Collections of Student Work
Student portfolios are purposeful and organized collections of student work assembled over a period of time that tell the story of a student's efforts, progress, and achievement. Use them to assess student growth, overall learning, and the process by which work is done, as well as the final product. Portfolios support assessment of difficult attributes, such as creativity and critical thinking, responsibility for learning, research strategies, perseverance, and communication skills.

Students participate in the selection of the items in the portfolio as well as the development of the guidelines for selection. Most items in the portfolio are accompanied by reflections which explain why each item is evidence of some significant learning. When undertaking the process of producing a portfolio, students take ownership and responsibility for their learning by establishing ongoing learning goals and assessing their progress towards those goals.

Consider including the following items in the portfolio:

- An effective solution to a difficult problem
- A creative use of technology to demonstrate understanding
- An application to an out-of-school situation
- A piece showcasing higher-order thinking
- Something a student is proud of
- Something that demonstrates the attainment of a goal
- Something a student enjoyed learning or doing
- Something that shows great improvement over previous efforts (include the first piece for comparison)

When establishing the criteria for assessing the portfolio, discuss the following questions with students:

- Does your portfolio show growth or change over time? Does it show how you've improved?
- Does it include the process of how you worked as well as the final product?
- Does it include thoughtful reflections on your achievements and learning?
- Does it include goals for future work?
- Does your portfolio contain an adequate amount of information?
- Does your portfolio show how well you do various tasks?
- Does your portfolio contain adequate variety in the types of items included?