Part 1:

General Portfolio Instructions
(For retake candidates who began the Certification process in 2013-14 and earlier.)

Part 1 provides the following key resources, guidelines, and support:

- “How to Use the Portfolio Instructions” outlines the content of these instructions and provides a step-by-step process for preparing, developing, and submitting your portfolio entries.
- “Phase 1: Prepare” provides a foundation for the development of your portfolio entries and introduces important resources and references.
- “Phase 2: Develop” provides approaches to developing the strongest demonstration of your accomplished teaching practice and offers organizational tools, practice activities, and formatting and specification information.
- “Phase 3: Submit” provides step-by-step instructions for uploading and submitting your portfolio entries.
# Contents

## HOW TO USE THE PORTFOLIO INSTRUCTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAVIGATING THE PORTFOLIO INSTRUCTIONS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETAKE CANDIDATES</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PHASE 1: PREPARE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOCATING AND USING IMPORTANT RESOURCES</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding Up-to-Date External Resources</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying the Five Core Propositions and the Standards</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering Evidence of Accomplished Teaching</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing the Scoring Rubrics</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDERSTANDING THE PORTFOLIO ENTRIES</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Types of Portfolio Entries</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What You Will Find in Part 2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the Portfolio Entry General Requirements</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOLLOWING POLICIES AND GUIDELINES</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics and Collaboration</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naming Persons, Institutions, and Places</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Accommodations Policies</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEARNING PORTFOLIO-RELATED TERMS</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PHASE 2: DEVELOP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WRITING ABOUT TEACHING</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Your Written Commentary Is Important</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description, Analysis, and Reflection</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Commentary Examples</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing Your Writing</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECORDING VIDEO ENTRIES</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Your Video Entries Are Important</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before You Get Started</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Recording Your Class</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Recording Tips</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Editing and Audio Enhancement</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitting Your Video Recordings</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANALYZING STUDENT WORK</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Analysis of Student Work Is Important</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About Analysis</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Activities</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing Your Work</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZING YOUR PORTFOLIO COMPONENTS</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specifications: Written Materials</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specifications: Video Recording</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Cover Sheets and Forms</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANAGING YOUR TIME</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry Tracking Form</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PHASE 3: SUBMIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formatting</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploading and Submitting</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVOIDING THE 4 MOST COMMON SUBMISSION ERRORS</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PORTFOLIO INSTRUCTIONS
Part 1: General Portfolio Instructions

How to Use the Portfolio Instructions

To get started, you must read Portfolio Instructions, which provides you with the information you need to approach portfolio development systematically. See “Navigating the Portfolio Instructions” (below) for a complete description of the purpose and use of this guide.

By developing and submitting one or more portfolio entries, you

• demonstrate that you know and understand your students and their learning needs and show that you can select content Standards and learning goals that are appropriate and meaningful for those students;
• demonstrate your ability to plan a lesson that is closely related to those Standards and goals and is tailored to your students' learning needs;
• compile evidence that your classroom environment encourages student learning and video-record your implementation of the lesson;
• analyze in writing what took place during your teaching and reflect on how what you learned about yourself as a teacher and your practice will influence both your future teaching and your students’ learning.

For an overview of the portfolio entry development and submission process for your selected path, see “Retake Candidates “on page 2.

Navigating the Portfolio Instructions

“Part 1: General Portfolio Instructions” provides the general instructions for preparing, developing, and submitting your portfolio entries, as described below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Phase 1: Prepare”</td>
<td>Provides a foundation for the development of your portfolio entries, giving you context for studying the Standards and the Five Core Propositions as well as links to important resources, references, policies, guidelines, and requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Phase 2: Develop”</td>
<td>Describes the kind of analysis required to produce the clearest demonstration of your accomplished teaching practice, helps you develop your writing about teaching, and gives you guidance about video recording</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides organizational tools that assist with keeping the process on track and on schedule and practice activities to assist with your analysis of the tasks you need to complete for each entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides guidelines for formatting your entries as well as instructions for using the cover sheets and forms to label evidence and document capabilities for submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Phase 3: Submit”</td>
<td>Provides instructions for submitting all portfolio materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions” provides you with certificate-specific information about the content of and directions for developing each of your portfolio entries. It describes the portfolio process and the nature of the evidence you are required to submit and presents the forms you need to properly prepare, organize, and submit your portfolio entries.

Retake Candidates

Any candidate who did not achieve certification during his or her initial attempt may retake any combination of portfolio entries and/or assessment center exercises on which he or she did not meet the individual entry or exercise performance standard in the two subsequent candidate cycles.

Reviewing Your Original Submission

To raise your score through retake, assess why your original portfolio entry did not meet the performance standard of 2.75 by following these steps:

1. Read the standardized feedback statements on your score report to gain insight about how to improve portfolio entries for which you achieved a score less than 2.75. Feedback statements identify aspects of your entry that may be improved with evidence that better demonstrates the Five Core Propositions, your Standards, and the scoring rubrics.

2. Refer to Part 2 of the Scoring Guide for Candidates for your certificate/specialty area to reread the rubrics for your portfolio entries. Pay particular attention to the rubric for the performance level most closely matching the score that you obtained. Next, read the rubric for scores of 2.75 and higher to identify ways in which you may strengthen your performance.

3. Read Part 1 of the Scoring Guide to evaluate your retake options and learn how to use the National Board’s online retake calculator to assist you in deciding which portfolio entries and/or assessment center exercises you should retake.

4. Examine your copy of your original portfolio entry. Reread the Standards for your certificate area to identify where your original portfolio entry could have been strengthened. If possible, ask a colleague or mentor who is familiar with the National Board Standards for constructive criticism of your original portfolio entry.

As you think about ways that you could have strengthened your original portfolio entry and reflect on areas for improvement, ask these questions:

- Did your original portfolio entry, taken as a whole, accurately represent your teaching?
- Were there important aspects of your teaching that your original portfolio entry did not capture?
- Could you have selected student work samples or video recording opportunities that would better fit the guidelines given in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions”?
- Did you address each of the questions listed in “Composing Written Commentary” in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions”?
PORTFOLIO INSTRUCTIONS
Part 1: General Portfolio Instructions

- Keeping the Level 4 rubric for your portfolio entry in mind, how could you have provided clear, consistent, and convincing evidence in your portfolio response that you have incorporated the Standards in your teaching practice?

After you have answered these questions, begin planning what you could do differently for your retake portfolio entry.

**Rules Governing Your Retake Submission**

Instructions for preparing your portfolio entry(s) are available online at www.boardcertifiedteachers.org/retake-candidates. Keep in mind the following retake information and guidelines:

For a classroom-based entry:

- The **Contextual Information Sheet** may remain the same if it accurately describes your current teaching context.
- **Descriptive aspects of your teaching context** in the Written Commentary may remain the same; therefore, your retake submission may have some similarities to the Written Commentary you previously submitted in the area of instructional context.
- **Descriptive aspects of your lesson or assignment** in the Written Commentary may remain the same because you may use the same lesson or assignment you previously submitted. However, if you do submit the same lesson or assignment, you should carefully consider whether this lesson or assignment allows you to provide evidence that meets the performance standards for this entry. You also need to consider whether using the same lesson or assignment will permit you to develop the required new and original analyses and reflections on your teaching practice and provide clear, consistent, and convincing evidence.
- **Analysis and Reflection aspects of your teaching practice** in the Written Commentary must be completely new and original, not identical or amended versions from any entry previously submitted. Consequently, a classroom-based retake entry with cutting and pasting or rearranging of sentences and paragraphs from your previously submitted analyses and reflections would be an amended version that does not adhere to this guideline. If you do not adhere to this guideline, you will receive a Not Scorable (NS) for the entry on your score report, and a previous score will not carry forward.

For the Documented Accomplishments entry:

- The **Contextual Information Sheet** may remain the same if it accurately describes your current teaching context.
- The **description and analysis** for an activity or accomplishment may remain the same if the activity or accomplishment relates to your work as a learner and leader and/or collaborator during the last five years (i.e., for the five years preceding the opening of
PORTFOLIO INSTRUCTIONS
Part 1: General Portfolio Instructions

The description and analysis for an activity or accomplishment may remain the same if the activity or accomplishment relates to your work with students’ families and the community during the current year (i.e., for the 12 months preceding the opening of the submission window).

Documentation for an activity or accomplishment may remain the same if the activity or accomplishment is related to your work as a learner and leader and/or collaborator during the last five years (i.e., for the five years preceding the opening of the submission window).

Documentation for an activity or accomplishment related to your work with students’ families and community must come from the current year (i.e., the 12 months preceding the opening of the submission window), and the year should be visible in the documentation. If you do not adhere to this guideline, you will receive a Not Scorable (NS) for the entry on your score report, and a previous score will not carry forward.

The Reflective Summary must be completely new and original, not an identical or amended version from any previously submitted entry. Consequently, a Reflective Summary with cutting and pasting from a previously submitted entry would be an amended version that does not adhere to this guideline. You will receive a Not Scorable (NS) for the entry on your score report, and a previous score will not carry forward.

Retake portfolio entries are compared to your previously submitted, corresponding portfolio entries. If a retake portfolio entry does not adhere to the retake guidelines, you will receive a Not Scorable (NS) for the entry on your score report, and a previous score will not carry forward.

As a retake candidate, you should follow these steps in preparing for and completing the portfolio entry development and submission process:

1. Read “Phase 1: Prepare” to learn about rules, guidelines, and the resources available to you.
2. Review the Standards for your certificate area as well as the Five Core Propositions to understand the knowledge and skills being measured. Pay particular attention to those Standards that serve as the basis for the portfolio entry or entries you plan to retake.
3. Read “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions” in your certificate area for the portfolio entries you have chosen to retake to develop your response and choose evidence of your teaching practice.
4. Review the Scoring Guide for Candidates for the scoring rubrics and an explanation of how the rubrics are used to assess your portfolio entries.
5. Review “Phase 2: Develop” for general information and practice exercises that can help you improve your skills in writing about teaching, video-recording your class, and analyzing student work.
6. Review “Phase 3: Submit” for detailed instructions for reviewing your entry components, completing the appropriate cover sheet and forms, and submitting your portfolio entry materials.
PORTFOLIO INSTRUCTIONS
Part 1: General Portfolio Instructions

Phase 1: Prepare

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards® (National Board) certification process offers you, as an experienced teacher, the opportunity to demonstrate that your knowledge, skills, and accomplished teaching practices meet high and rigorous standards. You must demonstrate your knowledge through both assessment center exercises and portfolio entries; the portfolio entries provide the opportunity to demonstrate actual classroom practice.

The information in this section helps you prepare for the portfolio process by presenting key foundational resources as well as requirements, policies, and guidelines. Major topics include the following:

- “Locating and Using Important Resources” (page 5)
- “Understanding the Portfolio Entries” (page 9)
- “Following Policies and Guidelines” (page 11)
- “Learning Portfolio-Related Terms” (page 15)

Locating and Using Important Resources

To best reflect your accomplished teaching practice, it is essential that you understand both the foundational philosophies and the practical components of the portfolio process. This section describes the materials available to help you get started in gathering evidence and documenting your accomplished teaching practice.

Finding Up-to-Date External Resources

Visit the National Board website (www.boardcertifiedteachers.org) for all up-to-date program materials, including the following:

- Guide to National Board Certification (policies and procedures for the certification process)
- National Board Standards (for each certificate area)
- Five Core Propositions
- Scoring Guide for Candidates (for each certificate area)
- Candidate Support and Higher Education Opportunities
- Managing Your Candidacy (using the My Profile feature)
- Frequently Asked Questions (for key topics)

You may also wish to make use of the following customer support and technical resources:

- Customer Support: Available via phone at 1-800-22TEACH or online in your My Profile account via Ask NBPTS.
- Resource: Adobe® Reader® software lets you view and print Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) files on all major computer platforms. You cannot edit an open document with Adobe Reader software; however, you can copy text to the Clipboard to paste it into other applications. You may download Adobe Reader for free by following the instructions provided on the Adobe Systems website (www.adobe.com).
Studying the Five Core Propositions and the Standards

Knowing and understanding the Five Core Propositions and the Standards for each certificate area, and for each entry within an area, form the foundation of your process as you collect and analyze evidence of your accomplished teaching practice.

The National Board Five Core Propositions and the Standards developed for each certificate area inform each stage of your portfolio development process by

• providing a framework to help you collect the most relevant evidence of your accomplished teaching practice;
• offering guidelines that can help you focus your analysis of and writing about that practice;
• enhancing your understanding of how the portfolio entries will be scored by National Board assessors.

The Five Core Propositions describe the core characteristics of an accomplished teacher and are at the heart of the evaluation embodied in the National Board certification process. They are enumerated in the first National Board policy statement (*What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do*), issued in 1987 and published on the National Board website. The characteristics described in The Propositions define the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and commitments of accomplished teachers—commitment to students and their learning, knowledge of both the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects, responsibility for managing and monitoring student learning, systematic consideration of their practice and readiness to learn from experience, and membership within learning communities.

The National Board Standards are a reflection of the Five Core Propositions. The Standards detail specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes that support accomplished practice, illustrate the ways in which professional judgment is reflected in action, and describe how knowledge, skills, and attitudes could be expressed in a variety of settings. The Standards identify those aspects of your accomplished teaching practice that you need to demonstrate as evidence of your accomplishment. Understanding how the Standards are reflected in your day-to-day practice is key to developing a successful portfolio.

Sets of Standards are developed for each of the specific certificate areas, and these sets are further refined for each portfolio entry within a given certificate area. When you begin to review each portfolio entry in your certificate area, you will find that these groupings of Standards define and frame what will be assessed by that entry.
Gathering Evidence of Accomplished Teaching

Through your portfolio, you can capture your teaching practice in real-time, real-life settings, thus allowing trained assessors in your field to examine how you translate knowledge and theory into practice.

Architecture of Accomplished Teaching Helix

The Architecture of Accomplished Teaching Helix shown below uses a double spiral to illustrate the carefully woven, upward-spiraling nature of accomplished teaching, where knowledge of students, commitment to goals, and practice of instruction, analysis, and reflection—as defined by the Five Core Propositions—develop at six closely linked stages.
Use the following table to review the steps used to demonstrate accomplished teaching and to see how each step relates to the Five Core Propositions. The steps can guide you in planning your portfolio entries and collecting evidence to demonstrate your teaching practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Core Proposition Demonstrated</th>
<th>Collecting Evidence of Accomplished Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Know Students and Subject Area</td>
<td>Teachers are committed to students and their learning.</td>
<td>Who are my students? Where are they now?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What do they need? In what order do they need it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Where should I begin?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Set Learning Goals</td>
<td>Teachers are committed to students and their learning.</td>
<td>What high and worthwhile goals can be provided, at <em>this time</em>, in <em>this setting</em>, that are appropriate for these students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Implement Instructions to Achieve Goals</td>
<td>Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.</td>
<td>What instructional strategies would be most effective for meeting goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What materials, people, or places can I use to enhance student learning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Evaluate Student Learning</td>
<td>Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.</td>
<td>Determine by evaluating student learning in relation to instruction—have goals been met?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reflect on Teaching Practice</td>
<td>Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.</td>
<td>What would I do differently? What are my next steps?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Set New Learning Goals</td>
<td>Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.</td>
<td>Based on evaluations of student learning of these students at this time, what goals would now be appropriate to set for students?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reviewing the Scoring Rubrics**

*The Scoring Guide for Candidates* describes, in detail, the basis on which your accomplished teaching is assessed. You must read the *Scoring Guide* prior to developing your portfolio to help you develop your entries at an accomplished level and to interpret your scores.

The Standards are the basis for the scoring rubrics and provide the criteria by which your accomplished teaching practice is assessed. Because the scoring rubrics clearly articulate the criteria as they are applied in the evaluation of your responses, it is important for you to understand them before you begin developing your portfolio entries.
PORTFOLIO INSTRUCTIONS
Part 1: General Portfolio Instructions

Understanding the Portfolio Entries

As a retake candidate, you may prepare, develop, and submit up to four portfolio entries. This section previews the types of entries you are asked to develop, the directions to follow when developing the entries, and the portfolio entry general requirements.

General Types of Portfolio Entries

The portfolio consists of four separate entries—three classroom-based entries and a fourth entry based on your documented accomplishments.

The National Board portfolios require evidence of your accomplished teaching practice along with your analysis of that evidence. Assessments of your performance are based on three distinct sources of evidence—which all the National Board portfolios share—that you submit in the form of entries:

- samples of students’ work
- video recordings of classroom practice
- documentation of accomplishments outside the classroom

Each portfolio entry requires a written component. In your Written Commentary for Entries 1–3, you may give details about the context in which you teach and about your instructional practice—how you analyze and reflect on your practice. It is your opportunity to reveal how and what you think about your work. Your Reflective Summary for Entry 4 gives you the opportunity to consider the significance of your accomplishments and the impact of your accomplishments on your plans for future student learning.

Entries Based on Student Work Samples

You must include student work samples, where requested, that provide direct evidence of your teaching. Your commentary on student work samples gives you an opportunity to look for patterns in the samples collected. It also provides assessors with evidence of your ability both to pose meaningful assignments that elicit student understandings (and possibly reveal misunderstandings) and to offer constructive feedback to your students.

As an essential source of evidence about your practice, this entry allows you to demonstrate what students are asked to do, how you interpret student responses, and what you do with the information the student work provides. Because there are many kinds of student work, this kind of portfolio entry samples the types of student work that are most important to teachers in each certificate area.

Entries Based on Video Recording

As with student work samples, video-recorded lessons provide direct evidence of your teaching, enabling assessors to see and hear exactly what occurs in your classroom: how you interact with students and how students interact with each other in the classroom environment you have created. There is no better evidence of what a teacher does than actual classroom practice; video recordings of practice in various situations and circumstances are essential evidence.
Use video recording to sample different concepts covered during the year and various kinds of instruction and classroom interactions. As part of this process, you individually contextualize and situate each video recording in a Written Commentary.

Entries Based on Documented Accomplishments

The third essential source of evidence about your practice reflects aspects of teaching outside the classroom, such as a teacher’s interactions with students’ families, with the school and local community, and with colleagues. Portfolio entries of this type center on documenting these kinds of interactions.

The assessment of your entire entry (Written Commentary, student work samples or video recording, instructional materials, Reflective Summary, and analysis of your activities) is based on the evidence that you provide of your teaching practice, not on the level of your students’ performance.

What You Will Find in Part 2

The directions for each portfolio entry include these components:

- **Standards Measured** lists the relevant Standards and uses their language to describe the kinds of Standards-based practice each entry is intended to elicit.

- **What Do I Need to Do?** summarizes the specific requirements of each entry—what kind of evidence and analysis you must submit so that your response is scorable.

- **Instructions for each entry’s deliverables** (depending on the requirements of a specific entry) include information on composing Written Commentary, description and analysis, and Reflective Summaries; preparing video recordings; and assembling assessment and instructional materials and documentation of accomplishments. Instructions include format specifications for each deliverable.

- **Cover sheets and forms** to be included in each entry or retained for your own records are provided at the end of each entry.

Understanding the Portfolio Entry General Requirements

Each certificate area’s assessment is based on a specific grouping of National Board Standards that articulates a vision of teaching and describes what accomplished teachers of a specific developmental group and in a specific subject area should know and be able to do. Through the vehicle of the portfolio, you can select examples of your practice that show how your practice embodies the Standards.

A complete portfolio is designed to assess a teacher’s performance in a wide range of classroom settings. You may wish to use more than one class in your portfolio entries to best demonstrate the broadest possible range of your teaching practice. If you have multiple classes that meet the age and content requirements, take advantage of these different classes when completing the classroom-based entries. However, if you have access to only one class that meets the age and content requirements for the certificate area, you may use a single class for all the classroom-based portfolio entries in a given portfolio.
When planning the student work you will collect and the lessons you will video record, keep in mind the following requirements for your classroom-based portfolio entries:

- **Class composition:** The teaching that you feature must take place with a class that meets the age and content parameters of the certificate area: at least 51% of the students in the class(es) that you use to complete your portfolio entries must be within the stated age range for the certificate area during the period in which you collect evidence for your portfolio. **The students featured must be from a rostered class during the regular school day and year, not after-school classes or summer school** (Music candidates are allowed to use after-school classes due to budget constraints). You may not include students from other classes to supplement your class.

- **Time period:** The period for evidence collection is the 12 months prior to the opening of the submission window.

- **Variety of evidence:** The teaching that you feature in each of the classroom-based portfolio entries must come from different units of instruction, different lessons, and different points in time—even if all evidence is drawn from a single classroom.

The portfolio entries have been designed for maximum flexibility: you may collect examples from your practice in various ways, as specified by your portfolio entry directions, over a period of months. Careful planning is essential to fulfilling the requirements of this portfolio. For help in organizing your time and managing this project, see “Managing Your Time” (page 52).

The portfolio entries were also designed to reflect, to the extent possible, activities that teachers engage in naturally during their work. Most entries enable you to sample from your practice and encourage you to reflect on that practice through Written Commentaries. The entries were developed in collaboration with practicing teachers who verified both the feasibility of preparing the entries in school settings and their value as vehicles for both assessment and professional discussion and growth.

**Following Policies and Guidelines**

As a candidate, you must read and agree to all terms addressed in the National Board Policies statement located and defined in the *Guide to National Board Certification* available on the National Board website. The National Board ensures that the National Board Certification process is fair for all applicants and is committed to examining and refining these policies on a regular basis to ensure that they benefit all candidates and enhance the ability of National Board to provide efficient and high-quality services. This segment addresses ethics and collaboration; naming persons, institutions, and places; and language accommodations.

**Ethics and Collaboration**

Collaboration with colleagues is a valued part of the process: engage them in professional discussions about the National Board Standards; have them help you video record, watch, and analyze the video recordings; and have them read and comment on your analyses and on the student work you have chosen. **However, the work you submit as part of your response to each portfolio entry must be yours and yours alone.** Your written commentaries, the student work you submit, and your video recordings must all feature teaching that you did and work that you supervised.
If you work as a member of a team of teachers, you have an opportunity to collaborate with other members of the team who are going through the assessment. However, if you work in a team teaching setting, you should review your responses carefully to ensure that your responses all feature teaching that you did and work that you supervised.

It is mandatory that you submit unique video segments and student work samples as well as separate and different analyses and reflections regardless of your teaching situation.

If you submit materials identical to those of another candidate, both of you will be disqualified from the certification process, and the organization or entity funding your certification assessment fee, if any, will be notified of this disqualification and the reason for it.

The National Board does not permit cheating or confidentiality breaches of any type and has established policy that outlines the consequences of these actions. All candidates are strongly advised to follow this policy. As a candidate, you are required to review the policy on Denial or Revocation of Certification (available on the website and in the Guide to National Board Certification).

If you observe first-hand a breach of security, misconduct, and/or unethical practice, please report it immediately in writing, with any documentation, in one of the following ways:

- by logging in to My Profile and submitting an inquiry via Ask NBPTS
- via fax to (888) 811-3514
- by mailing to National Board, c/o Pearson, 19500 Bulverde Road, San Antonio, TX 78259

Reports of unethical behavior must be received from persons who have first-hand knowledge of the occurrence. Thank you for helping to protect the integrity of National Board Certification for the teaching profession.

**Naming Persons, Institutions, and Places**

You are required to seek and receive permission to use images and some of the materials you include in your portfolio. You collect permission in the form of National Board releases for students whose images and/or work appears in your materials, students and adults whose images are included in your photos, whose images are seen or voices are heard in videos, and all parents or guardians of such students.

Prior to uploading your submission(s), you must attest to the National Board that you have obtained releases for individuals whose images and/or work appears in your entry materials. You must keep the National Board Student and Adult Release forms with your records, so do not submit them to the National Board.

As you develop evidence of your accomplished teaching practice, you must refer to students and possibly to parents, colleagues, and other adults. In these and all materials that you submit with your portfolio entries, you must refer to people in ways that preserve their anonymity, following the guidelines provided below. Your written materials, student work samples, and instructional materials must not show the last names of any person.
Exceptions are the National Board Student Release Forms and Adult Release Forms, which must contain full signatures but which you do not submit with your portfolio; Verification Forms, which require the full signature of the person who verifies your accomplishments in the Documented Accomplishments entry; and documentation within the Documented Accomplishments entry, which may contain names under certain conditions as specified in your certificate area portfolio entry directions in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions.”

Your goal in referring to people or places is to convey to assessors sufficient evidence about your teaching practice. Use the following guidelines to refer to people, institutions, and places in all of your written work:

- **Children or students:** Use first names only. If you choose to feature two students with the same first name, use first names and the first letter of each of their last names.

- **Parents or legal guardians:** Identify these adults by referencing their relationship to the students, for example, “Marie’s mother.” Parents should receive the same kind of anonymity as students.

- **Other teachers, principals, school employees, or administrators:** Use “a colleague” or “the principal” if possible. If necessary, refer to the person by first name only. For example, use a construction like “John, one of our math teachers . . . .”

- **Your school, school district, or facility name:** Use the institution’s initials, followed by the words that identify the level of the school, but do not identify its location. For example, you would use “JM Middle School,” or Sunny Cottage School would become “SC School.”

- **Your city, county, or state:** Refer to these only as “my city,” “my county,” or “my state.”

- **A college or university:** Write “a four-year college,” “a graduate program,” or “a two-year college.” It is better to be clear and general when making such references than to use unnatural constructions such as “John Doe University.”

- **Your name:** Be sure to remove your name from student work (use correction fluid) and do not include your name in your Written Commentaries. If you are quoting a student, use “Joey then said, ‘Mrs. S., why do we need to . . . .’” or something similar.

**Language Accommodations Policies**

We recognize that languages other than English are frequently used in the classroom; therefore, for the following circumstances, the accommodations described are allowed.

**Student Work Samples and Video Evidence with Brief Expressions or Phrases in a Language other than English**

Student work samples and video evidence may include brief expressions or phrases in a language other than English. The inclusion of such expressions or phrases must be limited because assessors do not have fluency in languages other than English. If expressions or phrases in a language other than English that are important for an assessor to understand are included, you must include brief explanations of these expressions or phrases in the Written Commentary that accompanies each portfolio response.
**Student Work Samples and Video Evidence in a Language other than English**

If you are submitting student work samples or video evidence in a language other than English, you must provide a written English translation for the samples or evidence. The translation must include your candidate ID number, the entry title, and any necessary student identifiers (but do *not* include students’ names). The translation should be labeled as such and grouped directly behind the sample or evidence (or if a video translation, behind the written commentary). Note that the pages of your translation do not count toward your page totals.

**EXCEPTIONS:**

- **English Language Arts.** Candidates seeking certification in this area must submit student work samples and video evidence in English.
- **World Languages.** Assessors for this certificate area are fluent in English and the target language; therefore translations are only required for documentation that is written in a language other than English or the target language.

If the majority of your instruction takes place with students for whom English is a new language, the appropriate National Board certificate may be either the Early and Middle Childhood/English as a New Language certificate or the Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/English as a New Language certificate. To help you make the decision whether to pursue certification in one of the available certificate areas, discuss your teaching situation with professional colleagues, your school faculty, a National Board Certified Teacher® or your faculty support group.

**Alternative Communication Modes**

The National Board recognizes that teachers and students in exceptional needs settings may routinely use

- Manual languages (such as American Sign Language) in their interactions;
- braille instead of, or in addition to, traditional print.

Specific instructions for submitting video recordings and student work in these circumstances are included in the entry-specific portfolio instructions for the Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/Exceptional Needs Specialist certificate area. In general, however, these are the guidelines that must be followed:

- If you submit a video recording in which there are brief phrases of manual language, without voicing, you must provide a transcript of the conversation in which there was no voicing.
- If you submit a video recording in which a student’s language is unintelligible, either because of technical problems or because of a speech/language impairment, you must provide a transcript of the student’s comments.
- If you submit a video recording that is extensively or exclusively in manual language, with or without voicing, an interpreter will be provided at the scoring site to assist assessors in understanding the video recording. You must notify the National Board, via *My Profile*, that your entry requires interpreter services or your entry will not be scored.
- If you submit instructional artifacts (e.g., assignments, handouts) or student work samples in Braille, you must provide translations of the materials.
Learning Portfolio-Related Terms

General definitions of some of the terms frequently used in the portfolios appear below. Some of these terms may not apply to your certificate area, so you will not necessarily find them in the text of your certificate. Note that the Standards provide additional examples of the meaning of some terms within the portfolio context.

Use the section below as a quick reference, but consider the National Board Standards for your certificate area as well as “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions” to be the final authorities for how you complete and submit your work. It is your responsibility to understand the Standards and to study the entry directions carefully before you make decisions about which lessons and students you feature in any entry.

assessor(s)
The person(s) trained to score National Board portfolio entries and assessment center exercises. To be an assessor, a person must possess a baccalaureate degree, have had three years of teaching employment, be currently teaching in the certificate area he or she will score, and have successfully completed assessor training. Current candidates for National Board Certification are not eligible to be assessors.

assignment
Any formal or informal prompt or other device used to cause students to produce responses.

bilingual
Able to function in two languages. In the portfolios, “bilingual” refers to any classroom in which the students are English language learners and use their first language to learn content and to aid in their English language development.

cite
To mention or bring forward as support, illustration, or proof. When portfolio directions ask you to “cite specific examples” of something, you should provide evidence that clearly supports whatever point you are trying to make in your response to the questions the portfolio asks.

class
A section or group of students that you teach during a specified time period (e.g., fourth period English). This is different from a subject area (e.g., English). This distinction is important because although you may teach several classes in a subject area, portfolio directions ask you to consider a specific group of students in a class, rather than all of the students in a particular subject area.

class set
A group of materials for an assignment that includes the student work samples of every student in a class. You must submit student work samples and materials according to the specific entry directions. You must submit student work only for those students whose work is featured in your submission.

content
A subject area such as mathematics, science, social studies/history, or technology education. In content-based ESL, English would be taught in conjunction with a subject area to a group of students of limited English proficiency (LEP), who may, but do not necessarily, share a similar first language.
disciplinary
Of or relating to a specific field of academic study (e.g., social studies, biology).

elicit
To bring or draw out (e.g., some of the Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Mathematics entries require that an assessment/prompt “elicit mathematical thinking and reasoning from students”).

evidence
Evidence that has a solid foundation in fact and would be convincing to most people. The basis for this kind of evidence is that it be strong, clear, and convincing and that it not be easily disproved by a difference in interpretation. The presentation of evidence does not remove the need for you to write detailed and well-organized analyses; assessors still need to know that you recognized this evidence, and they want to see how you have used this evidence in your teaching.

evoke
To summon or call forth. In the context of portfolio entries, an assignment/prompt that evokes student responses causes students to produce the desired work.

evolution
Gradual changes. Used in a general sense, this could refer to gradual changes that take place in your classroom or in your teaching practice.

insight
The capacity to grasp the true nature of a situation; the act or outcome of grasping the inner nature of things or of perceiving in an intuitive manner. If an entry directs you to give insightful reflection, you must show assessors that you grasp the true nature of the teaching situation and/or that you understand it in a perceptive or intuitive way.

instructional materials
An item used or produced during a teaching sequence. Assessors review the materials to better understand the activity featured in your video recording or Written Commentary (e.g., rubric, transparency, Internet Web page).

instructional sequence
A group of related lessons or activities supported by a common goal or theme. The instructional sequence is not limited to one lesson or activity. The time interval should be sufficient to present evidence of students’ skill or understanding of the topic.

interdisciplinary/cross-disciplinary
Of, relating to, or involving two or more academic disciplines that are usually considered distinct. “Interdisciplinary” or “cross-disciplinary” may simply refer to two different branches of science or can be as different as social studies and the arts.
interpretation

The explanation of a conclusion you reached about the results of a teaching situation. An interpretation explains to assessors how you understand the results of an event and what these results mean to you. See “Writing about Teaching” (Part 1, “Phase 2: Develop,” page 20) for more detailed explanations and writing samples.

lesson

A period of instruction; an assignment or exercise in which something is to be learned; an act or an instance of instructing; teaching; an experience, example, or observation that imparts new knowledge or wisdom.

manipulatives

Hand-held objects with moving or interchangeable parts that are used as models to demonstrate the structure of something or how it works (e.g., the set of sticks and balls that fit together to show the structure of molecules).

nonprint text

Includes instructional materials that are not part of a curriculum textbook with the exception of illustrations. Nonprint items include media such as a drawing, film, drama, photography, speech, presentation, newscast, collage, graph, computer-generated product (graphic) or other appropriate technology, and any other visual or audio performances. Nonprint items may contain some text (e.g., a comic strip).

pedagogy

The art or profession of teaching, training, or instruction.

print text

Instructional materials that are printed literary texts such as books, short stories, or poems.

prompt

Information that causes or stimulates students to produce responses. A prompt can be formal or informal and can be anything from a specific assignment to a piece of art, a photograph, or a theory in your field of teaching. A prompt might be a writing topic you give students as a basis for their response to a short story that serves as a stimulus.

scaffolding

Various means of supporting learning and making new material or concepts accessible to students, during the practice of which teachers methodically build on students’ prior knowledge in order to teach new skills, procedures, and concepts.

small-group discussions

This term as used in this context describes the requirements of video-based portfolio entries for the purposes of which a small group generally consists of three to five students (although this may vary based on the number of students a teacher has in a class and on specific directions for the entry). The main objective of highlighting small-group discussions is to show the teacher facilitating discussion among students within the small groups during the regular class with others present and not recorded during an off period or after school.
stimulus

Information used to elicit a response or action; an incentive. A stimulus can be a written work or visual object, an activity or event, directions given by the teacher, or anything that causes student responses to be produced. A stimulus might be a short story, and a prompt might be a writing topic you give students as a basis for their response to that story.

student assessment

The formal or informal process of collecting, analyzing, and evaluating evidence about what students know and can do. There are multiple forms of formal and informal assessments. Formal assessments may include, but are not limited to, classroom tests, performance assessments, and standardized tests. Informal assessments may include, but are not limited to, observations, checklists, and anecdotal records.

student response

Any kind of student work that results from an assignment by the teacher. This may be a discussion, formal writing assignment, a drawing, a journal entry, or any other work a student completes under a teacher’s guidance.

student work

Student work samples as defined by the submission format specifications provided for each portfolio entry. Submit only the number of student work samples required by the entry. Consult each entry for page limits on student work samples submitted.

tangible products

Some physical result of a lesson that reveals something about the teaching, the learning process, or students’ learning or understandings. These products could be student work, a model produced during the lesson, and/or a piece of artwork.

technology

The full range of sound, video, and data systems available as tools for learning. A wide array of media ranging from overhead projectors, calculators, videocassette recorders, and cameras to such technologies as multimedia computers, software, the Internet, and complex scientific tools. Consult your certificate’s Standards and make sure that the technology you choose to feature is relevant and meaningful to your certificate area, your students, and your instructional goals.

unit

A section of an academic course focusing on a selected theme or concept. A unit may also correspond to a chapter in a curriculum text.

visual cues

Devices used to enhance understanding (e.g., a student’s gestures, illustrations).

visual literacy

The ability to recognize and understand ideas conveyed through visible actions or images (e.g., pictures).
whole-class discussions

In this context, this term is usually used when describing the requirements of video-based entries. A whole-class discussion is one in which the entire class is involved in a discussion. This does not mean that each and every student must be shown in the video-recorded lesson. The main objective in a whole-class discussion is to show that the teacher is effectively engaging the entire class as a group. The video recording should show some interaction with specific students, but it is not necessary to zoom in on every student. However, it should be clear in the video recording you submit that the students are actively engaged in the discussion.

Phase 2: Develop

Following the step-by-step process, you have reviewed the foundational materials, including the Five Core Propositions, the Standards for your certificate area, and the Scoring Guide for Candidates, and have read “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions” for your certificate area. These directions provide a detailed understanding of both the portfolio process and the nature of the evidence you are being asked to gather. The directions also provide a list of the Standards measured by each portfolio entry.

In this section, you review the additional and detailed general resources for developing portfolio entries, including the following:

- “Writing about Teaching” (page 20)
- “Recording Video Entries” (page 35)
- “Analyzing Student Work” (page 43)
- “Organizing Your Portfolio Components” (page 47)
- “Managing Your Time” (page 52)

There is a particularly valuable resource—a collection of questions—in the following three sections. You can pose these questions to yourself or use them to suggest other questions; all can help you more fully develop the kind of analysis you want to highlight in your Written Commentary, a key component of each portfolio entry.

Writing about Teaching

The portfolio entry directions for each certificate area require you to describe, analyze, and reflect on your teaching practice. This process involves these practices:

- describing what happened in a classroom situation
- analyzing the “how,” “why,” or “in what way” a particular lesson was or was not successful in teaching students
- reflecting on how you would handle this same situation in the future

These skills inform your evaluation of your own work—an evaluation that provides insight for National Board assessors into not only what is happening in your classroom, but into the rationale for those events and processes. You make these evaluations in individual analyses—the Written Commentary—that you submit with each entry.

Thinking analytically about teaching is a complex process that benefits from both practice and teaching experience. Since evaluation of one’s own work is not a daily part of teaching, some teachers may have little experience with description, analysis, or reflection. Systematic and probing questions about “why” and “how” are key when analyzing and beginning to reflect on your practice.

For these reasons, it may be helpful to practice this kind of thinking and writing before you begin working on your Written Commentary or other written components of the portfolio. The questions provided in this section and the two that follow can help you get beneath the surface of the daily details of your teaching to jumpstart the work of analysis.
Although you are not submitting these practice activities to the National Board, we encourage you to use these activities and the writing samples and suggestions provided to familiarize yourself with the kinds of thought and writing that are required in the portfolio entries. This can help you present to National Board assessors the clearest picture of your teaching practice.

Your Written Commentary about your teaching is the final visible result of a great deal of less visible labor—the culmination of the kind of analysis that the practice activities in these materials are designed to help elicit.

**Why Your Written Commentary Is Important**

Remember that the only information available to National Board assessors is what you provide in these portfolio entries—your video recordings, student work samples, instructional materials, and Written Commentary. Regardless of the strength of the evidence you present in each portfolio entry, your analysis of your featured teaching is a crucial element conveyed solely by your Written Commentary. You must demonstrate to assessors that you have appropriately described, analyzed, and reflected on your teaching practice and have used this analysis appropriately to guide your teaching.

**Description, Analysis, and Reflection**

This brief guide to writing about teaching is really a guide to the summary activity that brings together all the hard work—the thinking, talking, discussing, prewriting, and rethinking—that you are doing during this process and that development of the portfolio entries is designed to elicit.

Keep the essential differences among descriptive, analytical, and reflective writing in mind as you prepare your Written Commentary. The directions in the assessment materials call for each of these kinds of writing; providing an appropriate response is essential to a complete presentation of your work.

**Descriptive Writing**

In this context, a *description* is a retelling of the facts of what happened in a classroom situation. It is meant to “set the scene” for assessors. Your description should be logically ordered and detailed enough to give assessors a basic sense of your classroom situation so that they can understand the context for your later analysis and reflection.

When you are asked to describe, be certain that your response meets these criteria:

- contains accurate and precise enumeration and/or explanation of critical features
- provides clear and logical ordering of the elements or features of the event, person, concept, or strategy described
- includes all features or elements that an outsider would need to be able to see as you see

**TIP:** Use descriptive writing whenever a prompt includes verbs such as “state,” “list,” or “describe” or when it opens with “what” or “which.” Confirm that your descriptions are clear and detailed enough to allow someone who is not familiar with your teaching to visualize and understand what you are describing.
**Analytical and Reflective Writing**

Analysis deals with reasons, motives, and interpretation and is grounded in the concrete evidence you provide in the materials you submit. Analytical writing shows assessors the thought processes that you used to arrive at your conclusions about a given teaching situation. It also demonstrates the significance of the evidence you submit.

Reflection is a thought process that you engage in after a teaching experience. This type of thinking allows you to make decisions about how you would approach similar situations in the future—deciding whether to do something the way you have in the past, differently, or not at all. Although reflective thought may occur at any time, the reflection component of your Written Commentary is where you must show assessors how you use what you have learned from your teaching experiences to inform and improve your practice in the future.

Analysis and reflection overlap, although they are not identical. For the purposes of this Written Commentary, analysis involves interpretation and examination of why elements or events described are the way they are, while reflection always suggests self-analysis, or retrospective consideration, of your practice.

When you are asked to analyze or reflect, be certain that your response meets these criteria:

- The subject of the analysis is available to the reader (e.g., the student work samples, the video recording).
- The focus of your writing is not on what (which is descriptive) but rather on why (which is both analytical and reflective).
- You need to provide the following:
  - Your interpretations of what happened during the lesson and its results.
  - Your conclusions about what should come next.
  - Specific evidence and/or examples that support your analysis and conclusions, making your points clearly to the assessors.

For example, if you are asked to analyze the success of a particular lesson or some specific teaching, do not simply explain what happened, which would be a description. Further, do not state a conclusion (“The lesson was a success”) or simply note the fulfillment of your learning goals (“Students gained a better understanding of multiculturalism in our society”) without also giving evidence or examples to support the statement.

Analysis in the context of a portfolio entry deals with reasons, motives, and interpretation, all of which should be grounded in the concrete evidence provided by your work. Your work alone cannot provide assessors with your understanding or interpretation of the significance of what you have submitted as samples of your practice—only your analysis can do this. Nor can your work tell assessors what you have inferred about your practice—only your reflection can give assessors that information.

**TIP:** Analysis is called for when a question in the Written Commentary asks “how,” “why,” or “in what way(s).” When you are asked to identify a particularly successful moment in a sample of teaching and to tell why you regard it as successful, you must analyze. When you are asked for a rationale, you must analyze.
When you are asked what student performance suggests about your teaching, you are being asked to analyze and interpret. This means that you are to use the evidence of student work to explain and illustrate your practice and also to use your practice to explain and provide a context for the student work. Ask yourself these questions:

- What did my students know before this teaching experience?
- What did my students learn because of this teaching experience?
- What did I know about my students and their knowledge before this teaching experience?
- What did I learn about my students and my practice because of this teaching experience?

**TIP:** When you are asked what you would do differently, your response is both an analysis of and a reflection on your practice.

### Written Commentary Examples

This section presents three examples of Written Commentary that a teacher might compose in response to the learning goals and requirements and Standards of a hypothetical portfolio entry. Review the three written commentary examples that follow.

The purpose of these examples is to illustrate some of the differences between descriptive, analytical, and reflective writing. These examples do not represent actual candidate responses and are not intended to be indicative of Level 3 or Level 4 writing or performance. In addition, they may not reflect the actual requirements and Standards for your certificate area. They also represent only limited activities and teaching practices that may be submitted in your portfolio entries.
Example 1

Instructional Context

My Advanced Placement (AP) Biology class was a very homogenous class relative to the rest of the school. In this class, students ranged in age from 16 to 17, with 19 students in the 11th grade and 2 students in the 12th grade. There were twenty white students and one black student, with no Hispanic, Multiracial or Asian students. There were no students identified as ESE or on a Free or Reduced lunch plan. There were 13 girls and 8 boys. There was no significant ethnic, cultural, or linguistic diversity in this class that affected the personality of the group. Many of these students have been grouped together in classes since elementary school and have few issues that affect their performance or congeniality.

A majority of students in my class were from prominently wealthy families in our community and stated they “were accustomed to success.” Many have had few academic challenges until they enrolled in this college level biology course. At least half of the students showed difficulty in text comprehension and recognizing main ideas. Many students also faced difficulty in pacing the requirements of the course in addition to meeting the demands of a rigorous schedule and demanding extra-curricular activities. The only previous science course many of these students had was a freshman level integrated science curriculum. Only half had experience with a chemistry course, and it focused primarily on dimensional analysis.

With the composition of class in mind, I was careful not to assume that my students’ learning styles were as similar as their ethnic backgrounds which motivated me to introduce personality and multiple intelligence surveys. From the results of these surveys, I was able to diversify my instructional and assessment practices to increase student comprehension. For example, I noticed this class had many visual/spatial learners, so I used a
Example 1 (Continued)

software program to turn vocabulary terms into crossword puzzles. As a result, I immediately noticed many of my visual students were scoring higher on their summative assessments. Sarah, a bright girl who used to say she didn’t “get it” later said that she enjoyed the class more and found the material more interesting when she had the assessments and materials tailored to her learning needs.

In my observations, the difference between the students who consistently scored well and those who struggled was not a major cognitive difference, but a difference in the ability to juggle the demands of a college course with other activities. The majority of the students struggled to remain on task when presented with a classroom interruption or deviation from the instructions.

This class was scheduled during the last period of the day, where it competed with extracurricular events and scheduled or unscheduled announcements. Frequently students had to leave early for a game, and this was also the period where many of our assemblies and meetings were held. Most of these students were involved in many of these events, and therefore often missed at least part of a class. For this reason, the course sequence was delineated early in the year and posted at all times in the room and on the website. This way, students could be held accountable for their missed classes. The sequence of my instructional activities was meant to create interest, develop a connection between the major idea and the world around them and to reflect on the evolutionary relationships that define taxonomy today. This allowed me to deepen students’ conceptual understanding and situate the major idea with a broader context.

Planning

Throughout the course of this activity, students were to actively participate in a scientific discussion and use the cognitive and manipulative
Example 1 (Continued)

skills associated with the formation of scientific explanations. This activity was designed to bring together their prior knowledge and develop their contextual understanding of invertebrate organisms under a taxonomic or evolutionary context (Goal 1). Through the use of evolutionary biology we attempted to reconstruct a partial history of life on Earth (Goal 2). Another goal of this discussion was to evaluate the techniques through which systematists test and refine their hypothesis about phylogeny and classification (Goal 3). In the process, students would learn how molecular biology is changing systematics, as it is changing every field of biology (Goal 4).

These goals are important for my students because they are standards represented in the AP and AICE (Advanced International Certificate of Education) curriculum, both of which require a rigorous standardized exam as well as the National Science Standards. The significance of this major idea is the understanding of life’s diversity. Students usually exhibit a general understanding of classification; however when presented with unique organisms they often revert to purely structural differences rather than appeal to the scientific basis of genetic or evolutionary differences.

A discussion was a particularly useful teaching approach for this lesson because ideas were examined and discussion in class so that other students could benefit from the feedback. Group discussions allowed students to develop meaning from active involvement, continued exposure and understanding of the concepts that guide phylogeny and classification. I was able to gain information about the students’ current explanations. This allows me to immediately identify and correct student misinformation. Those student explanations then became the baseline for instruction as I helped students
Example 1 (Continued)

to construct explanations aligned with scientific knowledge. I also helped students evaluate their own explanations and those made by scientists.

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Reflection

Looking back to the goals for the activity, I feel that my approach was successful because I was able to modify instruction based on each student’s need....I feel I was successful in helping students contextualize their knowledge of invertebrate organisms in an evolutionary context through thought-provoking questions and an inquiry method of discussion as part of Goal 1. Since this was a new activity to my repertoire, I feel that I can increase the relevance for students by having illustrations of the representative organisms to reinforce their prior knowledge. I will also align future assessments to represent the new discoveries in taxonomy and will include more studies into binomial nomenclature.
Example 2

The instructional goals for this lesson were for students to comprehend and enjoy a novel [“The Pinballs” by Betsy Byars], to identify dialect and theme, to make predictions, to identify, understand, and propose alternatives to conflict, to use prior experience during discussions, to interpret symbolism, to think long-term, to exercise problem-solving and decision-making skills using details from the text, to reflect on how this literature imitates life, and to extend understanding of the book through a variety of multimodal and cross-disciplinary activities. These instructional goals are consistent with the state’s objectives and the school curriculum. They meet the requirements for listening, speaking, writing, literature study, reading, reference/research skills, and technology integration. This selection [“The Pinballs”] is a good example of how culture transmits itself through literature, and students see how literature reflects true human experiences. I chose the small group format for two reasons. First, students are comfortable talking to each other as they work in collaborative groups on assignments in the classroom. This method allows them to take intellectual risks without feeling as though they have to “act” for me. For example, Kevin…used good oral language skills, but his dialect included incorrect grammar such as, “Ain’t got no.” As I monitored discussion, I knew I would need to address verbs and double negatives in a later lesson. My second reason for choosing the small group format is because this model ensures a greater number of students actively participating in discussion while simultaneously learning to appreciate cultural, linguistic, and personal interests of others. For example, Caroline…spoke low and was slow to respond. Her behavior is consistent with her family’s belief that it is disrespectful to be the center of attention so she resists bringing attention to herself. Erika…and Christian,…my two ESOL students, were vocal in small group discussion. This does not happen during whole class discussion. Since English is a barrier for them, they often shy away or
Example 2 (Continued)

speak too low to be heard by other students in a whole class discussion. I noticed how a small group setting facilitated ESOL students' speaking abilities because they felt validated by their peers. This method allowed all students to make personal and reading connections to the novel as they engaged in meaningful discussion about conflict.

Considering that the original nature of this unit was to expose students to literary works written by women, I made sure that there were at least two females in each group who represented at least two different cultural or ethnic backgrounds. My rationale was for the groups to have insight from each female's point of view based on their cultural experiences. I then assigned male and female students to groups equally. This setup automatically promoted differing opinions based on gender, race, cultural, and linguistic diversity. An informal assessment of my students' cultural backgrounds, prior learning experiences, etc. helped me strategically place students in groups to maximize discussion. Each group had five to six students to allow each student an opportunity to participate.

To spark interest and to set purpose for the discussion, students wrote letters to each other about a time when they encountered conflict and how they resolved it. To further set purpose for small group discussion, the class viewed a website (via scan converter) of a picture of pinballs. I connected the computer to a large screen television so that the class could view the image during group discussions. This helped students transfer prior knowledge so that they would have a clear understanding of conflict and how it relates to a pinball. I then told my students how Carlie, a character in the novel, had conflict with everyone and was treated like a pinball (has no control where it lands).

...  

I was so intrigued with the level of discussion within groups that I did not focus on theme. Before the video, Tycheri told me that theme was prose.
I knew that she confused genre with theme. I did not discuss theme because I assumed other students had mastered the concept. I need to teach theme separately as a literary concept. I should have asked fewer questions in group two because I interrupted Christian. Had I facilitated more, he would have talked more. I did a good job of asking leading questions, but I should have let students ask some questions that facilitated critical thinking as well.

Small group discussion was effective. Prompts helped students stay focused on the topic. Groups even competed in pinball tournaments on the computer!
Example 3

Many interactions on the videotape show students learning to reason mathematically and to communicate their reasoning. One interaction is when the group of boys is rotating the right triangle. In this interaction, Jonathan (the boy in the gray shirt) turns the coordinate plane $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to the right, then locates the coordinates of point 1. He communicates those coordinates to be over 2 and up 2. However, when Jonathan made an error in the original position of the shape, I probed his thinking further, resulting in his understanding. In the video, I ask the group to observe the patterns in the table for the rotation of the rectangle. I led the group to the understanding that the opposite of the old x-coordinates have become the new y-coordinates and the old y-coordinates have become the new x-coordinates. As a result, the group notices their coordinates for the rotation should follow the same pattern. Thus, the real coordinates of Point 1 must be (2, −3). Another interaction which shows students reasoning mathematically is when the group of girls is working on the reflection of the isosceles triangle. During this part of the video, the two girls demonstrate how to correctly reflect the isosceles triangle over the x-axis by flipping from Quadrant II to Quadrant III. In addition, they demonstrate mathematical thinking as they work together to locate the coordinates of each point on the isosceles triangle. The girls communicate the coordinates of each point out loud to each other. Also, Megan (the girl in the black shirt) places her fingers on the graph and then counts how many units point F is over and down from the origin.

The analysis of the lesson suggests that the learning goals for these students were best achieved through small group interactions. One reason is the small groups allowed students more hands-on experience with manipulatives to perform the transformations. In the video, students physically moved their fingers on the graph and located the points. This experience is far more enriching and can not be duplicated by the use of a worksheet.
Another reason is small groups provided students with the opportunity to interact with other individuals to communicate and correct their thinking. Both groups in the video communicated the location of points with each other, monitored their work with the graph, and corrected their thinking about location of points or positioning of figures. In addition to small groups, students worked in a whole class format before and after the videotaped segment. The inclusion of the whole class format enhanced the lesson. Before the videotaped segment, it allowed students to process the instructions and ask questions about the assignment. At the end of the lesson, it provided an opportunity for each group to communicate with the class and for students to report observations they made about the coordinates of different transformations.

The use of manipulative materials had a positive effect on the students’ learning experience. First, the manipulatives increased the students’ level of access to the mathematics at hand. Instead of simply performing the transformations on a worksheet or listening to a lecture about transformations, students were actively engaged in concrete explorations with the materials. For instance, the two girls in the video tried to reflect the isosceles triangle but could not figure out why points F and G’s coordinates were the same. After focusing their attention on where point G was and where their assignment said it should be, they were able to figure out they needed to flip the figure over. Next, the use of manipulatives enhanced student conceptual understanding. This point is best illustrated by the opportunity the manipulatives provided for me to correct student misconceptions with translations. Until students engaged in the group activity, I did not realize they thought a translation could be performed while also turning or rotating the figure. However, when they began working in groups I immediately noticed students sliding the point of the figure to its given location, but they were also chang-
Example 3 (Continued)

...ing the orientation of the figure. As a result, I utilized class time during the whole group discussion to address this misconception. Last, the use of manipulatives provided maximum abilities to assess student knowledge of the learning goals. By simply observing students, I determined their ability to perform a given transformation. I noticed whether students slid the figures the correct amount in the right direction, rotated the coordinate plane the correct amount, or flipped a figure accurately over the x-axis. Since the table contained many patterns, I could immediately discern whether the coordinates were accurate.

... If I were given the opportunity to teach this particular lesson with these students again, I would make two improvements. One improvement would be to replace the recording page where students had to graph the transformation of the figures with a page of questions focusing on the specific patterns within the coordinates. By creating a page of questions, I could extend students’ thinking beyond just transforming figures and recording the coordinates. I could target specific observations I would like them to make for certain transformations. For instance, I could ask them to observe the pattern created when a figure is reflected over the x-axis. Then, I could extend their thinking by asking them to predict what would happen to the coordinates if the original figure had been flipped over the y-axis. Another improvement would be to supply each group with a transparency of the recording sheet. When groups began presenting their result to the class, they filled in their coordinates and graphed the figures on the overhead at the front of the room. While groups were recording their data, valuable class time was lost. By using transparencies, groups could just place their data on the overhead and conserve class time.
Reviewing Your Writing

A key step in the writing process, regardless of the skill or experience of the writer, is to review your own writing objectively. Even professional writers can become so involved in their writing that they forget to include information that readers do not know. For some, reviewing with objectivity requires “distance,” or time away from the project.

**TIP:** If you have time, set your writing aside for a day (or more) and do not think about it. The next time you read it, you should have an easier time recognizing where you left out important information or if a transition is missing or if something is unclear.

To ensure that your Written Commentary meets stated goals, you may want to ask at least one other person to read your work. This person should be someone who will be thorough and constructive with his or her feedback. Your goal in having someone else read your work is to discover the things that need improvement that you may not be able to see. Explain the basic portfolio entry directions to this person, and let him or her review the National Board Standards for the entry. Ask your reader to keep in mind that this Written Commentary accompanying your evidence is all the information you will be able to give assessors about your practice and that you need feedback about this writing, not about you or your teaching practice. Have your reader mark places in the text where he or she would like to know more or has trouble understanding the content. This kind of feedback can help you pinpoint the passages that need additional detail or explanation.

You will find that different people provide unique insights about what might improve your writing. A teacher will give a much different critique than someone who is not a teacher. Both kinds of feedback are valid and important. All National Board assessors who might be looking at your portfolio entry are teachers in your certificate area who have undergone extensive training in National Board scoring procedures. However, some individuals may be better able to see “skips” in logic or to notice areas that need further explanation than would a colleague from your school who may not perceive skips because he or she is already familiar with your teaching environment.

Once you have received comments from your reader or readers, understand that these are simply opinions and that it is up to you to decide how to use the information you have collected. You may find that you receive seemingly contradictory feedback; try reading your own writing from both points of view. Follow the suggestions that make sense to you. Sometimes a reader is unable to pinpoint the exact source of a problem in a piece of writing but knows that a problem exists. This feedback can be very helpful, pointing you to the areas that may need more attention. It may take some thought and work on your part to determine which changes are most beneficial to your writing. You may need to do several drafts of your writing to develop one Written Commentary that you feel best demonstrates what you are trying to show about your teaching and that also demonstrates that the Standards for the entry have been met.

The Written Commentary is a key part of your portfolio entry. Since you must provide your writing with your portfolio entries to the National Board by the deadline for portfolio submission, you may want to give yourself an earlier deadline for finishing your Written Commentary. This timeline would allow sufficient time for you to review your own writing and to get feedback from others. Your goal should be to submit the best evidence and analysis of your teaching possible.
Recording Video Entries

Why Your Video Entries Are Important

In two or more of the portfolio entries required for National Board Certification, you are asked to submit video recordings of your teaching. The purpose of the video-recorded entries is to provide as authentic and complete a view of your teaching as possible. The National Board assessors are not able to visit your classes; therefore, a video recording is the only illustration of these key practices:

- how you interact with students and how they interact with you and with each other
- the climate you create in the classroom
- the ways in which you engage students in learning

Your video-recorded entries convey to assessors how you practice your profession, the decisions you make, and your relationships with students. This topic provides technical advice, guidelines, and helpful information about making effective video recordings of your teaching practice.

Before You Get Started

You must complete two key steps before you start video recording your class: obtain permission to video-record and make sure your equipment is adequate for the task.

Permission

The National Board Student Release Form and an Adult Release Form are included in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions.” These forms are used to collect and document the signed permission given for all individuals who appear in your submitted photographs or are seen or heard in video recordings or for whose learner work you submit. You must use the National Board release forms; district or school release forms will not be accepted.

You must secure permission from the parents or legal guardians of all students in your videos. You should secure permission for all other students in your class in the event you need these releases. You should do this even if you are making the video recordings only for practice, since you might make a video suitable for submission even if you are only intending to practice.

Ensure that parents understand that the video recordings are not about the students, but are intended for professional discussions with other teachers about the best ways to teach, and that the students will never be identified by their full names. If, for some reason, a student’s parents refuse to grant permission, you will have to ensure that the student is seated out of the camera’s range and is not heard.

You must have a signed Student Release Form for each student who appears or is heard on a submitted video recording, seen in a photograph, or whose work samples you submit, as well as a signed Adult Release Form for any adult who is included in your submitted video recordings or in a photograph. It is your responsibility to keep these release forms on file in the event a question arises regarding these permissions. In addition, the National Board may request a copy of these forms as documentation for your entry.
Equipment

You need the following equipment, at minimum, to make video recordings of your class:

- video camera
- headphones to monitor the sound being recorded
- external omnidirectional boundary microphone to be placed near students and connected to the camera at some distance from the group (If such a microphone is not available with your video recording equipment, consult a local audio retailer or search the Internet for more information. Helpful hints on how to use this relatively inexpensive microphone are provided in “Improving Audio Quality” (page 40).
- tripod
- extension cord

Use the best video recording equipment available to you when making your recordings. Your school may have good equipment that you are allowed to borrow to create higher-quality recordings.

Because it is often difficult to hear students speaking, make sure that the equipment you use has a sensitive microphone. Some handheld cameras have audio reception that is sensitive; others require a separate microphone. If you are filming small student groups, you will be circulating among groups and should carry a handheld microphone to record your voice and the voices of the students. See “Improving Audio Quality” (page 40) for more on this topic.

Video Recording Your Class

In addition to providing some tips on the mechanics of recording, the strategies presented in this section can give you important practice in observing your teaching. This practice helps you reflect on the work samples you have decided to pursue as well as those you have not chosen. Observing your teaching lets you practice analyzing teaching in a way that you would not be able to without a video recording. With a video, you are able to watch what you do and when you do it as the lesson unfolds.

Until both you and your students get used to the experience, video recording may present an inauthentic view of your teaching. The first time you bring a video camera into the classroom, many students may not behave as they usually would. Some may become quiet and slide down in their seats, and others will play to the camera. Many teachers may find themselves inhibited (perhaps acting more formally, for example). For these reasons, it is a good idea to make several practice video recordings to enable both you and your students to become familiar with the mechanics of video recording and with maintaining a natural demeanor in front of the camera. You should experiment to find the most effective use of video recording for your situation.

To get the maximum benefit from practicing your video recordings, you should record at least three different classroom sessions (although we encourage you to arrange to record as many different classroom sessions as possible to gain even greater familiarity with the process). You should also record varied teaching formats, including full-group instruction, cooperative-group work, and small-group instruction. These recordings are to be made during the rostered class and not created during an off period or after school to show your regular teaching environment.
PORTFOLIO INSTRUCTIONS
Part 1: General Portfolio Instructions

Place the camera on a tripod or in a good vantage point (for example, on top of a file cabinet) where the camera view takes in the entire classroom. Record several classes and watch these recordings alone so that you can become accustomed to how you look and sound. You will also begin to notice what your students are doing and how their learning could be improved.

You must base your video practice sessions on the Standards for your certificate area since the video recording materials you eventually submit must reflect the elements of teaching practice that are judged essential to the National Board’s vision of accomplished teaching. These elements, based on the Standards, are what assessors look for in the materials you submit.

How to Practice Your Video Recording

The purpose of practice sessions is to make you comfortable with video recording as a medium of conveying your practice. As you may decide to use a practice session for your final submission, note the time limits specified in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions” and remember that each segment must be continuous and unedited. The guidelines below apply to each of the video recordings you produce:

1. Decide on the sessions you plan to video record. Your practice exercises will be most beneficial if you record multiple sessions with as wide a variety of lessons and/or students as your teaching assignment permits. The classes you choose need not be the most advanced, but the topics of the lessons you record should be ones that are important for the students at their level of learning and on a topic that likely engages them.

2. Arrange for another teacher or a student to operate the video equipment at several practice sessions. Review video recording procedures with that individual, including the need to avoid stopping the camera or using the “fade in/out” function of the camera so that no content is lost and so that your recording does not give the appearance of having been edited.

3. Consider finding other people who have the time and expertise to offer you assistance in video recording your classes. If a local college or university offers courses in video communication, there may be students there who would welcome the opportunity to help with camera work. Alternatively, such courses within a high school may supply students looking for experience. Consider seeking advice from your school or school district library media specialist or audio visual specialist.

4. Jot down a few notes that can help you recall a particular session when you are working on the analysis of your recording. At a minimum, note the following:
   - any particular instructional challenges offered by the students
   - the learning goals (lesson objectives) for the lesson
   - your opinion about the overall success of the lesson (i.e., were the learning goals achieved?) and the evidence you have as the basis for your opinion
   - a description of any instructional materials used in the lesson

! The video recording of your classroom teaching must be continuous and unedited. If your recording appears to have been edited, the entire entry will be assigned a “0.” Note: when more than one segment is required, it is acceptable to pause between segments.
5. Label the recordings and your notes so that you can quickly and correctly match them.

**Analyzing Your Video Recordings**

To select which video recording you wish to submit, review all of your video recordings, keeping the “Video Analysis Questions” below in mind. To be eligible for submission, your video recordings must be continuous and unedited and meet the time requirements specified in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions.” You may want to watch your videos several times. In fact, you may wish to initially watch each recording with the sound turned off to provide greater awareness of your and your students’ nonverbal behavior (for example, facial expressions and body language).

After you have chosen the video recordings that you want to use, develop your written analysis by answering each of the “Video Analysis Questions” below. Your responses should be straightforward and written in nontechnical language.

When you have finished answering these questions, review your writing imagining that you do not know anything about the unit or the students you have selected. Is your writing clear? Can you follow your own thinking?

**Video Analysis Questions**

Video-recorded teaching sessions offer particularly strong evidence of a teacher’s knowledge and ability. The following questions are designed to focus attention on aspects of teaching that are described in the National Board Standards. Use these questions to hone your skills as an observer and analyst of your own teaching:

- What is the extent of classroom involvement (e.g., are most students participating or are the same few students doing all the talking)?
- Are the students engaged in the lesson? How can you tell? What do students’ facial expressions and body language tell you about your instruction?
- What kinds of questions do you ask? Can all your questions be answered with a single word? How long do you wait for responses? Do you ask students to explain and/or defend a particular answer or approach? Do you ask students to compare or evaluate alternative interpretations or strategies?
- Are there any opportunities for students to ask questions? How would you categorize the students’ questions (e.g., do they indicate confusion and a need for clarification or understanding and extension)?
- What roles (e.g., expert, facilitator, colearner) do you play in the video recording? Is each role appropriate for the situation?
- What kinds of tasks do you ask students to do? Do you capitalize on their previous knowledge and experiences?
- What instructional opportunities do you take advantage of and why?
- What instructional opportunities do you not take advantage of and why?
- What evidence do you see of the students taking intellectual risks? Does the climate of the classroom provide a safe environment for getting something wrong? Do students talk to each other as well as to you?
- Do you encourage students to take risks, to speculate, and/or to offer conjectures about possible approaches, strategies, and interpretations?
PORTFOLIO INSTRUCTIONS
Part 1: General Portfolio Instructions

- Are the learning goals for the lesson achieved? Do you adjust the lesson so that your goals could be achieved by every student? What is the evidence for your answers, both in the video recording and from other sources?
- Explain how your design and execution of this lesson affect the achievement of your instructional goals. (Your response might include—but is not limited to—such things as anticipation and handling of student misconceptions, unexpected questions from students, unanticipated opportunities for learning that you captured, or your planned strategy and its outcomes in the lesson.)

**TIP:** These questions can also be used to guide discussion of video recordings in your professional collaboration group, if applicable.

**Video Recording Tips**

After you and your students have become accustomed to the presence of video equipment, you will want to produce quality video recordings that best reflect your classroom work with students. Professional quality is **not** expected. The following technical tips are provided to help you provide the best quality in your entries.

**Improving Video Quality**

Review the following suggestions for improving the quality of your video recording:

- If possible, use a tripod. Having the camera in a fixed position eliminates the wobbly effect of an unsteady hand.
- If chalkboard and/or whiteboard writing is an important part of the lesson, be sure that it is captured on the video recording and is legible. This may require refocusing the lens on the board. In addition, sometimes writing is legible to the eye but not to the camera, so you might have to move the camera to reduce the amount of glare on the board or use dark markers on chart paper taped to the chalkboard and/or whiteboard.
- In general, the camera should be pointed at the speaker. That is, when the teacher is speaking, the camera should be aimed at the teacher. When students are speaking, the camera should capture them. However, this general principle is difficult to achieve if the camera is positioned at the back of the room. A side position is more effective.
- You may need for the camera person to follow you as you move from group to group to improve the sound. If you have to move the camera while recording, set the zoom lens to its widest setting to cut down on the shakiness of the recorded image.
- Increase the amount of light in the classroom to improve the video recording. Be sure to turn on all the lights and, if possible, open your curtains or blinds.
- Avoid shooting into bright light. If there are windows on one side of the classroom, try to shoot with your back to that light source.
- If you are using an older camera, you may have to adjust it for type of light source each time you shoot. Newer cameras may have a switch for recording in incandescent, fluorescent, or day light, or they may be completely automatic.
**Improving Audio Quality**

Audio quality is important and can be the most troublesome aspect of classroom video recording. If you or your students cannot be heard, it is difficult for assessors to recognize and score your performance. Even if you can be heard, clarity of conversation is extremely important for assessors because they need to interpret the content of the dialogue.

There are environmental and technical challenges when trying to get the best audio quality. Flat, echoing walls and multiple students talking simultaneously make good sound retrieval a challenge; even with professional recording equipment, it can be difficult to hear everything that students say. For these reasons, always test the sound quality when recording and keep the following tips in mind:

- **Before each recording session, check the equipment to be sure that all cables are secured** and, if necessary, use masking tape to hold them in place. Many audio problems are the result of faulty connections rather than poor equipment quality.

- **Eliminate noises that may interfere with recording.** If the microphone is picking up extraneous noise, consider turning off fans, air conditioners, fish tank filters, and so on while you are recording. Also, whenever possible, avoid recording when you must compete with outside noises, such as a lawn mower, recess, or band practice.

- **Have the person recording wear headphones** to monitor the sound and to address audio problems as they occur.

- **Keep the microphone close to the action.** The location of the microphone is key to capturing quality audio. Remember that the closer the microphone is to the action, the better the sound recording. If you are circulating among student groups, for example, and you want to capture your interactions with a group, consider carrying an external microphone. For whole-class recording, the microphone can be suspended from the ceiling in the center of the room.

- **Use an external omnidirectional boundary microphone.** This is the most effective way to enhance the sound quality of your video recording. The built-in microphone of most cameras is generally not adequate; because it is attached to the camera, it is frequently not close enough to the person speaking, so it often picks up background noise and misses important conversations. Most external microphones lie flat to pick up sound that reflects off large, flat surfaces, such as table tops or walls. For almost all video cameras, the external microphone is plugged into the “EXT MIC” jack on the camera. When plugged in, the built-in microphone on most newer cameras automatically turns off, and only the sounds from the external microphone are recorded. Be sure to check this feature of your camera before you begin recording.

The following table provides background on setting up an external microphone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment Needed</th>
<th>Setup</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One omnidirectional boundary microphone</td>
<td>Plug one end of the adapter into the external-MIC opening on the video camera.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One heavy-duty extension cable</td>
<td>Plug the extension cable into the other end of the adapter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One adapter</td>
<td>Plug the external microphone cable into the extension cable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plug the external microphone into the external microphone cable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You are now ready to begin video recording.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Whole-Class Video Recording

Whole-class video recording in National Board assessments is intended to show that you are effectively engaging the entire class, as a group, and that the entire class is involved in a discussion, again as a group. The video recording should show some interaction with specific students, but it is not necessary to zoom in on every student nor must every student in the group be shown in the video-recorded lesson.

The following are recommendations for video-recording whole-class teaching activities such as demonstrations, discussions, and so on:

- **Determine optimal camera placement.** It is optimal to place the camera on a tripod at the side of the room and, if possible, set it up high on a counter or table.

- **Set the lens to a wide angle.** It is important for assessors to be able to see you and your students together, your students’ reactions to what you are doing, and their engagement in learning.

- **Avoid trying to follow a conversation back and forth between different people.** The camera always arrives late to the action.

- **Determine optimal microphone placement.** With masking tape, firmly attach the external microphone high on the front wall or on any other flat surface that faces toward the majority of speakers.
Small-Group Video Recording

Small-group video recording in National Board assessments is intended to focus attention on student interaction in collaborative learning situations and on your facilitation of such learning as you move around the classroom. It is meant to capture a particular kind of classroom structure: one in which you interact with many small groups as they pursue independent work.

The following are recommendations for video recording small-group activities such as discussions among several students, or groups of students, working on a project:

- **Determine optimal camera placement.** Plan ahead to determine the group of students you want to video-record and then place the camera on a tripod, choosing a single vantage point from which you can record. Alternatively, the camera can be handheld and/or braced against a wall to steady the image.

- **The camera should be an appropriate distance from the group while showing as many participants as possible.** It is important for assessors to be able to see the facial expressions of students and to understand how you work with those students. Be sure that all of the people—you and your students—interacting in this small group can be seen and heard.

- **Adjust if the group is looking at or referring to an item.** Zoom in at the beginning of the conversation and maintain a close focus long enough for assessors to be able to understand the ensuing conversation. Then zoom out and keep the lens set wide.

- **Determine optimal microphone placement.** Carry the external microphone so that it is always closest to you and to the group with whom you are interacting. It is essential for assessors to clearly hear the participants’ conversations.

![View of a small group showing best camera and microphone placement](image)

Video Editing and Audio Enhancement

There are established guidelines for the submission of video recordings. You may not submit edited videos, defined as postproduction processing of the video itself or cuts in an otherwise continuous segment. Examples of editing include the elimination of unwanted segments, the addition of footage, fade-ins and fade-outs, the addition of audio recorded material from a device other than the video recorder, and the “blurring” of an image to conceal a face or nametag. In addition, videotape segments may not be created with two or more cameras, giving the video recording a “studio” effect.
PORTFOLIO INSTRUCTIONS
Part 1: General Portfolio Instructions

However, amplifying the sound to enhance the audio on a video is acceptable as long as the amplification of the audio does not conflict with the postproduction editing guidelines described above.

Do not stop and restart the camera or the sound—this is classified as an edit. All video recordings must be continuous and unedited unless you are explicitly directed to do something different in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions.” Edited video recordings will not be scored.

Submitting Your Video Recordings

Be sure to do the following before you submit your entries:

- Play back your video recording to ensure it can be viewed by the assessors.
- Check the audio quality of your video recording and make sure it is audible.
- Make sure that you are present and recognizable in the video recording.
- Make sure your video recordings do not exceed the time limits stated in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions.” While submitting a video recording that exceeds the time limit does not disqualify your entry, assessors view only the video footage that is within the stated time limit.
- Remember that you are to submit only the segment that is to be used for scoring unless you are directed to do something different in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions.”

To score your video entries, assessors must be able to see and hear what is going on in the classroom, and verify that you are visible and identifiable in the recording. Failure to meet these requirements will make your entry unscorable.

Analyzing Student Work

The resources and materials in this topic give you an opportunity to practice some important skills and to systematically analyze all the information students produce about who they are, what they know, and the state of their learning. The activities in this topic offer a framework for thinking analytically about student work—particularly student responses to assignments, class work, assessments, and other instructional material—and for writing down your analytical insights about your students and their work.

TIP: Develop your own repertoire of questions and strategies to help you understand and analyze the work that students produce. Also develop rich and interesting opportunities for student responses—creating both occasions for response and the prompts or problems you can pose for students as they explore and master new ideas.

Why Analysis of Student Work Is Important

As described in “Writing about Teaching” (page 20), your Written Commentary about students and their work is a critical component of the assessment materials you are submitting. Your analysis of your teaching practice is an essential element of assessing your knowledge and ability as an accomplished teacher.
Because this kind of analysis and writing may be unfamiliar to teachers, some practice is likely to be both helpful and reassuring. You may learn about the depth and breadth of your perceptions about student work once you begin to focus analytically, and, in turn, student work can become an even more interesting and critical resource for pedagogical information.

About Analysis

To properly analyze student work, begin by making a detailed description of the evidence you observe. You need this evidence to be able to ask insightful questions and to make knowledgeable connections regarding your hypotheses about student learning. You must go beyond describing what you have seen to provide an analytical examination of instruction.

If you are also reflecting on your practice as a part of that analysis, a further prewriting step is required: as you connect what you did with what you see in the evidence of student learning, you must examine the effectiveness of your actions, your possible options, and the potential effects of those options.

This essential cognitive work produces an analysis that serves to broaden and deepen your practice and thus enhances future student learning. Step-by-step activities that take you through the analytical process are outlined below. You can apply all of the following activities to analysis of written student work, but the principles also apply to all instructional materials and can be helpful when used in conjunction with the video analysis questions in “Analyzing Your Video Recordings” (page 38).

Practice Activities

Activity 1: Observation and Description

Choose one of your class assignments that you thought elicited considerable information about your students’ understandings. Choose three student responses to the assignment. Be sure to choose students who each pose a different instructional challenge to you as a teacher. Select student responses that are substantial enough to support the level of analysis required in the Written Commentary. Unless otherwise specified in the entry, these are to be each student’s individual response, not a response completed as part of a group activity.

Look carefully at the assignment that elicited the three student responses. Answer the following questions with specific details about the assignment (the word “assignment” is used here generically to mean an occasion, a prompt, or another device for eliciting substantive student response):

- What was the goal of this assignment?
- Why is this an important goal for student learning of the subject?
- How was this assignment connected to other activities, in or out of class?
- What subject-specific concepts did students need to know in order to complete this assignment successfully?
- What misconceptions would you predict might appear in student responses to this assignment?
- In what ways did you intend for this assignment to extend students’ thinking about the topic?
- What did each student do correctly and/or incorrectly? (Student 1, 2, 3)
For each of the students you have chosen, jot down brief descriptions of the following features of the response to your assignment:

- What was the most striking feature of each response? (Student 1, 2, 3)
- What were the patterns in each response? (Student 1, 2, 3)
- What misconceptions does each response reveal? (Student 1, 2, 3)
- What insights (if any) does each response reveal? (Student 1, 2, 3)
- What feedback did you give each student? (Student 1, 2, 3)

**Activity 2: Interpretation: What Does Each Student’s Response Tell You?**

Using the same three student responses, jot down answers to the following questions for each student. Here the emphasis is on your interpretation of what you see.

Ask yourself these questions:

- How can you interpret the response from each student?
- What frame of reference is available to you to aid in that interpretation?
- What are the cues the student and the work give you?
- Using what you know about the connections that need to be made in order to understand ideas in particular domains appropriate to the content area, what does each student’s response tell you?
- How can your colleagues assist you in your interpretive work?

For each of the students you have chosen, jot down your interpretation based on each student’s response to your assignment:

- What is each student’s most essential misunderstanding or difficulty? (Student 1, 2, 3)
- How does each student’s response fit into what you already know about this student’s understandings and performance? Be specific. (Student 1, 2, 3)
- In two sentences for each student, describe what each learned from this assignment, judging from the responses. (Student 1, 2, 3)
- What does each student need to do next to move his or her understandings forward? (Student 1, 2, 3)

**Activity 3: How Does Each Student’s Response Illuminate Your Practice?**

In this activity, use what you have observed of each student’s work—and how you have interpreted those observations—to illuminate your goals and your strategies for reaching those goals. The focus of this analysis is the degree to which the student’s work shows that your goals for the assignment, and for your instruction prior to the assignment, were met.

- For each of the three students, write a brief but very specific diagnosis of the degree to which this student work shows that your goals for the assignment were met. (Student 1, 2, 3)
- Explain briefly how your instruction prior to the assignment was designed to prepare these students to complete this assignment successfully.
- For each of the three students, give your best diagnosis of the performance they have exhibited on this assignment. What parts of your instruction and/or preparation for this assignment do you think need reteaching or reinforcement for each student? (Student 1, 2, 3)
- Given each student’s performance on this assignment, what goals should you set for each of these students in the immediate future and, also, in the more distant future? (Student 1, 2, 3)
- What was your feedback strategy for each of these students? (Student 1, 2, 3)
- Why did you choose that strategy for these particular students? (Student 1, 2, 3)

**Activity 4: Reflection**

The final stage in analyzing student responses is to reflect on your practice. It is in this final stage that you ask yourself this: in light of what the student responses have told you about the students’ understandings, difficulties, misconceptions, and gaps, what might you do next (and/or differently or additionally) for these students? It is the habit of reflecting on decisions made in the midst of the teaching day that distinguishes the analytical teacher. And it is reflective practice that moves accomplished practitioners constantly forward; as you become your own observer and coach, you can recognize your accomplishments in making choices that advance student learning in effective ways. You can also encourage yourself to try yet another strategy when you are not satisfied with students’ progress.

The following questions are designed to help you reflect on your practice with the three students who have been the focus of these activities. However, these questions could be asked at the end of every teaching day about each class you teach. Once you begin to think in these terms, you need not write down the answers. You will find that the habit of reflection generates so many new ideas and strategies that you are hardly able to find the time to try them all.

Look back at the three student responses to your assignment. Briefly answer each of these questions about these students, their responses, and your own sense of your practice:

- What did each student learn from this assignment and the instruction that preceded it? Be specific. (Student 1, 2, 3)
- What did you learn from each student’s response? (Student 1, 2, 3)
- What would you do differently in light of the student responses to this assignment?
- In light of your analysis, reevaluate your feedback strategies. Would you alter them in any way? If so, how and why? If not, why not?
- Would you give the same assignment again? If so, would you prepare students for it differently? If so, how? If not, what assignment would you give in its place and why?

**Reviewing Your Work**

As you work on completing your portfolio entries, you should reflect on ways to improve your responses by asking yourself these questions:

- Does the entry, taken as a whole, accurately represent my teaching?
- Are there important aspects of my teaching that the entry does not capture?
- Could I select student work samples or video recording opportunities that would better fit the guidelines given in the Portfolio Instructions?
- Do I address each of the questions listed in the Written Commentary instructions?
- In what ways could I improve my responses to the questions in the entry directions?
- In what ways might my responses be incomplete or unclear to someone who understands my teaching only by the work I am submitting in this entry?
If you have trouble answering these questions, a colleague or mentor may be able to help you assess your work.

Organizing Your Portfolio Components

It is essential that all components you submit be organized and assembled as required by the National Board in the following areas:

- specification and formatting guidelines
- cover sheets and forms

The following general information on these two areas can be applied to all entries. Consult “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions” for complete and detailed instructions for your specific certificate area.

Specifications: Written Materials

Your Written Commentary, Reflective Summary, and all other typed or keyed portfolio materials are subject to the format requirements described below and will be submitted as Microsoft Word, Open Office or PDF files. When preparing written materials for your portfolio entries, consult the directions provided with each entry and follow the specifications detailed there. Also be sure to proofread your writing for spelling, mechanics, and usage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Written Material: Specifications and Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Format** | Type and double-space text. (Bulleted lists must also be double-spaced.) Do not use 24-point line spacing (see samples on page 49). Use 12-point Times New Roman font. You may use bold or italic to emphasize headings, words, and phrases in the body of your text. Do not use condensed or compressed fonts (see samples on page 49).

   *Exceptions:* You may use the system default font, size, and spacing on the Contextual Information Sheet, at the top of the Verification Form, in a response written directly on a Cover Sheet, in a unit overview (Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Music, Early and Middle Childhood/Music), and in an academic intervention plan (Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/School Counseling).

   Materials will be submitted electronically as a Microsoft Word, Open Office or PDF file. Page size must be 8.5” × 11” with 1” margins on all sides.

   Quoted material should be referenced in parentheses within the text. Footnotes are not required.

   Make sure materials are legible.

   Group materials as outlined in the “Electronic Submission at a Glance” for your certificate area. |
### Your Written Material: Specifications and Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labeling</th>
<th>Insert your candidate ID number in the upper right corner of all pages. Do not include your name.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anonymity guidelines</td>
<td>If materials include names or other identifying information, show the student’s first name only; delete students’ last names, teachers’ names, or any identifying information about the students’ families.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Page count                                    | The instructions for each entry specify page-count maximums for the materials that you type. You are not required to submit the maximum number of pages. However, do not submit more than the maximum page count for each component. Pages beyond the maximum will not be read or scored. (Cover sheets, Contextual Information Sheets, Classroom Layout Forms, and the like do not count toward these totals.)  

Note: Within descriptive text about each Written Commentary, suggested page lengths for each subsection are provided as guides; if you complete a subsection within a given Written Commentary using fewer pages than suggested, you can use the remaining page count to complete another section or sections within that same Written Commentary. |
**Line- and Character-Spacing Samples**

Use 12-point Times New Roman font. Double-space your text unless an exception is specified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use double spacing. Use normal character spacing.</th>
<th>Do not use 24-point spacing.</th>
<th>Do not use condensed character spacing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sample text sample text sample text sample text</td>
<td>sample text sample text sample text sample text</td>
<td>sample text sample text sample text sample text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>text sample text sample text sample text sample text</td>
<td>text sample text sample text sample text sample text</td>
<td>text sample text sample text</td>
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<tr>
<td>sample text sample text sample text sample text</td>
<td>sample text sample text sample text sample text</td>
<td>sample text sample text sample text sample text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Specifications: Video Recording**

Your video recordings are subject to the format requirements described below. When preparing to make your video recordings (or to select from those you’ve made), consult the directions provided with each entry and follow the specifications detailed there.

You must have the parents/guardians of all students you plan to include in the video recording complete Student Release Forms before you make any video recordings. You must have any adults who will appear in the video recording (for example, teacher’s aides, parents, student teachers, or colleagues) sign an Adult Release Form prior to recording.
## Your Video Recording: Specifications and Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Formats</strong></th>
<th>Your video recordings must adhere to the format specifications outlined in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions” and must be submitted as an flv, asf, qt, mov, mpg, mpeg, avi, wmv, mp4, or m4v file.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length</strong></td>
<td>The instructions for each entry specify the maximum number of minutes allowed for each video recording you submit. You are not required to submit the maximum except where specified. Do not submit more than the maximum number of minutes; if you submit a longer video recording, only the given maximum number of minutes will be viewed and scored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compression Settings</strong></td>
<td>The ePortfolio system has a 500 MB file size limit for each file that is uploaded. You must compress larger video files before submission. Please follow the instructions in the “Video Conversion &amp; Compression Guide”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Editing** | Make sure that your video recording is continuous and unedited, unless you are explicitly directed to do something different in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions.” **Caution: Stopping and restarting the camera or the sound is regarded as editing.**

*DO NOT* stop and start the camera, except as specified in the entry directions.

*DO NOT* turn off the microphone during recording.

*DO NOT* add graphics, titles, or special effects (e.g., fade in/out). |
| **Recording** | Use a camera angle that includes as many faces of the students in the class as possible. The video recording should show as much of the class as possible, but it is acceptable to focus on a particular student while he or she is talking, singing, or playing an instrument. **You must be shown in the video as well** unless otherwise stipulated in the directions for a given entry.

Make sure that sound quality is good enough that the assessor can understand all of what you say, sing, or play and most of what students say, sing, or play. |
| **Language** | Show conversations that occur in English unless you registered for World Languages (French or Spanish).

- If student work samples and video evidence include brief expressions or phrases in a language other than English and it is important that an assessor understand them, include brief explanations of these expressions or phrases in the Written Commentary that accompanies each portfolio response.

- If you are submitting student work samples or video evidence in a language other than English, you must provide a written English translation for the samples or evidence. |

See “Language Accommodations Policies” for more information.
Using Cover Sheets and Forms

All cover sheets and forms specific to your certificate area are provided in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions.” The cover sheets and forms are designed to help you do the following:

- ensure consistent organization of your entry(s)
- gather important information
- obtain permission from students, parents, and classroom assistants

TIP: Cover sheets and forms are provided as Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) files. You can write your responses on a printout or you can enter your responses electronically. To read, edit, and print these documents, you must install Adobe® Reader® software on your computer. You can download Adobe Reader for free by following the instructions provided on the Adobe Systems website (www.adobe.com).

NOTE: To save the forms that contain your electronic responses, you must own Adobe Acrobat software. For this reason, it is recommended that (1) you compose your responses before you enter them into the form fields and (2) you confirm that your responses are complete before you save each form. Note that fields provide a maximum number of characters, so you will not be able to exceed this limit.

Confirming Cover Sheets and Forms

You can confirm that you have all the appropriate cover sheets and forms—and that you are distributing them properly—using the following resources, all of which can be found in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions”:

- **Your Electronic Submission at a Glance.** This chart—specific to each certificate area—provides an overview of the contents of each entry.
- **“Cover Sheets” section.** At the end of each entry, you’ll find all cover sheets and forms required for that entry.
Managing Your Time

One of the biggest challenges you face in preparing portfolio entries may be the organization and management of your time. This topic describes tools designed to facilitate completion of these entries. You are not required to use the following features—all are optional but are provided to help you focus on the tasks at hand and to chart your progress:

- **The Activity Planner Worksheet**: This is a Microsoft® Word document that you can customize to chart out your time (located in Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions).

- **Electronic Submission at a Glance**: This is a master list of your portfolio submission deliverables and provides a detailed overview of all forms and deliverables you’ll need when you prepare your portfolio for submission.

- **Entry Tracking Form**: This document, described later in this section, provides a place to log the classes you have video-recorded, the unit you were teaching, and the student work you have chosen for each entry.

- **Communication Log**: This document provides one approach to tracking your contacts with various people outside the classroom concerning your students and their learning (located in Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions).
Entry Tracking Form

Before you begin developing your portfolio entries, plan a strategy for gathering your evidence of your accomplished teaching practice on different occasions of teaching. If you teach in a setting in which you have multiple classes, use more than one class as a source for evidence. Keep in mind that some certificate areas require that student work samples be from different students and that your final choice for your entries must come from different teaching units.

You can create a form similar to the form below to keep a record of which students, lessons, and units of instruction you elect to feature in Entries 1–3—each classroom-based entry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry Tracking Form</th>
<th>Units (must choose three)</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Students Featured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry (number and title)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase 3: Submit

When the submission window opens, you will be emailed a voucher code, or set of codes, that you will use to gain access to the ePortfolio system. Please review the *Guide to Electronic Submission* for detailed instruction on how to access the ePortfolio system.

**Formatting**

You will continue to develop evidence using the instructions found in “Part 2: Portfolio Entry Directions”; however, you will be required to convert everything to an electronic format in order to upload your entries to the ePortfolio system. For instructional documents and helpful tips for formatting your materials, visit the ePortfolio page on the National Board website (http://www.nbpts.org/eportfolio).

- **Forms.** You may submit your forms as PDF files. If you scan these pages as graphic files, you may insert them into word processing files for submission.

- **Written commentaries.** Written commentaries and reflective summaries are composed using word processing software. Submit your work as Microsoft Word, Open Office or PDF files.

- **Video Recordings*.** Your video recordings must be submitted as flv, asf, qt, mov, mpg, mpeg, avi, wmv, mp4, or m4v files.

- **Other types of evidence.** There are other evidence types that require you to submit artifacts and evidence together with cover sheets that provide additional detail. You may have gathered this evidence in both hardcopy and as electronic files. The evidence must be organized together with the appropriate cover sheets (where needed) and submitted as Microsoft Word, Open Office or PDF files.

*The ePortfolio system has a 500 MB file size limit for each file that is uploaded; however, there is no limit on the number of megabytes (MB) uploaded for an entire portfolio. You must compress large video files before submission.

**Organizing**

Prior to uploading your entries into the ePortfolio system, be sure that all your portfolio components are clearly labeled and organized into the appropriate files. Use the Electronic Submission at a Glance for your certificate area as your guide to assembling materials for each portfolio entry.

Reviewing the following general questions can remind you of where to look for mistakes, so before submitting your portfolio for scoring, be sure to ask yourself these questions:

- Have all requested materials been included?
- Have the proper forms and cover sheets been filled out and included?
- Are all materials grouped and ordered correctly, properly placed?

Better than finding mistakes is to avoid them altogether. The following reminders can help.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Review Guideline</th>
<th>IMPORTANT!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student work samples</td>
<td>In each Written Commentary, confirm that student work samples are the samples that that lesson elicited. Use the appropriate cover sheets and mark the student work samples with student identifiers (e.g., “Student A,” “Student B”). Omit student last names.</td>
<td>If you include the wrong Written Commentary with your student work samples, that Written Commentary will be used to score your entry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Video recordings                 | Review the content of your video recordings:  
**Written description:** Verify that the lesson you described in the Written Commentary is the same lesson that you included in your video evidence. | If you include the wrong Written Commentary with a video entry, that Written Commentary will be used to score your entry.  
A video recording that appears to have been edited renders the entire entry unscorable. |
| Completeness of entry            | **Missing components:** It is your responsibility to make sure that your portfolio entry materials are complete when they are submitted. You will not be notified of any missing critical components.  
**Electronic Submission at a Glance:** This checklist details the required submissions for your certificate area and can help you check the completeness of your submission.  
**Extraneous material:** Do not include materials that are not required as part of an entry as this may impede the assessors’ ability to identify your actual entry submission. | You will not receive a score for any entry that is missing in its entirety or lacking a critical component (e.g., a Written Commentary, video recording, or student work sample).  
You will not be able to add to or edit an entry after it has been submitted for scoring.  
Candidates with incomplete score profiles will not achieve National Board Certification. |
| Important forms                  | Make sure you have completed and *retained* all appropriate forms:  
**Student and Adult Release forms**—which document that anyone who appears or is heard in a video recording or seen in a photograph or any student whose work is part of your student work samples has given their permission for use of their image and/or work. Keep these completed release forms—copies and originals—with your records. | It is your responsibility to keep all release forms on file in the event a question arises regarding these permissions. In addition, the National Board may request a copy of these forms as documentation for your entry. Do *not* submit release forms with your portfolio. |
| English translation              | If you are submitting student work or video evidence in a language other than English, you must provide a written English translation for that evidence.  
The translation must include your candidate ID number, the entry title, and any necessary student identifiers (but do *not* include students’ names).  
Video translations will be submitted in the Written Commentary file and Student Work translations will be submitted in the Student Work file. | Failure to provide a translation or to properly label your submission will mean that your response will not be scored.  
Note that the pages of your translation do not count toward your page totals. |
Uploading and Submitting

After formatting and organizing materials for your portfolio entries, you will need to upload and submit your portfolio components to the ePortfolio system. Refer to the *Guide to Electronic Submission* for step-by-step instruction on uploading and submitting your entry(s) for scoring.

It is your responsibility to carefully review your uploaded portfolio materials prior to submitting them for scoring. Please read the following section—“Avoiding the 4 Most Common Submission Errors”—to avoid problems and delays in scoring your submission.
Avoiding the 4 Most Common Submission Errors

Review your submission carefully before submitting it for scoring. Read the following chart to avoid the 4 most common submission errors that can make your entry unscorable. Receiving an NS for your submission will result in retake fees and a delay of your consideration for certification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions to Review Before Submitting Your Portfolio Entries</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are your entries complete and formatted correctly?</td>
<td>Material missing from your submission will cause it to be unscorable. This includes Written Commentary, student materials, video recording, documentation, and so on. Avoid this error by using the Electronic Submission at a Glance to verify the contents of each entry prior to uploading your files to the ePortfolio system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you play back your video to test the recording quality?</td>
<td>After uploading your video file to the ePortfolio system, and before submitting for scoring, play the video recording to ensure the picture and sound are clear and to verify that the video is the correct video for the entry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your video recording continuous and unedited?</td>
<td>To be eligible for submission, video recordings must be continuous and unedited and meet the specified time requirements. If the video recording appears to have been edited, the entire entry will not be scored. Do not edit the video in any way, including eliminating unwanted segments, adding footage, creating fade-ins and fade-outs, adding audio-recorded material from a device other than the video recorder, and “blurring” an image to conceal a face or nametag. Do not stop and restart the camera or the sound—this is classified as an edit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your classroom meet the age and content requirements for the certificate area?</td>
<td>At least 51% of the students in the class or classes that you use to complete your portfolio entries must be within the stated age range for the certificate area during the period in which you collect evidence for your portfolio. Failure to use an appropriate class will make your entry unscorable. If possible, use different classes when completing the classroom-based entries. However, if you have access to only one class that meets the age and content requirements for the certificate area, use a single class for all the classroom-based portfolio entries.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>