



How to Use Portfolios For Reflection & Assessment

A Quick Win Toolbox Training Session for Early Years Educators



With Jodie Clarke - The Empowered Educator



Are they necessary?

If you make them
meaningful...



Empowered Portfolio Tips..



What

Make sure you have a clear understanding of the format you want your portfolio to take & when you will update it.



Why

If you are going to be spending extra hours on portfolios know your why! What do you want to achieve?



How

How will you add portfolio compilation into the limited planning time you have available? How will you ensure your not doing unnecessary work?





Consider All The Steps



....Just because you have to meet lots of documenting requirements as an educator it doesn't mean you can't be smart about **how you choose to do it and how much time** you spend on different areas..



Know the Basics



....All you **are required to do** is document children's learning in the best way that you can and **demonstrate that children are learning and are on a continuum of learning** "the distance travelled".

....Portfolios are **just one way of documenting a child's learning journey** with you as either a home based or centre based educator.



Clarify Your Goals



.....**Clarify** what you want to achieve with your portfolios or learning journals in terms of the planning cycle.

.....**Think** about the other forms of documentation, assessment & communication you are already using.

.....**Write** down what you want the information in your portfolio to tell you, the child and their parent.



Let's Reflect

Still trying to decide?



Does it show a learning journey?



Questions that might help...



What do you consider a **child portfolio**?



Do you know **why** you do portfolios?



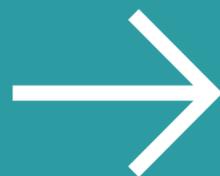
Are your methods of keeping portfolios **sustainable in terms of time management and skill**?



Are they only a pretty form of **parent communication in summary** form?



Does your portfolio document and identify learning throughout ..."**a child's progress or distance travelled**?"



Are you doubling up?



Questions that might help...



What does the information in the portfolio **tell you, tell the parents?**



Do you think in terms of **quality over quantity?**



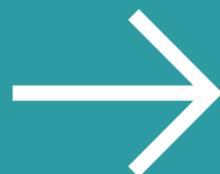
Do you show that not only have you understood and documented the child's learning **but also extended it? How do you show that?**



How does the portfolio **help support you to plan for further learning?**



Do you find you are **holding onto children's artworks or other special moments** because you need them for the portfolio?



How else do you communicate?



Questions that might help...

- 💡 Do you think there are other more meaningful ways you could **share the term or year of a child's care** with the parents rather than giving them a book/folder at the end of the year?
- 💡 What **other ways are there to document learning** and share with parents if I don't use a portfolio?
- 💡 Are there other recording/documenting methods and techniques besides portfolios that **would work better for you as an educator?**
- 💡 Could you keep **digital portfolios** instead?
- 💡 Finally, ask yourself if compiling and adding to portfolios is **taking away from your love of working with children.**





Putting it all Together

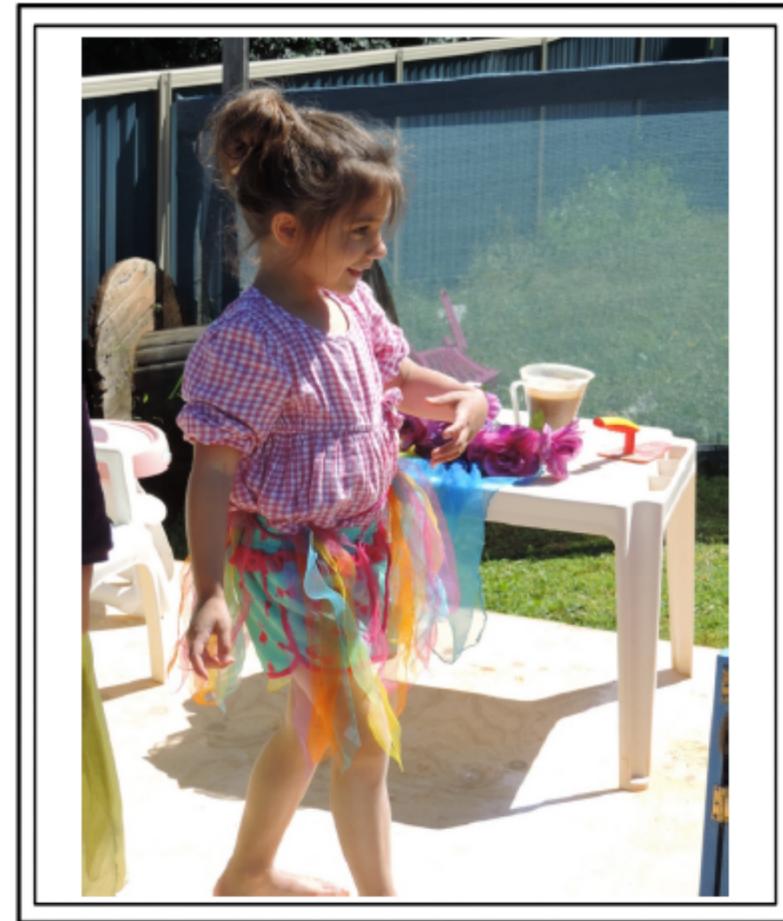
What could show the story of a child's learning journey?



**Let children pick
a photo of
themselves to
use on the front
cover.**



MY PORTFOLIO & MEMORY BOOK



Name:

Break it down for parents



IMPORTANT MOMENTS IN PLAY & LEARNING

What will I find in this section?

As a child plays during these important early years, they are continually learning, developing and progressing in their own unique way.

As well as becoming a valuable keepsake for families, this journal and memory book is a collection of some of the important information educators, connecting with your child this year, have documented and used to inform their planning and interactions. They use this information as a guide to extend, challenge and support each child's unique learning journey.

In this section of your child's journal and memory book you will find 'snapshots' of the information collected in various early learning formats that come together to connect with your child's own work samples, important moments, and snippets of their voice shared in the first part of this book.

By bringing both parts together this book aims to provide an overall picture of your child's past year of early learning and play.

If you have any questions at all about what you see in this journal please ask!

**Include relevant
assessments.**



MY PROGRESS

What will I find in this section?

Early childhood educators use assessments or summaries of learning at specific intervals throughout the year to give an overview of the 'distance travelled' by each child on their own unique learning journey.

As well as assessing progress toward learning outcomes, it also becomes a general summary of each child's interests, needs and participation in activities and experiences throughout the year.

Summaries help educators to identify gaps, celebrate strengths and interests, indicate a requirement for possible early intervention, help explain to families how their child is learning and progressing, and guide educators toward continuously putting new goals in place for each child.

The following summaries of your child's learning and progress aim to help you understand your child's strengths and challenges, the distance they have travelled throughout this year and how you might continue to extend the learning in your own home environment.

Include meaningful observations & show how these support a child's growth.



OBSERVATIONS

What will I find in this section?

In this section you will find various types of observations recorded by educators in order to identify and support your child's strengths, needs, interests and development.

An observation can take many different forms and may be called different things but the overall purpose is the same.

In the early childhood profession documenting observations is one way educators gather information about children to inform their programming and ensure they are planning appropriate activities, strategies and experiences for each individual child and also the whole group. The aim is to support and challenge the children's development and individual learning journey.

This collection is a snapshot of some of the important observations made throughout the year - if at any time you would like to see all of your child's observations please ask your educator.

**Include reflections,
voices & extension
activities.**



REFLECTIONS

What will I find in this section?

Educators use reflection skills to ask what is happening... why, when and how?

Reflecting on and evaluating children's observations allows educators to identify the children's strengths, developmental skills, capabilities, emerging interests, preferences, potential and opportunities for further development. They also continually reflect on their own skills, practice and early learning environment. This is how educators are then able to plan appropriate experiences, activities and learning environments for your child.

Children are also encouraged to share their voice, thoughts, feelings and opinions as a form of reflection and to help create a sense of belonging and respect.

On the following pages you will see examples of some snapshots of reflection that have led to extension activities and further learning throughout the year.

**Include snapshots
of how your
forward planning &
program have
played a
significant role.**



FORWARD PLANNING

What will I find in this section?

Educators bring their observations, interpretations, reflections, and knowledge of each child together to devise experiences, activities and environments which will foster the children's development.

To simplify this section - Forward planning basically means looking closely at the skills each child is already showing and then planning ahead for an activity, experience or environment which would further develop those skills.

Forward planning also requires educators to continually review resources, materials, people, routines, expectations and strategies.

In this section you will find some snapshots of how forward planning has played a significant role in the distance your child has travelled this year on their individual learning journey.

**Moments of
everyday play you
want to share.**



IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES

What will I find in this section?

Some moments during everyday play reveal to us important developmental milestones being achieved, skills being challenged, progress being made, or social and emotional connections being formed.

Sometimes an important activity or moment just makes an educator want to share the significance for whatever reason with the family of that child.

This is a snapshot of those moments for your child.

Record milestones



MY FIRST DAY

Date: _____



 What did I do inside today?

 What did I do outside today?

Ask children for
their input.



MY FIRST DAY

Date: _____



What did I do inside today?



What did I do outside today?

Memories to share.



MY FIRST DAY

 Who did I meet today?

Blank light blue rectangular area for writing the answer to the question 'Who did I meet today?'.

 What made me smile today?

Blank light blue rectangular area for writing the answer to the question 'What made me smile today?'.

 What did I eat today?

Blank light blue rectangular area for writing the answer to the question 'What did I eat today?'.

 How did I rest and relax today?

Blank light blue rectangular area for writing the answer to the question 'How did I rest and relax today?'.

**Review & update as
the year goes on.**



MY FRIENDS



My friends names are...

A large, empty rectangular box with a light blue background, intended for writing the names of the children's friends.

**Make summaries
interesting.**



A SNAPSHOT OF MY JOURNEY SO FAR



The funniest thing I did or said this year was...

A large, empty rectangular box with a light blue background, intended for writing a response to the question above.



Something that always made me smile was...

A large, empty rectangular box with a light blue background, intended for writing a response to the question above.



New skills I learned this year were...

A large, empty rectangular box with a light blue background, intended for writing a response to the question above.

**Collaborate &
connect with
family.**



ALL ABOUT ME



My name is...

.....

I was born on...

.....

My family includes...

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

 My favourite things to do inside are...

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

 My favourite things to do outside are...

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Include children in the compilation of 'their' book.



MY VOICE

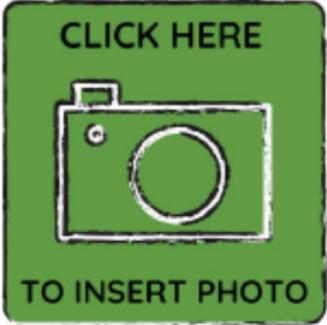
The worksheet is titled 'MY VOICE' in a blue, sans-serif font at the top. Below the title are two speech bubble outlines. The top speech bubble is larger and contains ten horizontal dashed lines for writing. The bottom speech bubble is smaller and contains five horizontal dashed lines for writing. The entire worksheet is framed by a light blue border.

**Share children's
play & creativity
with families.**



MY IMPORTANT WORK GALLERY

Snapshots of creativity, play and learning



Date:

Description

the empowered educator

Explain the learning that took place.



Date:

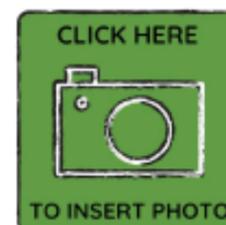
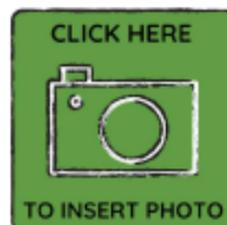
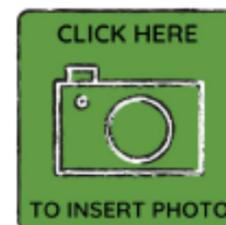
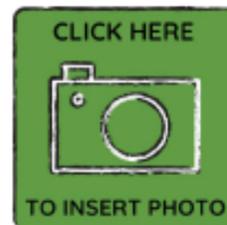
Description

Type into the box here - fully editable!

An opportunity for children to self reflect.



MY FAVOURITE MOMENTS FROM THIS YEAR



Start with the basics...



Bring it all together



Portfolio Contents Cheat Sheet

- 1** Child observations & Analysis of Learning
- 2** Forward Planning Activities
- 3** Special Moments
- 4** Samples of Artwork/Construction/Projects/Craft
- 5** A Summary of Learning
- 6** Family Information and Input

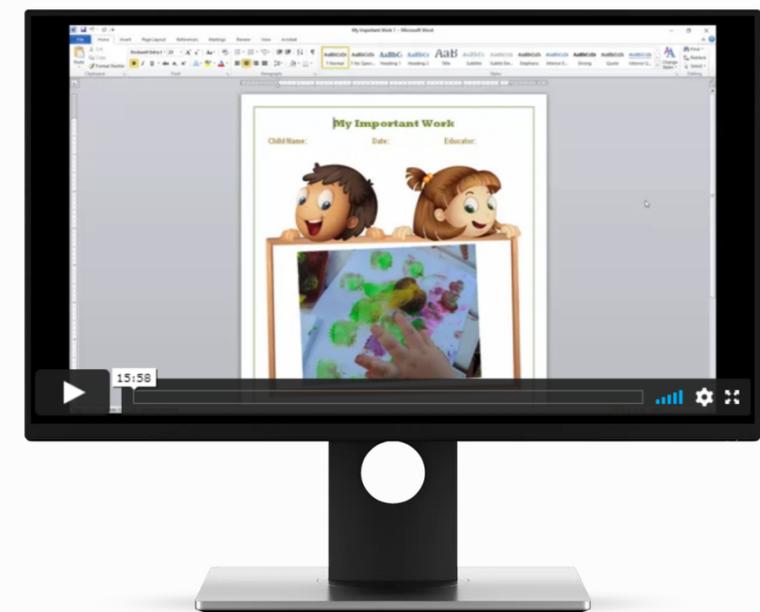




Want to go Digital?



If you like the idea of keeping all of your content for each child in a folder on your device or computer to share with parents as relevant watch my Toolbox video... **'How to Create a Paperless Portfolio'** for the steps to set up your own.



Other Paperless Options



-  Save relevant folders and photos to a **USB stick** then hand out to families at the end of the year.
-  Create a **powerpoint slide show or video** to show and distribute to parents.
-  **Email a link to parents** so they can access their child's portfolio of learning via your dropbox (or other cloud based service that you might use).



You made it!



What Action Will You Take Now?



Review - Look through the slide guide, download your portfolio pages and begin creating your own system.

Take Action - Decide how you will compile, review and distribute your next portfolio or learning journal





Thanks for Watching

