

Digital Portfolios Made Easy

Introduction

Digital Portfolios Made Easy (DPME) is a portfolio system developed to provide a set of templates for presenting digital portfolios that are complete yet simple.

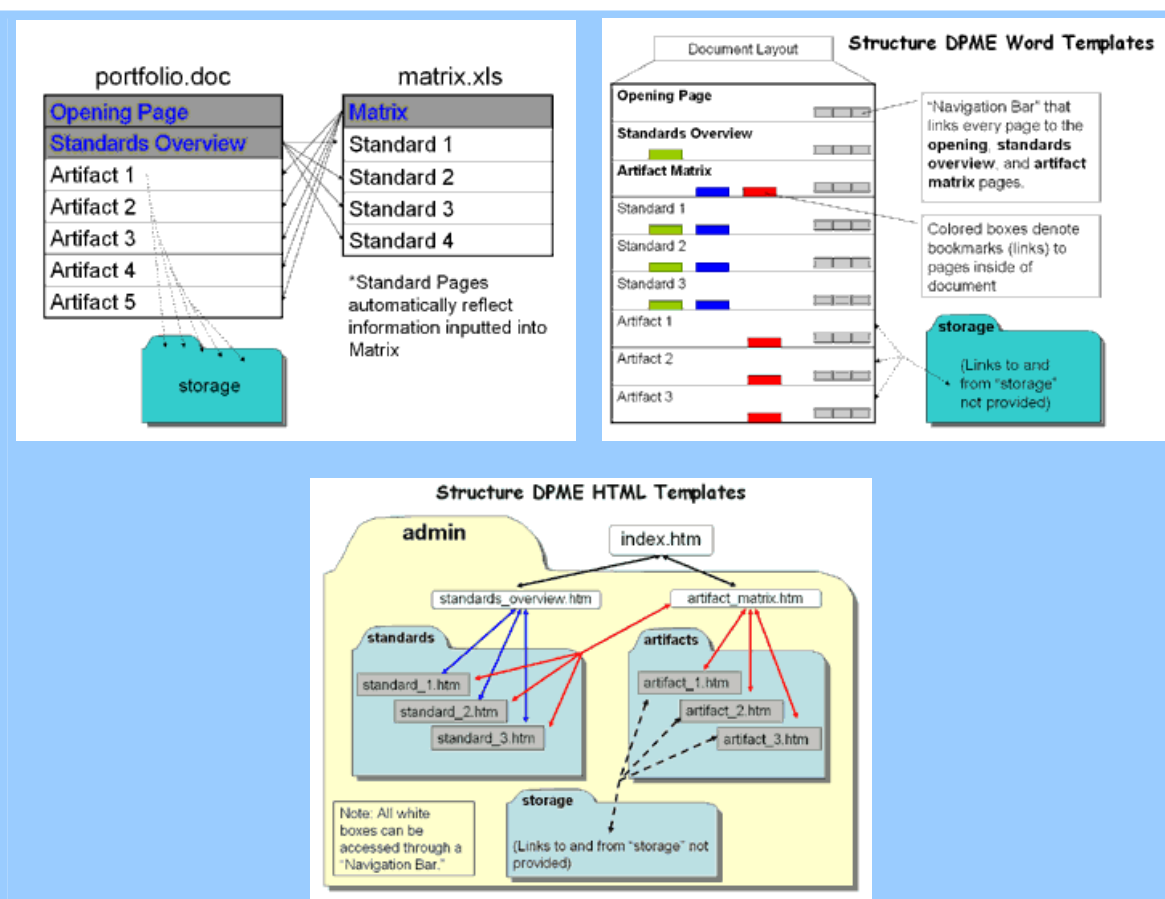
The growing interest in electronic and digital portfolios has created opportunities for practitioners to present portfolios that are more rich and interconnected than the traditional notebook professional portfolio. The greatest obstacle to creating digital portfolios, however, can be the practitioner's perception of the technology itself. The technology does not need to be overly complicated, and the goal of DPME is to make the process as transparent and intuitive as possible. The DPME templates provide a framework within which to build a standards-based, individualized professional portfolio. The DPME templates are provided in three formats: Word, HTML, and xWord. These three formats allow practitioners of all skill levels to use software that most already have on their computers.

Creating your own digital portfolio can seem like a difficult task. The toughest part of creating any portfolio is selecting the artifacts that you want to include. It is difficult to decide how you can best portray your professional self through a collection of artifacts that you have created and accumulated over time. Once you have identified your collection of artifacts, you need a format to organize and present your materials. The DPME templates can aid in the development of your digital portfolio by providing an intuitive framework that emphasizes the artifacts and their meaning to your professional development.

Overview

DPME templates integrate two forms of portfolio organization, standards-indexed™ and standards-referenced™. These concepts are unique to DPME. Standards-indexed™ portfolios typically align artifacts to standards in a linear manner. A single artifact frequently aligns with only one standard. This system makes it easy for evaluators to assess the depth of fulfillment for each standard, and the emphasis is on the standards rather than the educator's actual artifacts.

Standards-referenced™ portfolios use artifacts as the central element of the organizational system, which consequently emphasizes reflection. The portfolios are presented and subsequently linked to all relevant standards. The DPME format encompasses both standards-indexed™ and standards-referenced™ forms of organization. Any form of organization, however, is not complete without reflection. DPME provides prompts where teachers describe, analyze, and plan based upon artifacts and the experiences associated with them (Bullock & Hawk, 2001). Reflections provide background information and context of the artifact, describe what the teacher learned, provide insight into teacher candidate thinking, and encourage future planning based upon experience (Bullock & Hawk, 2001).



xWord Template

The DPME xWord template is a portfolio template that uses two Microsoft Office applications. This template contains two files: a Microsoft Word file and a Microsoft Excel file. The unique features of this template format include “auto-fill,” which removes the repetitive tasks of copying and pasting artifact names throughout the template, and this template format allows for the possibility of aligning artifacts to multiple sets of standards. The Word file is a single document that ranges from 23-30 pages. The Excel file is a single worksheet that ranges from 5-20 tabs. The lengths of both of these files depend on the number artifacts a practitioner uses and the types of standards being addressed. Previously created hyperlinks/bookmarks allows for easy navigation between files.

Organization

The Word file contains approximately 25 pages: Opening Page, Standards Overview, and Artifact Pages. The first page is the Opening Page, which is where a practitioner outlines his or her educational philosophy and/or a welcome statement. Following the Opening Page is a Standards Overview Page that contains general definitions for the standards being addressed in a given portfolio. This page also serves as a navigation menu to view individual Standard Pages. It is also possible to have more than one Standards Overview Page depending on the amount of standard types. Approximately 20 Artifact Pages follow the Standards Overview Pages. Artifact pages can be directly accessed in this file by scrolling down, or these pages can be reached from the Artifact Matrix where standard/component alignment information is displayed.

The Excel file contains approximately 8 pages: Artifact Matrix and Standard Pages. The first page is the Artifact Matrix Page, which is the navigational hub of all DPME templates. The Artifact Matrix page also serves as a target for numerous functions that are placed on individual Standard Pages contained in the Excel file. Standard Pages take information from the matrix and copy it throughout the template. This copying can happen for one set of standards or multiple sets of standards without requiring repetitive typing or copying and pasting. No information will have to be entered on to Individual Standard pages. An excel function copies artifact names from the artifact matrix when an “x” is typed into an artifact’s row.

Microsoft Word Template

The DPME Word template is a portfolio template that uses software familiar to most practitioners. After extensive testing, the Word format has been refined to meet the needs of various practitioner skill levels. This single document may

range from 25-50 pages in length depending upon the standards being addressed and the number of artifacts being used. Internal hyperlinks within the document provide easy navigation between artifacts, standards and reflections.

Organization

After extensive testing and retesting, the pages in a DPME Word format were combined into a single Word document. This document may range from 20-50 pages in length depending upon the standards being addressed and the number of artifacts being used. It opens with the Opening Page that includes a photo of the portfolio creator and an educational philosophy. The next page provides a Standards Overview, which is followed by the Artifact Matrix that acts as the major navigational tool for the portfolio. The individual Standard Pages follow in succession. Finally, the Artifact pages are placed at the end of the document. The template is designed to accommodate 15 artifacts. This number of artifacts can either be lengthened or shortened depending upon a practitioner's needs.

Navigation

Combining all of these pages into a single document was done to increase the efficiency and speed of navigation throughout the materials. The extended length of this document does not mean that the reader has to scroll through all of these pages in a sequential order.

Microsoft Word incorporates navigational capabilities called Hyperlinks and Bookmarks. Hyperlinks allow a user to create links to other locations within the portfolio document, to other files, or even to websites. Most links are already provided in the template. You will find that clicking on blue underlined numbers or words will cause you to move to other places in the document.

Hyperlinks are included in the template through the Standards Overview Page and Artifact Matrix. Also, a navigation bar is located at the bottom of every page. It allows movement between three main pages: Opening Page, Standards Overview and Artifact Matrix.

HTML Template

The DPME HTML template is for more technologically advanced practitioners who want to post their portfolios on a website. The DPME HTML template contains the same prompts and look and feel of the Microsoft Word template. Unlike the Word format, the parts of the portfolio are contained in separate files. Hyperlinks are provided on the Standards Overview and Artifact Matrix pages to enable simple navigation between files. Also, a navigation bar is provided that connects to the pages: Opening Page, Standards Overview, and Artifact Matrix.

DPME Process Overview:

- Developing Background Skills
 - File Management
 - Digital Imaging and Scanning
 - Creating Hyperlinks in Microsoft Word
- Creating an Opening Page
- Creating an Artifact Matrix
- Creating Artifact Pages and Writing Reflections
- Creating Individual Standards Pages

File Management

An important background skill to possess when creating digital portfolios is being able to organize and manage files. What follows is a step-by-step process, beginning with downloading a template format, for managing the many files that support a digital portfolio. Two general principles apply to file management: (1) the location of files in relation to their folder(s) is set and cannot be changed; (2) before new objects, e.g., images, are placed on a page or new files are linked to, they must be placed in the **storage** folder.

After Downloading a Template Format:

- On the desktop, 'unzip' the newly downloaded folder by right-clicking on folder icon and selecting "Extract All..."
 - Follow steps described in Wizard window
 - Two folders should appear on your desktop, one with a zipper and another without
- Rename the folder without the zipper, 'your last name_portfolio', e.g., 'smith_portfolio'
- You can now delete the folder not named 'smith_portfolio'
- Start the necessary software program, either Microsoft Word or an HTML editor
- Use the File menu to navigate to your folder on the desktop and select the file you want to open, e.g., 'index.html'

During the Session:

- Save (not Save As) at least every 5 minutes

End of the Session:

- Save (not Save As) your file
- File > Exit/Quit the software program
- Insert your USB Flash drive or other storage device
- Drag the FOLDER, not just individual files, from the desktop to your USB Flash drive or other storage device folder
- Drag your original folder located on the desktop to the trash/recycle bin or to the My Documents folder on the computer (This will ensure that the most recent portfolio is at the very least on your storage device)

Editing a Continuing Project

Beginning of the Session:

- Insert your USB Flash drive or other storage device
- Drag your FOLDER from the USB Flash drive or other storage device to the desktop
- Eject your USB Flash drive or other storage device (This is to ensure that you are working on the folder off of the Desktop and not your storage device)
- Start the software program used for the current project
- Use the File menu to Open your project
- In the resulting window, navigate to your folder on the desktop and select the file you want to open



During the Session:

- Save (not Save As) at least every 5 minutes

End of the Session:

- Save (not Save As) your file
 - File > Exit/Quit the software program
 - Insert your USB Flash drive or other storage device
 - Drag the FOLDER, not just individual files, from the desktop to your USB Flash drive or other storage device folder
 - Drag your original folder located on the desktop to the trash/recycle bin or to the My Documents folder on the computer (This will ensure that the most recent portfolio is at the very least on your storage device)
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Digital Imaging and Scanning

After artifacts have been collected, if not already digital, they need to be put into formats that will display well in a digital portfolio. The recommended formats include (.pdf) (.jpg) (.gif). There are numerous ways of transforming a previously non-digital artifact into one these file formats. The linked handout describes background information that may be helpful in transforming artifacts.

Creating Hyperlinks in Microsoft Word

IMPORTANT: All linking must be preceded by dragging or placing files into **storage** folder.

Linking to a File:

- Highlight a word that you want to serve as the link (That which is clicked to 'go' to another file)
- Go to the **Insert** menu
- Select **Hyperlink**
- In the left column select **Existing Webpage or File**
- Navigate to *portfolio folder*
- Select the desired file within **Storage** folder
- Select **OK**

Linking to a Webpage:

- Highlight a word that you want to serve as the link (That which is clicked to 'go' to another file)
- Go to the **Insert** menu
- Select **Hyperlink**
- In the left column select **Existing Webpage or File**
- In the **Address** dialog type desired URL address, including http://, or **Copy and Paste** URL address from web browser

DPME Template: Opening Page

Location of pages by template versions:

xWord **portfolio.doc**: page 1

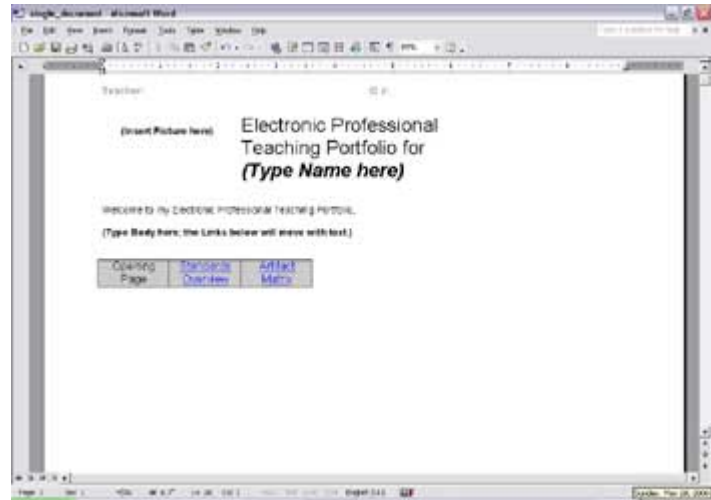
Word **single_document.doc**: page 1

HTML **index.html**

The Opening Page involves inserting an image of oneself on the page and crafting an introductory statement and/or educational philosophy.

Inserting an Image:

- Place cursor in table cell
- Delete text (Place Picture Here)
- Go to **Insert** menu
- Select **Picture**
- Select **From File**
- Navigate to *portfolio folder*
- Select **storage**
- Select desired image



DPME Template: Artifact Matrix

Location of pages by template versions:

xWord **matrix.xls: matrix tab**

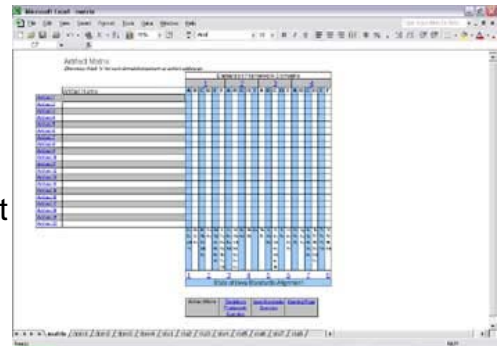
Word **single_document.doc: page 3**

HTML **admin folder > matrix.html**

The Artifact Matrix provides a standards-indexed™ and -referenced™ view of how artifacts apply to standards and their criteria/components. This matrix is a quick-view of standards and artifacts alignment as well as the navigational hub of DPME templates. Under the column labeled **Link** are previously created links to **Artifact Pages**. Under the columns labeled **Standards** are previously created links to individual **Standards Pages**.

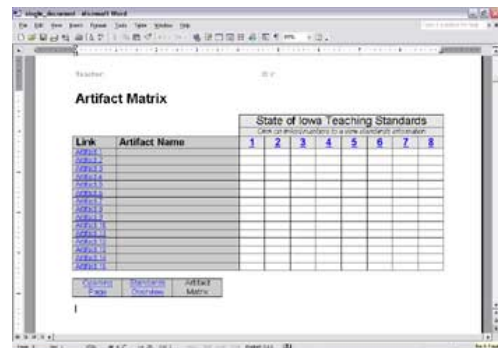
Creating xWord Artifact Matrix:

- Put the names of relevant artifacts in the column **Artifact Name**
- Identify the pertinent standards and components/elements that align with an artifact
- Each row is a standard component
- Mark an "x" in each column



Creating the Artifact Matrix (Word and HTML):

- Put the names of relevant artifacts in the column **Artifact Name**
- Identify the pertinent standards and components/elements that aligns with an artifact
- Signify this alignment with the criteria/component's letter or number in the appropriate standard's column

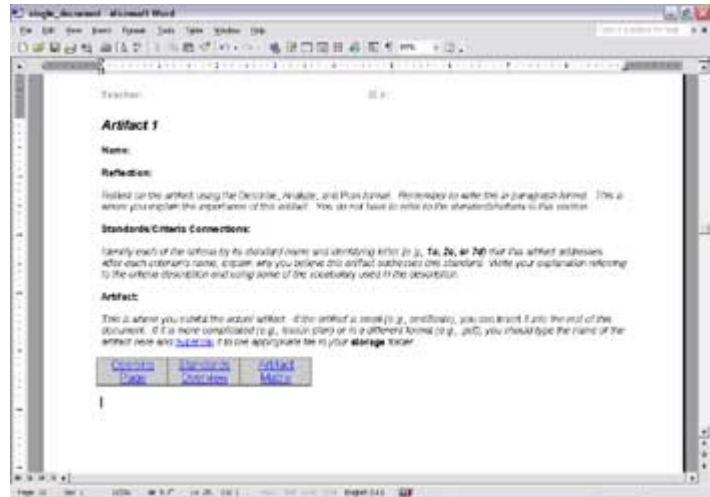


DPME Template: Artifact Pages

Location of pages by template versions:

xWord	portfolio.doc : pages 3-22
Word	single_document.doc : pages 12-26
HTML	admin folder > artifacts folder > artifact.html

These templates are designed to provide a space for reflections that include a description, analysis and future plans for each artifact. Connections to the specific criteria for each pertinent standard are explained here as well. Finally, the artifact is either included in the document or a link is provided to access the artifact. These pages contain three basic parts: Reflection, Standards/Criteria Connections, and the display of or link to a digital artifact.



Creating Artifact Pages and Writing Reflections:

- Title: Begin by placing the title of the artifact in the title, ex. Artifact 1: Math Lesson Plan.
- Reflection: Write a reflection about the artifact. The recommended format is *What? So What? and Now What?* This format can also be thought of as *Describe, Analyze and Plan*. Reflections are typically three paragraphs in length. The first paragraph is where you describe the artifact. You analyze the artifact in the second paragraph. This analysis might include descriptions of the success of a lesson or the significance of an event. The third paragraph is where you explain what you learned from the experience and how it will impact future practice.
- Standards/Criteria Connection: Explain how an artifact meets each of the criteria identified on the Artifact Matrix and Individual Standards Pages. Each explanation is prefaced with a number and letter representing the specific criteria/component (i.e., 1g, 3d, or 7c).
- Artifact: Place an artifact on the page or create a link to the artifact. Insert a photo of the artifact the same way as on the [Opening Page](#). Create a [link](#) to a digital artifact in the storage folder or to a website.

DPME Template: Standard Pages

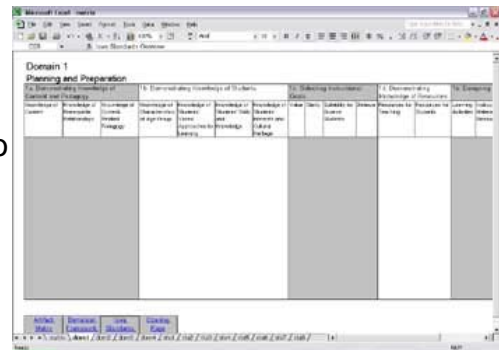
Location of pages by template versions:

xWord	matrix.xls: sta tabs
Word	single_document.doc: 4-11
HTML	admin folder > standards folder > standard.html

Individual Standards Pages list the criteria/components for each standard. These pages are also another location that illustrates the alignment among artifacts and criteria/components.

Creating xWord Standard Pages:

- An Excel function copies information from the Artifact Matrix on to each of these pages. This function can be easily deleted. It is important to remember that if an artifact name does not appear, to check the Artifact Matrix and not to manually type in the artifact name, as this will delete the function.



Creating Individual Standard Pages (word and HTML):

- List the name of each artifact that aligns with a criteria/component in the **Artifacts** column
- Repeat as necessary for each artifact
- Once an artifact is entered in the **Artifacts** column, a link needs to be created from the artifact's name to its **Artifact Page**
 - Highlight the artifact's name
 - Go to the **Insert** menu
 - Select **Hyperlink**
 - In the left column, select **Place in this Document**
 - In the middle window, select the corresponding artifact's **Bookmark**, ex. **A1**
 - Select **OK**

