

INTRODUCING AN ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO

Lesson Plan 1

PURPOSE

To introduce learners to ePEARL.

OBJECTIVES

To help learners understand what an electronic portfolio is and the key features that they will be using in ePEARL.

TIME REQUIRED

45 – 60 minutes (depending on amount of hands-on time).

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1) This lesson plan.
- 2) Internet connected computer & projector or SMART board.
- 3) List of learner usernames and passwords.

TOPICS ADDRESSED

- 1) What is an electronic portfolio?
- 2) Why are we using an electronic portfolio?
- 3) How to access and personalize the ePEARL.
- 4) How to get help in ePEARL.

PLANNING TIPS

- You may want to train 4-5 tech-savvy learners on ePEARL the day before you introduce this lesson so they can assist you with any questions or challenges the learners have.
- Try to set up the equipment the afternoon before and practice logging in to make sure everything works properly, including your own username & password. Be sure to personalize your welcome message and image so you can show what a personalized page might look like to your learners in class the next day.
- You may want to print out labels for your learners that have the URL of where to go to log in, their username, and password. These can be stuck to the inside of their agenda for quick reference.

DISCUSSION SPARK

Start by finding out about your learners past use of portfolios in a class discussion. Some questions you could ask include: “Have you used a portfolio in school before? What did you put in there? What did you like about it? What did you dislike about it?”

- 1) Have learners brainstorm in small groups their likes & dislikes.
- 2) Put some of these on the board.

DISCUSSION SPARK 2

Introduce the idea of an electronic (or digital) portfolio by asking learners what do they think of when they hear terms like "electronic" and "digital," and what would an electronic portfolio look like? How might it be different from the paper portfolios they have used before? Pros and cons?

TEACH


- 1) After this discussion you can explain to them: "An electronic portfolio is a type of computer software that allows you to store all of your work in one place. The portfolio we will be using is on the World Wide Web (Internet) and will help us become more independent learners by helping us to set goals, identify strategies to help us achieve those goals, and reflect on our progress through feedback and revising and looking back on our growth and our work."
- 2) Explain to them that you will be using a portfolio this year called ePEARL to help them create, organize, share, and reflect on their work. You might say something like: "This year we will be using ePEARL in class. ePEARL is an electronic portfolio that will help us plan, create, organize, share, and reflect on our work. Since it is on the Internet you will be able to access it from school, the library, home, or anywhere you have a computer with Internet access. You will each get your own username and password so that you are the only ones who can personalize and add pieces to your portfolio. As your teacher, I will also be able to see what you put in there, but I won't be able to add or delete any works. You will also be able to share your portfolio with your parents by logging in and viewing it with them at home. You can also share your work with your classmates and give and receive comments on each other's work. We will be spending some class time at the beginning of the year learning how to use ePEARL effectively, but eventually you will be able to work more and more independently and be able to use it on your own any time you want."

Classroom Management Tip

Depending on your access to computers (portable lab, 3 computers in the back of the classroom, separate computer room) you may want to explain to learners how often they can expect to use ePEARL and how they will be allocated computer time for the first weeks of use. We recommend having learners work as partners for the first few lessons so they can help each other problem-solve and figure things out before having to ask the teacher.

DEMONSTRATION

Now show your learners the path that they will take to find the ePEARL log in page. You may have a portal that they will log in to first, or they may go to ePEARL directly from the school or school board homepage. During this demonstration, be sure to explain:

- 1) Log in procedure and that passwords are case sensitive (meaning it matters if letters are lower case or capitals – if they are having problems logging in, be sure they haven't hit the "caps lock" key by mistake).
- 2) The home page: You can use the virtual tutorial to introduce learners to the home page, but it is helpful to start by explaining how you personalized your portfolio and that they will be allowed to make this page reflect their own interests and personalities so they feel that their portfolio shows their individuality. Also, point out the question marks  and that they should click on those first when they need help, before going to a student technician or teacher for help.



- 3) Proper use: You may also want to remind learners that since this is a portfolio for school it is not meant to be used like a Facebook page. It is intended to be appropriate for the school setting, not for socializing. A good rule is not to put anything in the ePEARL that would embarrass them if their teacher, parents, or grandparents were to see it.
- 4) Preview Virtual Tutorial: Click on the "resources" button on your teacher ePEARL and from this page you can access the Virtual Tutorial. The chapters you may want to show learners are:
 - a) Introduction
 - b) Personalizing (Welcome Screen & Themes only)
 - c) Help

HANDS-ON

Now it is your learners' chance to try logging in and personalizing their home page. Distribute their usernames & passwords and assign them a partner (if you choose to work in dyads) and computers. If you have trained student "technicians," introduce them to the class and let learners know that they can ask these students for help if you are not available.

For more tips

For other ideas on classroom management and integrating ePEARL into your lessons, please see the Job Aid on the teacher resources page: "Using ePEARL in your lessons."

