



TRY IT OUT

COMPANION GUIDE

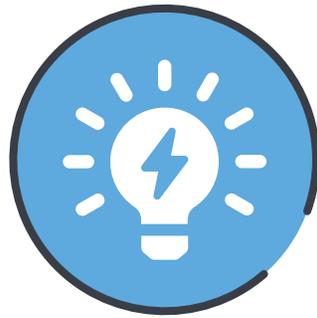


MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION



TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

The MDE does not officially endorse any specific technology standards or models of teaching with technology. However, the resources provided within this companion guide are made available to assist educators and school and district leaders with the integration of technology into classrooms, schools, and school districts. Local schools have discretion over which technology partners and products are used in their districts. For legal advice regarding technology services, please contact your local school board attorney.



ACTIVE LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT

1

Create, publish, and share digital content to communicate ideas or student understanding to a variety of audiences.

2

Lead students in the creation of classroom rules and expectations for digital collaboration.

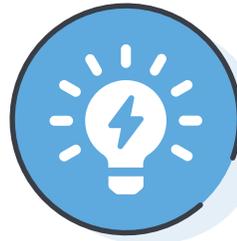
3

Use digital portfolios to showcase open-ended student activities and/or explore student interests.

4

Provide one-on-one conferencing in which the teacher offers individual guidance and support as students make choices about their learning.

TRY IT OUT



1

Create, publish, and share digital content to communicate ideas or student understanding to a variety of audiences.

Work in the classroom is often produced solely for the teacher. Papers and projects are handed in, graded, and returned to the student without ever having made an impact on the real-world. Learners become more engaged and motivated when they are producing and sharing products that will be used or experienced by an authentic audience, such as peers, experts, or community members who truly care about the work. By connecting outside the classroom walls, students develop important skills as they learn to effectively communicate ideas to diverse audiences. There are many ways that educators can provide opportunities for students to engage with authentic audiences:



IDENTIFY POTENTIAL AUDIENCES

Reflect on the curriculum standards and objectives that will be addressed during this learning experience and identify any relevant audiences who might be connected to these standards in some way. As you brainstorm, try to identify audiences who would truly care about student work. Consider:

- Experts or professionals in related career fields
- Individuals or groups who would benefit from this knowledge
- Members of the community, relevant stakeholders, and families
- Local news stations and/or newspapers
- Local politicians
- Related nonprofit organizations or cultural institutions
- Older or younger students in the same school building
- Other classrooms (within the school, district, or beyond!) who are engaging in similar learning activities
- Special interest networks, clubs, and groups, both in-person and through online / social media channels

IDENTIFY

DIGITAL TOOLS

A variety of tools are available to create, publish, and share digital content with audiences. Many of these tools will automatically generate a link that allows audiences to access the content, which streamlines the process of publishing and sharing. Decide which tool(s) students will utilize for this learning experience. Possibilities include:

- **EduBlogs**
- **Microsoft Sway**
- **Google Sites**
- **Spotify for Podcasters**
(formerly Anchor)
- **Canva**
- **Adobe Express**
- **Flip**
- **Seesaw**
- **Padlet**
- **Wakelet**

When selecting digital tools, don't forget to consider the following:



Choice

Consider offering a choice board that includes multiple tool options, especially for older students who have more experience with creating and sharing their work publicly (see Standards Aligned Content and Tools: Try it Out Activity 2). Making decisions about which form of media will best enable them to communicate thoughts and ideas to the intended audience is a critical skill for students to develop. Depending on the age and readiness of students, they may require additional support as they build this skill.



Logistics

Determine how and when students will share and discuss their work with your selected audience. As you plan, work to integrate opportunities for two-way interaction so students know that the audience is invested in their work. For example, students might share and discuss their work during a synchronous video call, the audience might use digital tools to leave comments on student work, or they could complete a digital form to share feedback with students after viewing. You might consider preparing the audience to provide meaningful feedback by sharing information about the intended learning objectives or rubrics/checklists outlining learning targets.



Student Safety and Privacy

Any time student work is shared publicly, several important considerations should remain top priority. First, ensure that any tools students are using to create, publish, and share are approved by the district and that permission has been obtained from all parents/guardians. When publishing student work in a digital space, ensure you are compliant with FERPA requirements and follow best practices to protect student privacy. Engage in ongoing discussions with students to address rules and expectations for digital citizenship (see Digital Citizenship: Try it out Activity 1), online collaboration and communication (see Active Learning and Engagement: Try it Out Activity 2), and safety in a virtual space. As young students develop these skills, they may benefit from teacher-led opportunities to publish and share to an authentic audience. These experiences provide valuable modeling from the teacher and immediate feedback while students practice these skills.

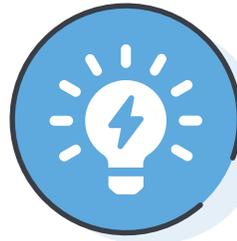
RESOURCES



- **Value of authentic audiences**
- **Creating authentic audiences for student work**
- **Authentic audiences** (Digital Promise)
- **Creating an authentic audience for student work**
- **Publishing opportunities for students** (Common Sense Media)



TRY IT OUT



2

Lead students in the creation of classroom rules and expectations for digital collaboration.

Establishing clearly identified rules and expectations in the classroom supports effective student learning and interactions. When students are involved in this process, it provides a sense of ownership and responsibility as learners draw connections between their experiences and expectations within the classroom. Just as educators teach students how to work together effectively in face-to-face settings, students should also be aware of rules and expectations for digital collaboration.

| DISCUSS

To lead students in the creation of classroom rules and expectations for digital collaboration, encourage your class to engage in a discussion to identify what collaboration means in a digital space:

- What is collaboration?
- What are the different ways we can collaborate digitally?
- How can I collaborate in a respectful way?
- What do I value about collaboration?
- How does digital collaboration connect to being a good digital citizen?
- Why is it important for us to collaborate effectively?

| BRAINSTORM

Once your class has determined what digital collaboration is, it is important to connect those definitions with rules and expectations. Provide guidelines for establishing effective rules in the classroom, ensuring that rules are specific, positive, and adaptable. Lead your students in a discussion as they generate a list of rules and

expectations about digital collaboration, placing these in a shared space. Begin refining ideas from the list, combining similar statements or removing rules that don't seem to apply. Each rule should be written in a positive phrase, demonstrating what the students will or should do when collaborating digitally. After students have completed their rules, ensure that everyone agrees that it contains a reasonable number of rules, depending on the age and readiness of your students. (Remember, fewer clear and concise rules are more effective than a long list!) If needed, continue to refine the list to a manageable length.

Categories you might address within your rules and expectations for digital collaboration include:

-  Demonstrating respect, including tone, timeliness, and vocabulary
-  Sharing knowledge, resources, or opinions
-  Providing feedback
-  Collaboration skills including recognizing other perspectives, active listening, and conflict resolution

| **CREATE & SHARE**

After your class has created their list, it is time to create a safe space to house the class rules and expectations for digital collaboration. Your students may consider adding these rules to the class digital citizenship contract or students may choose to create a poster to display in the class at all times. You may also consider sharing copies of the digital collaboration rules with each student to keep with them. Once the rules have been created in the decided space, allow students to review and sign their name, demonstrating their agreement to collaborate digitally following the expectations created by the class.

| **EXPLORE & APPLY**

There are a variety of ways students can collaborate digitally, making it important to provide them with opportunities to practice the rules and expectations they have co-created. As new circumstances arise with digital collaboration, reconvene with the class to review changes or amendments that should be made to the rules and expectations. Students should participate in individual reflection, after engaging in digital collaboration, evaluating how well they met expectations.

| CONSIDERATIONS

The age and readiness of students will impact the way they collaborate digitally. Consider providing younger students with a framework to guide digital collaboration, such as a “**Glow and Grow**” template for feedback or **sentence starters** to support commenting. Young students may also benefit from frequent review of the rules and expectations each time they are collaborating digitally. Older students could utilize **rubrics** for effective collaboration to inspire and guide their interactions in the virtual space.

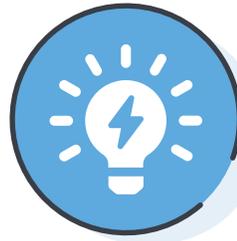
RESOURCES



- [PBL Works Collaboration Rubric](#)
- [Successful Collaborations - The Collaboration Rubric](#)
- [Rubric for Cooperative and Collaborative Learning](#)
- [Create Effective Class Rules Using Tips from Launch Your Classroom!](#)
- [20 Collaborative Tools for Your Classroom That Are NOT Google](#)



TRY IT OUT



3

Use digital portfolios to showcase open-ended student activities and/or explore student interests.

GET READY

DEFINING THE PRACTICE

Digital portfolios are a collection of student work that can be used to demonstrate progress toward mastery of content over time. They also provide opportunities for students to use digital tools for self-expression. Throughout the school year, students can add their work to capture their learning within one space. Since these portfolios are housed in a digital space, they can include a variety of media types to communicate ideas, including pictures, videos, audio recordings, and visual creations. Portfolios may be revisited by students, teachers, families, and other relevant audiences to reflect on and share student progress.

GET SET

UNDERSTANDING THE WHY

Student creation of digital portfolios is an excellent strategy to promote learner agency in the classroom and to encourage students to take an active role in the learning process. Students take responsibility for their own learning as they are tasked with collecting, organizing, and sharing evidence of their accomplishments, strengths, interests, and areas for growth. Through this process, students have meaningful opportunities to reflect and think critically about their own progress toward academic goals. The flexible nature of digital portfolios also allows students to make choices about how to demonstrate their learning, beyond traditional tests and assessments. The teacher also benefits, as the portfolio becomes a rich resource to gauge student understanding and to easily communicate progress with families.



IMPLEMENTING IN THE CLASSROOM

Digital portfolios provide students with the opportunity to share their knowledge while also as a method of self-expression and creativity. With portfolios, students have the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding, preferences, and interests in connection to the content they are exploring in the classroom. To effectively implement the use of digital portfolios in your classroom, follow these steps:

1 DEFINE YOUR PURPOSE

Identify the purpose of digital portfolios in your classroom by considering how you hope students will use them to support their learning. The purpose will determine the structure of your portfolio and what type of content students include. Possibilities might include any combination of the following suggestions:

- ▶ **Assessment:** Digital portfolios can include a variety of artifacts, such as assignments, assessments, multimedia projects, reflections, and more, in order to evaluate student progress and document mastery of learning objectives.
- ▶ **Showcase Accomplishments or Interests:** Digital portfolios can be used to showcase specific achievements and areas of interests, such as growth in a particular standard, completion of a project, or documenting the process for an open-ended activity.
- ▶ **Student-Led Conferences:** Digital portfolios might be created in order for students to share their learning and progress with parents or guardians during student-led conferences.
- ▶ **Reflection:** Digital portfolios can serve as a tool to facilitate ongoing reflection in the classroom, providing a space for students to explore their learning challenges and successes over time.
- ▶ **Personalized Learning:** Digital portfolios can document a students' individual learning path as they work toward mastery of learning objectives.

2 PICK A PLATFORM

Select a digital platform to house each students' portfolio. When making a decision, be sure to consider important factors such as features of the tool, capabilities of sharing with an outside audience, student age and readiness, school policies, and available district-provided tools. The chosen platform should support your defined purpose.

Some suggestions include:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| ▶ Google Sites | ▶ Seesaw | ▶ Canva | ▶ Adobe Express |
| ▶ Microsoft Sway | ▶ Book Creator | ▶ EduBlogs | ▶ Wakelet |
| | ▶ Class Dojo | ▶ Padlet | |

3

ESTABLISH THE STRUCTURE AND EXPECTATIONS

Next, design a clear structure and outline expectations to support the development of digital portfolios. Determine what guidelines you will provide as students create and maintain their portfolios. Key decisions to consider include:

- ▶ **Organization:** Will specific sections or pages will be included in each student's portfolio?
- ▶ **Content:** What artifacts will be included in the portfolio? Are there requirements that all students must include, or will students have the flexibility to decide?
- ▶ **Timeline:** How often will students be expected to add to their portfolio?
- ▶ **Creative Process:** What will the overall portfolio creation process look like? Will it be more student-directed, or teacher-led?
- ▶ **Assessment:** How will portfolios be assessed? Who will be doing the evaluations?
- ▶ **Audience:** With whom will portfolios be shared? When will this sharing take place?

4

CREATE AND SHARE

Introduce the selected platform, guidelines, and expectations for digital portfolios to students. You may find it helpful to build understanding by providing examples of digital portfolios with students. Students might be invited to suggest ideas for how their portfolios can be used and shared. As students create their portfolios over time, provide ongoing support through one-on-one conferences (see Active Learning & Engagement: Try it Out Activity 4) and specific feedback (see Formative Assessment & Feedback: Try it Out Activity 4) to guide improvement. Increase engagement and motivation in the portfolio creation process by encouraging students to share their portfolios with authentic audiences (see Active Learning & Engagement: Try it Out Activity 1).

GRADE BAND CONSIDERATIONS

PreK - 2nd Grade

When using digital portfolios with younger students, support independence by utilizing tools with streamlined design and features. Seesaw and Class Dojo are intuitive for younger learners, while still providing the freedom to select multiple media types for their artifacts, such as drawings, photos, audio response, or videos. You may also require approvals before posts go live, allowing for students to receive feedback during the creation process as they learn how to build a digital portfolio.

3rd - 5th Grade

3rd-5th grade students may be given more flexibility and student agency within the digital portfolio creation process by beginning to make decisions about the appearance, organization, and content within their portfolios. Tools such as Book Creator provide students with more options in the overall design, in addition to allowing a variety of media, including text, images, audio recordings, and videos. You may require specific elements to be included in the portfolio, but provide students with the opportunity to also share artifacts that they feel demonstrate their learning and interests.

Middle School

Older students should use their digital portfolio to take an active role in their learning. Explore how digital portfolios might be used as a tool for students to understand themselves as learners so they are better able to advocate for their needs and preferences. Beginning in middle school, many students work with multiple teachers for each content area. As students work with different teachers, they can use digital portfolios as a tool to communicate their strengths, interests, and areas of growth in the classroom. Students can be given more freedom to represent their learning by making choices about the content included in their portfolio.

High School

As high school students prepare for college and career readiness, consider how digital portfolios can be integrated as part of the process. Portfolios can be utilized to showcase student skills, achievements, and learning experiences as they relate to potential future careers. Well-developed portfolios can also serve as excellent artifacts in the college application process, highlighting evidence of relevant projects, community service, internships, and more.

RESOURCES

- [3 Tools for Creating Digital Portfolios](#)
- [5 Ways That Digital Portfolios Can Expand Learning Opportunities](#)
- [Tools for Creating Digital Student Portfolios](#)
- [5 Reasons To Use Digital Portfolios In Your Classroom](#)
- [Cool Tools for School: Digital Notebooks and Portfolios for Students](#)
- [How to Create Powerful Student ePortfolios with Google Sites](#)
- Example: [Physics Portfolio](#)
- Example: [Book Creator Example Digital Portfolio](#)
- Templates: [Canva Education Portfolios](#)



TRY IT OUT



4

Provide one-on-one conferencing in which the teacher offers individual guidance and support as students make choices about their learning.

GET READY

DEFINING THE PRACTICE

As educators, we know that students need guidance from their teachers. One-on-one conferencing is a dedicated time for teachers to offer individualized support as students make choices about their learning by voicing their needs, preferences, and interests. The conversations that take place within conferences provide important opportunities for reflection, effective feedback, goal setting, and connection.

GET SET

UNDERSTANDING THE WHY

One-on-one conferences are at the heart of active learning and engagement. If we want students to utilize their agency to become actively involved in the learning process, we must give them time and support to do so. Implementing one-on-one conferencing in the classroom supports student agency in many ways:

- Through the back-and-forth dialogue within a conference, students have opportunities to make choices about how they will learn content and demonstrate their understanding.
- Students can engage in on-the-spot formative assessment paired with meaningful feedback from their teacher during one-on-one conferences.
- Students become more aware of their own learning needs as they reflect on data and progress during conferences.
- Meaningful conversations with a teacher can lead to deeper critical thinking, collaboration, and communication.
- One-on-one time builds authentic relationships, allowing teachers to connect to student's individual interests and more effectively meet their learning needs.

GO

IMPLEMENTING IN THE CLASSROOM

In order to successfully implement one-on-one conferences, teachers should first establish a plan for individual conferences within their classroom. Here are some key considerations to guide planning:

1 START WITH YOUR WHY

Reflect on your purpose for one-on-one conferences. We want students to become active and engaged drivers of their learning, which requires them to recognize: (1) Which learning objectives they have already mastered, (2) Which learning objectives they have not yet mastered, (3) What steps they can take to reach mastery, (4) What resources and supports are available to them as they learn, and (5) How they can demonstrate their understanding.

One-on-one conferences can be structured to address these key areas. During conferences students and teacher might:

- ▶ Set learning goals.
- ▶ Reflect on progress toward goals and/or determine if mastery has been achieved.
- ▶ Conduct formative check-ins to determine progress.
- ▶ Provide individual guidance, scaffolding, support, and/or recommendations to students.
- ▶ Discuss available supports and resources, including curated digital media, and create a plan for how and when the student will use those resources.
- ▶ Engage in conversation surrounding how students will demonstrate mastery of an objective, including selecting appropriate forms of media and digital tools to communicate their understanding.



2

PLAN THE LOGISTICS

Decide **HOW MANY** conferences will happen each day or week by calculating how many students are in your class(es) and how often you would like to meet with them.

Based on how many conferences you plan to hold each day or week, determine **WHEN** they will take place. Look for times in your schedule when students are working independently or in small groups so you are free to meet with students. Remember that conferences do not have to be long. Meaningful conversations can take place in even just five minutes spent with each student individually.

Determine **WHERE** you will have the conferences within your classroom. Try to find a quiet and private area of the classroom that still allows you to appropriately monitor the class.

Create a schedule to identify **WHO** you will meet with during each conference block. Consider making this schedule available to students by posting it in the classroom or loading it into your online Learning Management System.

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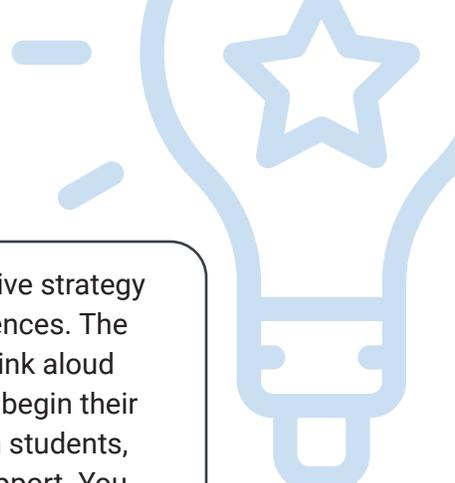
PREPARE STUDENTS

Just like any other classroom expectation or routine, conferencing is a skill that must be taught. First, ensure students understand the purpose of conferences. This one-on-one time is not a punishment! Rather, it is a time for students to make choices about their learning. Depending on the age and readiness of your students, you might put helpful supports into place, such as guiding questions, sentence stems, and modeling of effective discussion and reflection during a conference.

GRADE BAND CONSIDERATIONS

PreK - 2nd Grade

In lower elementary grades, Morning Meetings are an ideal space for whole-group discussions surrounding conferencing. During this time, the teacher can model behaviors that support effective conferencing, and students can turn and talk to practice these skills with a partner. One-on-one conferences can take place during centers or station rotations that are frequently utilized in elementary classrooms. To see a detailed example of how one teacher hosts reading conferences for primary students, read this blog post: [How to Conduct Individual Reading Conferences in K-2](#) from Learning at the Primary Pond.



3rd - 5th Grade

In 3rd-5th grade classrooms, modeling during mini-lessons is an effective strategy to introduce expectations to guide goal-setting and one-on-one conferences. The teacher may demonstrate how they assess lesson expectations and think aloud with their class in the construction of an appropriate goal. As students begin their independent work, teachers may take the time to meet individually with students, assessing where they are in their progress and where learners need support. You can see an example of effective student conferencing in 3rd and 5th grade English Language Arts by reviewing this video from Annenberg Learner: [Program 10: Teacher-Student Conferences](#).

Middle School

Secondary educators most often teach departmentalized classes, meaning they face the challenge of managing one-on-one conferences for more students. In order to successfully facilitate conferences with a larger student caseload, consider following the scheduling recommendations described by Crystal Ceresani in her blog post, [How to Prioritize One-on-One Conferences with Middle School Students](#). For one-on-one conferences to take place, it is also important to build a culture of independent work in your classroom. Establish and practice rules, expectations, and procedures so students are self-sufficient and able to independently complete work, even while you meet with other learners. It can feel more manageable to begin the process by connecting initial conferences to a specific assignment or skill. Students can reflect on their strengths, areas for growth, and potential goals beforehand, then use their reflections to guide the conference discussion.

High School

Older students are largely capable of making decisions regarding one-on-one conferences, including when they are needed and what purpose these conferences serve. Consider introducing the four conference types found in this article by John Spencer, [The Power of Student Conferencing](#), to provide students with the language to identify and describe their needs. Establish a system for requesting conferences, such as having students submit a paper or digital form to communicate a timeline and purpose for the meeting. Provide a chart or rubric to students so they may review their role, the teacher's role, and other expectations for the conference type they have selected prior to ensure the purpose of the conversation is met.

RESOURCES

- Example: **Coaching Conversation Framework** (Creating a similar framework can help educators clarify the purpose and structure of one-on-one conferences in their classroom, and can serve as a useful tool in building student understanding surrounding conferences.)
- Blog: **John Spencer: The Power of Student Conferencing**
- Handout: **Teacher's Guide to One-on-One Conferences**
- Video: **Teacher-Student Conferences at Lovett**
- Webinar: **One-on-One Conferencing with Students**

