Handout - Different Types of Digital Portfolio Posts

One of the keys to developing a great digital portfolio is creating a wide variety of posts. Doing so will show that you are truly a reflective learner. Here are four types of posts that you might want to consider writing:

Proud Of Posts:

Proud of posts celebrate things that you have accomplished as a learner. Worked hard to learn a concept in Math? Spent a lot of time revising an essay in language arts? Put extra time into designing new tests for a lab? Consider writing a Proud Of post.

Questions to Consider When Writing Proud of Posts:

1. **What are you proud of?**
2. **Why is this an accomplishment -- either for you or for any student your age?**
3. **What did you have to do in order to accomplish this?**
4. **Why is your work and/or effort extraordinary?**
5. **What are you going to do next?**

Sample: One of the things that I'm currently proud of is the 95 that I recently earned on my Calculating Percentages test. This is a pretty important accomplishment for me mostly because I wasn't all that sure that calculating percentages mattered, so I wasn't putting a whole lot of effort into learning how to do it. But when I was out at dinner with my dad, I saw him calculating percentages so he could figure out how much of a tip to leave for our waiter.

That made me interested and I started practicing with calculating percentages everywhere that I go. What I'm proudest of is that I actually know why multiplying by a decimal makes sense when calculating percentages. That means that not only can I answer questions about the process of calculating percentages, I know WHY that process works.

Working On Posts:

Working on posts highlight things that you are currently working on and trying to master as a learner. They celebrate the fact that you have a goal and a plan for reaching that goal. They spotlight your first attempts at learning something new and describe your next steps for moving forward.

Questions to Consider When Writing Proud of Posts:

1. **What are you working to learn?**
2. **What evidence do you have to show that you are making progress towards learning?**
3. **What parts of the concept/skill have you already mastered?**
4. **What parts of the concept/skill do you still need to master?**
5. **What are you going to do next?**

Sample: Over the last several weeks in Language Arts, we've been learning about personification in class. I really like personification because the idea of giving nonliving things lifelike traits is cool to me. I've been trying to use personification more often in class. In this particular poem, I use one example of personification: Goosebumps, gifts to skinny dippers from the cow pond down in the pasture." I love the idea that the cow pond is giving goosebumps as gifts to swimmers.

But here's the thing: It seems like I'm really good at using personification in poems, but I'm not using it in any of the other styles of writing that we are learning. I've never used personification in a summary of a book that I am reading or in a report that I have to do for one of my other core classes. And I'm not sure that I've ever even seen personification in nonfiction texts -- like current events or textbook readings. So my next goal is to see if I can find personification in other kinds of texts. I'm going to check out the sports articles that I read on ESPN every morning. Then, I'm going to try to use personification in something OTHER than a poem.

Thinking About Posts:

Thinking about posts spotlight ideas that are rolling around inside your head. Made an observation in science class that surprised you? Read a current event that bothered you? Thought of a possible solution to a world problem that intrigues you? Consider writing a Thinking About post.

Questions to Consider When Writing Thinking About Posts:

1. **What are you thinking about?**
2. **What made you start thinking about this?**
3. **Why is this idea interesting to you?**
4. **Why does this idea matter?**
5. **What are you going to do next?**

Sample: In science class today, we were talking about solar energy and the important role that it can play in fighting back against global warming. What I learned, though, is that even though enough sunlight lands on the earth every minute to power the entire world for a year, we don't catch or convert very much of that sunlight into electricity. That got me thinking that we need to find creative ways to catch as much energy as we can.

One idea that I had was that we should create super durable solar panels that can be driven on and then install those panels into every parking lot. Think about how cool that would be. There are parking lots EVERYWHERE -- and most of them are uncovered and hit by sunlight all day long. If we turned them into drivable solar panels, we'd catch lots of energy. I want to do some research on solar panels to see how durable they are.

Challenged By Posts:

Challenged by posts highlight moments when you disagree with an idea shared by someone else. Have you worked with a partner that solved a problem a different way than you? Disagreed with the way that your teacher wants you to organize your notebook? Heard a politician talk about a plan that you think would be a terrible idea? Consider writing a Challenged By post.

Questions to Consider When Writing Challenged By Posts:

1. **What is the idea that you have been challenged by?**
2. **What is it about this idea that you disagree with?**
3. **How might this idea be valuable?**
4. **Why would other people believe in this idea?**
5. **What are you going to do next?**

Sample: Today in social studies, we were talking about the Holocaust. One of my classmates made a big speech about how anyone who was alive during the Holocaust that didn't speak up against what the Germans were doing to minority groups was a chicken. His point was that anytime that you see something bad happening, you HAVE to speak up -- and that if you don't, you aren't a good person.

I'm not sure that I agree with him.

While I agree that we SHOULD speak up when we see something bad happening -- especially something as bad as the Holocaust -- I just don't think it is always that easy. Take living in Germany for example: I bet that all of your neighbors and friends in school would either agree with Hitler's decisions or be afraid of the consequences of disagreeing in front of everyone else. I know that's how I feel when I see friends making bad choices. Even though I know the choices are bad, I don't always speak up because I don't want to make enemies. I want to find some interviews to read of people who were alive during tough times like the Holocaust to see if they ever felt bad about what was happening -- and to see what (if anything) they did about it.