

LEARNING PORTFOLIO

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Create a portfolio of written work to represent your evolving thinking in this course. Because the learning portfolio is intended to be consciously and carefully selective, you should choose up to 5 pages of passages selected from your writing, the writing of your classmates, or that of critics and authors you have come in contact with. In fact, you should include a few passages from others that inspired you or helped you to think more deeply about an issue. Those passages should, however, not exceed 50% of your total selection. One required source is your first essay and my feedback on it. For all passages, be sure to identify the source (e.g., reading journal, class notes, online discussion group posting, papers, posting on child_lit listserv, etc.).

Then write your reflective essay (5-7 pages, double-spaced), explaining what this collection as a whole means to you and how this portfolio reflects the changes in your thinking about children's literature, (your) writing, connections between disciplines, your education as a whole, you as a learner, the way you understand yourself and others, etc. Your learning experience is the subject of this essay. You may want to focus on two or three specific questions such as these:

- How has your writing evolved? Which assignments were more comfortable and productive for you? Why? What have you learned from reading the writing of your peers?
- Looking back at your responses to the Measure of Epistemological Reflection, how did your particular ways of knowing affect you during the semester? Did you notice any changes? If so, how would you describe them? What do you make of your observations?
- What major ideas, themes, and threads do you find in your writing and the writing you selected from others? How have you developed these ideas over the course of this semester? What does this development mean to you?
- How do your ideas connect to those you developed in other courses? How does this course fit into your overall undergraduate education?
- How do your insights connect to your life, your personal values, and convictions? How might these connections affect your future learning?

Use your selected works as evidence for the arguments you want to make.

In reviewing your essay, I will look for the following as they apply to the questions you choose:

- Critical analysis of how and why your writing and thinking about the subject of the course has changed (or not changed)
- Evidence of your preparedness to take an active role as a participant in the discourse of our field of study, including accuracy of discipline-specific facts and principles
- Ability to connect the course material to other fields you have studied and to your personal interests in different areas of your life
- Depth and specificity of reflection
- Persuasiveness of your evidence-based argument
- Clear organization; engaging and comprehensible style; correct grammar and vocabulary

As was the case for all previous projects, this is not the place for flattery or arguments you don't believe in. Your readers (your peers and your teacher) will not be interested in statements about how good the course was (you can do this in your course evaluations). They are genuinely interested in deep reflection and strong arguments. Essays that compellingly and convincingly argue that this course has been a waste of time and otherwise conform to the standards of excellence described in the evaluation rubric will receive an A. Please seek peer feedback before turning in your portfolio. This final assignment counts for 15% of your course grade.