

Reading Specialist, K–12

Exit Portfolio Guidelines



The Reading Specialist, K-12 certification program at Cabrini College is designed to enable students to deepen their understanding of the dynamics of teaching/assessing and leading initiatives in literacy in diverse school settings. Experiences throughout the program support continued growth and development within the field.

The Exit Portfolio will serve to highlight the unique strengths that Reading Specialists bring to classrooms and schools. Students in Cabrini College's Reading Specialist, K-12 certification program develop a portfolio of texts to document personal and professional growth. Originally organized in binders, portfolios are now through the 'iwebfolio' platform.

The Exit Portfolio will contain the following:

- Copies of Clearances
 - FBI Criminal History Clearance
 - PA Child Abuse History Clearance
 - PA Criminal Record
- Documentation of having passed the specialty-area Praxis examination in Reading
- Reading Specialist Praxis Scores
- TIMS cover sheet
- Philosophy of Education / Reflective Essay
- Professional Reading Log
- Sample of Academic Writing
- Two Curricular Adaptations (one each in assessment, pedagogy)
- Professional Development Protocol
- Collaborative Review of Practice
- Recap 1 – Analysis of Literate Environment
- Recap 2 – Literacy Profile
- Recap 3 – Diagnostic Profile

Philosophy of Education/Reflective Essay

Students are challenged to refine their philosophical stances regarding literacy practices, assessment, and learning communities by engaging in reflective practice. These values, assumptions, and processes are critical to master practitioners, as they impact greatly upon practice by signaling “what to do, how to do it, and why it needs to be done.”

To prepare for writing this important document, students should consider jotting down several key points that provide the essence of their thinking regarding the teaching/learning processes, literacy assessment, curricular design, literate and developmental classroom environments, and the role of community in literacy learning.

Each section should explore aspects of personal and professional growth, be one-to-two pages, typed and double-spaced, and have a clear heading. The introduction should provide a brief description of professional experience and current work context. The conclusion should provide discussion of future goals as a literacy educator and leader.

Professional Reading Log

Reading broadly within the field lies at the heart of what literacy professionals do on a regular basis. Master practitioners engage, interact, ask questions, inquire inwardly, seek answers from colleagues or others known in the field for their wisdom, try new approaches, and then reflect on action.

This ongoing professional engagement and the development of healthy dispositions towards it keep master practitioners fresh, current, and capable of serving as an invaluable resource to colleagues.

Logs should provide complete and accurate citations, as well as two-paragraph annotations from a minimum of 15 books and five literacy-related periodicals. Relate the ideas presented in the texts to personal theory and practice. Choose professional readings, not books for children or young adult readers.

Sample of Academic Writing

To complete this section, select a sample of academic prose written within coursework. It should address an issue of personal importance or review a body of theory that has impacted upon personal practice. Cite theoretical and pedagogical references within the text and compiled fully and accurately in an attached bibliography.

As with any selection of academic prose, the text should conform to all conventions and standards of public writing, be direct and concise, and have a clear internal organizational structure.

Ongoing Curricular Adaptations

Designed to provide an opportunity for certification candidates to document two significant changes/innovations they have made in their teaching and assessment procedures across their involvement in the program, this narrative should contain a strong sense of voice, intent, and relationship to Chapter 4 Academic Standards.

Reflective practice, inquiry, and ability to discern the need for change and continual revision in implementation should be evident. Be sure to include a reflective narrative discussing curricular adaptations, in addition to any artifacts or examples of student work.

Professional Development Protocol

Reading Specialists and School Leaders might plan staff development, lead professional book studies, coach colleagues in the use of a new teaching/assessment protocol, or mentor a new teacher. Describe an example of designing and leading professional development and provide copies of the documents created to support the initiative (e.g., brochure, handouts, digital support, etc.).

The protocol should address not only how the needs of diverse students in inclusive settings might be met through the professional development designed, but also the concerns of teachers as they work towards implementation of new literacy routines/assessments. In addition to copies of relevant documents, include a reflective narrative; for example, a PowerPoint presentation created for staff development along with a written discussion of how and why it was created.

Collaborative Review of Practice

The Collaborative Review of Practice serves as documentation of engagement in the field as a practitioner of theory-based best practices, both in the literacy learning/assessment processes and leadership/coaching processes.

Documentation will include strong evidence of thoughtful planning, execution (though feedback from colleagues and mentors), and reflective practice. Specific directions for these collaborative reviews are provided with the syllabi for individual courses. Choose at least two of these reviews for inclusion.

Recap 1: Analysis of Literate Environment

As part of the signature assignment for EDG 522, Creating a Community of Readers, students must document having spent a minimum of five hours observing a classroom setting, interviewing the classroom teacher, and then analyzing the physical, affective, and social attributes that provide for the literacy needs of its participants. Parameters of the text created for this assignment are discussed fully by course instructors.

Recap 2: Literacy Profile

While enrolled in EDG 541, Instructional Strategies for Teaching Reading, students craft a descriptive profile of the child engaged during the Literacy Partnership. The profile will include, but not be limited to, the child's background, range of approaches/activities incorporated in sessions, as well as a description of his/her ability to decode and comprehend texts of increasing complexity, vocabulary development, language fluency and use, writing, and spelling. More details are provided by the course instructor.

Recap 3: Diagnostic Profile

During matriculation into EDG 542, Learners at Risk, students submit a descriptive profile of the assessment procedures utilized to assess the literacy strengths and vulnerabilities of a child worked with during a Diagnostic Partnership.

The profile will include, but not be limited to, the child's background, range of assessments utilized, functional reading levels established, and a description of the child's decoding, comprehension, writing, and spelling. More information about this assignment is provided during the course experience.

Evaluation

It is strongly suggested that students keep the documents they will need to complete their exit portfolios in organized folders on a computer, flash drive, in cloud storage, or on an external hard drive throughout participation in the Reading Specialist Program. Students receive access to an e-portfolio system with storage space.

A template has been created, and students receive directions to help upload documents. The rubric below will be used to evaluate the work. Be sure to use the rubric for self-assessment while completing each component of the portfolio.

Essential Documents

Included in portfolio?

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • TIMS | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Clearances | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Reading Specialist Praxis Scores | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

Rubric

Exemplary

7

6

5

Developing

4

Needs Improvement

3

2

1

Philosophy of Education

Clear, value-driven credo of one's beliefs regarding: teaching/learning processes, assessment, curricular design, classroom environments, and role of community in literacy learning

Ambiguous statement of one's beliefs regarding: teaching/learning processes, assessment, curricular design, classroom environments, and role of community in literacy learning.

Reading Log

Minimum of 15 books read and 5 literacy-based journals sampled; topics include at least 8 areas within literacy domain; references cited fully and accurately; annotations written to describe how texts read have influenced one's practice.

Fewer than 15 books read and 5 literacy-based journals sampled fewer than 8 topics within literacy domain; references cited inaccurately or incompletely; annotations lacking clarity, detail or conviction.

Academic Writing

Citations noted accurately in text; references fully cited in bibliography; strong internal organization; proficiency with standard English and conventions of public writing; written cogently and with clarity.

Citations noted incorrectly in text; references cited incompletely in bibliography; weak internal organization and voice; lack of proficiency with standard English and conventions of public writing; written without precision.

Curricular Adaptations

Strong evidence that newly-acquired pedagogical and assessment procedures have been mastered; documentation of reflective practice and inquiry; explicit connections to Academic Standards.

Weak sense of history and evolution beyond previous literacy engagement; limited authentic protocols to support work; minimal evidence of increasing mastery of new literacies and reflective practice.

Professional Development Protocol

Strong sense of history and evolution beyond previous literacy engagement; authentic protocols provided; strong evidence of increasing mastery of new literacies and reflective practice.

Text reflects limited incorporation of current research and theory; conventions used inconsistently and/or inappropriately; limited application for classroom life and other learning context; weak sense of voice and commitment to literacy; less than professional appearance.

Collaborative Review of Practice

The work serves to document the candidates' engagement in the field as a practitioner of theory-based best practices, both in the literacy learning / assessment processes and leadership/coaching processes.

Documentation includes strong evidence of thoughtful planning, execution (though feedback from colleagues and mentors), as well as reflective practice. Documentation does not include adequate evidence of thoughtful planning and execution tempered by feedback from colleagues and mentors nor does it provide adequate reflection upon practice.

Rubric

Exemplary

7

6

5

Developing

4

Needs Improvement

3

2

1

Recap 1

Completed following EDG 522 Creating a Community of Readers, the work documents having spent a minimum of five hours observing a classroom setting, interviewing the classroom teacher, then analyzing the physical, affective, and social attributes that provide for the literacy needs of its participants. Writing is clear and concise and is free of grammatical and mechanical errors.

Documentation of work is less than complete. The writing is fraught with mechanical and or grammatical errors.

Recap 2

Completed while enrolled in EDG 541, Instructional Strategies for Teaching Reading, the work submitted is a well-crafted descriptive profile of the child with whom you engaged during your Literacy Partnership. Its content includes the child's background, range of approaches/activities incorporated in one's sessions, as well as a description of his/her ability

The descriptive profile is less than complete, the writing is not clear, lacks sufficient supporting detail and contains grammatical and or mechanical errors.

The descriptive profile is less than complete, the writing is not clear, lacks sufficient supporting detail and contains grammatical and or mechanical errors to decode and comprehend texts of increasing complexity, vocabulary development, language fluency and use, writing, and spelling. The writing is clear and compelling and free of grammatical and mechanical errors.

Recap 3

Completed during EDG 542 Learners at Risk, this work consists of a detailed, descriptive profile of the assessment procedures utilized to assess the literacy strengths and vulnerabilities of the child with whom you worked during your Diagnostic Partnership.

The work submitted lacks sufficient detail and does not include a detailed account of assessment procedures, or the child's strengths and vulnerabilities as revealed throughout the Diagnostic Partnership.

Its contents include the child's background, range of assessments utilized, functional reading levels established, and a description of the child's decoding, comprehension, writing, and spelling.

The description of the child's decoding, comprehension writing, and spelling is incomplete. The writing contains mechanical and or grammatical errors.

The writing is detailed and compelling and is free of grammatical and mechanical errors.

Review

After uploading all the documents to an Exit Portfolio, students should email cabriniexitportfolio@gmail.com. Be sure to include name and student ID in the subject line and indicate Cabrini email address in the message.

Full-time faculty will carefully review each component of the work using the rubric as outlined and notify the student when the review is complete, emailing a completed rubric.

Any section that receives a score below 3 on the preceding rubric must be rewritten before the portfolio can be approved.

Timeline

Advisors suggest that students submit Exit Portfolios within a month after completion of last class.

- For certificates needed by Sept. 1, submit portfolio for review by July 1.
- For certificates needed by Jan. 1, submit portfolio for review by Nov. 1.

For more information, please contact:

- Marty B. Waring-Chaffee, Ph.D., (mbw722@cabrini.edu, 610-902-8509)
- Susan Jacques Pierson, Ph.D., (sr722@cabrini.edu, 610-902-8325)