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**The Effect of Portfolio Assessment on the Writing
Performance of EFL Secondary School
Students in Saudi Arabia**

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Master Degree in Arts and Education
(Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language)**

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

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The Effect of Portfolio Assessment on the Writing Performance of EFL Secondary School Students in Saudi Arabia

By

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of the portfolio assessment strategy to teach and assess writing performance of EFL third year students enrolled at the 3rd Secondary School, Skaka (Al-Jouf region). The purpose of the study was to determine whether a specific portfolio assessment model was effective in helping the students to improve their English writing performance in general and writing product skills and writing processes in particular. The targeted population consisted of 63 female students. The control group students (N=30) received traditional classroom instruction whereas the experimental group (N=33) received treatment (portfolio assessment strategy). Data were collected through English writing assessment test, analytic scoring rubric (a composition grading scale), self-reporting questionnaire on writing processes, portfolio holistic scoring rubric, and portfolio assessment model for EFL writing instruction. Test scores and self-reporting questionnaire scores were used as measures of students' English writing performance. Descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, and Spearman rank order coefficient of correlation were used for data analysis. The results of the pre-administration of instruments indicated that the two groups were homogenous and that their English writing performance was poor and inadequate. However, the findings of the post-administration showed a remarkable improvement in English writing performance of the portfolio group students in general and in their writing product skills in particular as compared with the non-portfolio group. Likewise, findings indicated a statistically significant increase in the students' use of writing processes as a result of the portfolio assessment strategy. Moreover, a positive correlation between the students' (experimental group) scores in the portfolio and their English writing test scores was found. Using portfolio assessment, as a complementary to traditional tests, in teaching and assessing EFL writing was recommended and that assessment should be an integral part of the teaching process. The study concluded that the portfolio assessment model is found to be an effective instructional strategy as well as an evaluation tool and that it enhances the students' English writing performance by focusing efforts on writing products as well as writing processes. Based on the findings of the study, some recommendations are emerged: using portfolio in EFL writing instruction as a teaching and assessment strategy not to substitute for traditional tests; rather they complement each other. In addition, assessment process should be an integral part of everyday teaching practices students involve in. It is also recommended to offer training for EFL teachers in planning and implementing portfolios in writing classes in Saudi Arabia.

Chapter I

Introduction

1. 1 Background of the Problem

1. 2 Statement of the Problem

1. 3 Purposes of the Study

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1.1 Background of the Problem

Recently, writing has received great interest not only because it plays crucial role in learning and transforming knowledge but also in promoting creativity. However, writing is not an easy skill to be mastered (Raimes, 1987a). According to Kroll (1997) teachers need to understand all the facets of the complex nature of writing as an intellectual activity and consequently, choose the suitable method to teach it that takes into account such nature. Similarly, Reid (2002) stated that "Teaching English L2 writing differ from teaching other language skills in that it is used as a support skill in language learning"(p.28). In this respect, Atawaneh (1994) stated that" In writing, however, the writer can not have immediate feedback, so he has to imagine the reactions of the reader and take them as bases for modifying his written message"(p.19). Therefore, "L2 writers have to pay attention to higher level skills of planning and organizing as well as lower level skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice, and so on" (Richards &Renandya, 2005,p.303).

Olshtain (2001) has argued that "Writing, as a communicative activity needs to be encouraged and nurtured during learner's course of study"(p.207). It is not an easy task to plan and teach a course in writing. With so many conflicting theories around and so many implementation factors to consider what approach to teaching writing are we going to use? Writing should be seen as a process - a way of learning-as well as a certain end product- a way of telling. So, Tompkins (1994) assured that the current emphasis in writing instruction focuses on the process of creating writing rather than the end product. As a result, attention has shifted from the finished product to the whole process with its various stages of planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Such emphasis on writing process empowers students by getting them to talk about their writing at every step of the writing process (Gocsik, 2005). During such teaching strategy the teacher will be engaged in as

tutor and writing assistant. In this regard, Badrawi (1994) suggested that "students should be given the time to write several drafts and develop their ideas"(p.15). Therefore, a student who is given the time for the process to work, along with the appropriate feedback from the readers such as the teacher or other students will discover new ideas, new sentences and new words as he plans, writes a first draft, and revises what he has written for a second draft (Raimes, 1987b). Consequently, the teacher's role has changed from the fault-finder and error-hunter to that of facilitator.

Assessment procedures should be adapted in such a way that they faithfully reflect teaching practices. Specifically, Bailey (1998) said that "While our pedagogic emphasis has swung from a strongly product-oriented to a largely process-oriented approach, which involves multiple drafts of papers, our evaluation procedures have lagged behind our pedagogy" (p.186). Supporting this view, Fengying (2003) concluded that "Learning a foreign language is a long and complex task. Learners need constant encouragement that comes from a sense of achievement and success. A shift in the way we evaluate learners can work wonders" (p.41). Puhl (1997) also asserted that the reform of instructional system should be made hand – in – hand with the reform of assessment system. Traditional language tests no longer meet the needs of language monitory students acquiring English as a foreign language since they have often been limited to assessment of the students' outcomes at a specific point of time and have provided little information about teaching / learning process. The recent wave of instructional reform reflects revolutionary ideas concerning the nature of assessment and its purpose. Hence, Bailey (1998) stated that "the main purpose of language assessment is to help us gain the information we need about our students' abilities and to do so in a manner that is appropriate, consistent and conducive to learning"(p.2). Thus, assessment has become an integral component of the instructional system (Hancock, 1994). It could be used to improve learning. In addition, a recognizable change with regard to assessment process is the moving of assessment from a judgmental role to a developmental role.

Assessment is usually an ongoing strategy through which the student's learning is not only monitored but by which students are involved in making decisions about the degree to which their performance matches their ability. It should involve collecting evidence of learning over an extended period of time, using a variety of assessment methods both traditional tests and alternative methods of assessment. According to Coombe and Barlow (2004) "alternative forms of assessment are an important means of gaining a dynamic picture of students' academic and linguistic development"(p.18). "The concept of alternative assessment is particularly relevant to foreign language and second language instruction because it focuses attention on what students can do with the language rather than what they are able to produce or recall" (Huerta-Macias, 2005, p.339). In his study, Khalil (2002) proved that using authentic forms of assessment develops students' achievement and promotes the creative thinking skill (Translated). In this respect, Gardner (1993) pointed out that creative individuals are extremely reflective of their activities, their use of time, and the quality of their product.

Analyzing the current writing instruction and assessment situation at Saudi secondary schools, the evidence from teachers' reports and final tests shows that writing is the weakest aspect of students' work in English. This is also supported by the results of the semi-structured interview conducted with a group of students (n=39). (For interview guide, see Appendix A). On the basis of content analysis of informants' responses, about 84% of the students reported having difficulty in EFL writing. Furthermore, memorization is given the main focus. Once students write the memorized composition, the teacher can easily grade them because there is an identifiable structure. Students are not shown how to develop or explore ideas on their own. Thus, they play no role with regard to their own learning.

With respect to the way of assessing students' writing products, the traditional paper and pencil tests, which are usually administered twice during the term, still dominate the writing classes. According to the traditional grading system, writings are usually checked, given grades, and returned while students are passive participants in the assessment process. Therefore, test scores cannot be trusted as a basis of making decisions concerning the student' actual writing performance. Note that the students' low writing performance may be due to the instructional practices used in teaching and assessing writing. The method used is product-based. Writing process is somewhat ignored. Teachers attend to the product: its clarity, originality, and correctness but they do not attend to the writing process. Nor do they attend to the writers themselves. In such a method, the teacher is dominant and error-hunter while he/she should be facilitator and assistant. So, the researcher has been led to argue for improving the process orientation in teaching and assessing writing performance.

While this is the current situation of teaching and assessing writing in Saudi Arabia. Elsewhere there are new trends that take into account the students' needs and give emphasis to their strengths rather than to their weaknesses. These trends are the alternative forms of assessing what the students know and can do with the language. Wiggins (1989) found that this is the result of the increase in recognition that a single assessment tool is not enough to judge the student's progress. "Portfolio assessment is in front of alternative assessment approaches" (Coombe & Barlow, 2004, p.18). Neiman (1999) further explained that "For the individual learner, the standardized test can only offer a snapshot, whereas, portfolios can offer the individual learner an album of an ongoing set of judgments that provide opportunities for the learner to do better work"(p.5). At this time, the educational system needs both, the snapshot and the album.

"In literature, the terms, portfolio and portfolio assessment, seem interchangeable" (Neiman, 1999, p. 2). Portfolio was introduced initially as a way for artists, graphic designers, and other professionals to show evidence of their work, illustrating their skill at applying knowledge to practice. With increasing focus of education on performance standards and student-centered classrooms, the portfolio has become more than a repository of work samples. However, portfolio assessment is an evaluation strategy which shows the student's ability and growth through selected pieces of work produced over an extended period of time. "The portfolio contents may include demonstrations of the students' academic achievements evidenced through multiple types of assessment, e.g., performance, process, and product assessments "(Brown, 1997, p.1). Moreover, a portfolio displays a variety of the student's writings over time that shows the stages in the writing process a text has gone through and the stages of the writer's growth.

Using portfolio assessment is increasing in the language field, particularly with respect to the writing skill (Hancock, 1994). Likewise, Genesee and Upshur (2004) reported that "portfolios have most frequently been associated with written language,"(p.101). Around the same issue, Sweet (1993) suggested using portfolio in writing instruction as it illustrates the range of assessments, goals, and audiences for which a student produced written material. Obviously, portfolio can be a record of the activities undertaken over time in the development of written products. Portfolios offer the benefit of involving students in the assessment process. Portfolio assessment is not teacher driven as is common in conventional assessments. In keeping with the trend toward student-centered classrooms, portfolio assessment is a shared responsibility. It requires the involvement of students, parents, as well as teachers, in establishing the assessment standards, criteria, and selecting contents of the portfolio.

Despite the fact that students' active participation is vital during the portfolio assessment process, the teacher is the key to the successful use of such strategy (Neiman, 1999). Using such type of assessment means more interaction and cooperation between the student and the teacher. Clearly, portfolio assessment "transforms the role of the teacher away from generating comparative rankings of achievement and toward improving student achievement through evaluative feedback and self-reflection"(Epstein, 2005, p.1).

No doubt, portfolio is not a new concept. Mathews (2003) stated that" The portfolio idea gained strength in the 1980s" (p.2). More specifically, interest in portfolios as assessment strategies first emerged in the literature in the field of composition and writing. As cited in Terwilliger (1997), Ballard, 1992; Farr, 1990, 1991; Murphy and Smith, 1990 all address the use of portfolios in the assessment of writing at the K- 12 level. In other words, Apple and Shimo (2004) reported that, unlike traditional tests, portfolio assessment measured individual students' progress rather than the product. Also, Abu Hjjaj (2003, p.131) recommended to study the effects of writing portfolio on the teaching / learning process and how to implement it in the classroom (Translated).

Further, a study conducted by Krigere and Sardiko (2002) revealed how writing skills are the easiest to assess by means of portfolio whereas other language skills are more difficult. Including a variety of writing tasks in the portfolio allows students of different levels to thrive. Likewise, Johns (1995) suggested that those not already using portfolio assessment should consider it for their writing classes. Applebee and Langer (1992) believed that "Portfolios of students' work offer one of the best vehicles for assessments of writing for that they typically contain a variety of different samples of student work"(Cited in Penaflorida, 2005, p. 348).

Using portfolio in writing classes has proven effective that the process of collecting a variety of writing samples with repeated drafts and frequent editing is a better way to assess writing performance than the old way of grading grammar and spelling tests and the final version of any written assessment. Portfolio, as an alternative or additional strategy of assessment, provides a way of evaluating not only the writing products but also "the processes of producing pieces of writing" (Clemmons, Laase, Cooper, Areglado, & Dill, 1993, p. 11). Borthwick (1995) added that "It offers teachers vital information for diagnosing students' strengths and weaknesses to help them improve their performance"(p.24). Moreover, it affords students the opportunity to manage and monitor their learning, document their progress and achievements over time, articulate their achievement levels, and more important experience success.

Among the requirements of the success of implementing portfolio assessment are the three basic principles which are identified by Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000) as collection, selection, and reflection. The collection is all of the activities, assignments and projects that are constructed in a specific setting. For a portfolio to work effectively, it must include samples of a student's work rather than all the work done. Furthermore, students must individually choose which piece to include in the portfolio. The decision for the selection of items has to be made depending upon the purpose of the portfolio. Finally, reflection is crucial. "By having reflection as part of the portfolio process, students are asked to think about their needs, goals, weaknesses, and strengths in language learning. They are also asked to select their best work and to explain why that work was beneficial to them "(Coombe & Barlow, 2004, p.20). Neiman (1999) reported that "It is this third principle that transforms a collection into a meaningful learning experience "(p.2). This view is supported by Santos (1997) who said that "without reflection, the portfolio remains a folder of all my papers" (p. 2).

Portfolio assessment and process writing are natural partners since both show effort and development very clearly. Process Writing is an approach to teaching writing which tries to stimulate the processes that many writers go through in their native language. In this way, it does not only focus on the final product but also on the stages along the way, such as gathering ideas , noting them down , recognizing and rephrasing them and preparing a final, accurate version. Seow (2005) mentioned that " The idea behind process writing is not really to dissociate writing entirely from the writing product and to merely lead students through the various stages of the writing process but to construct process-oriented writing instruction that will affect performance " (pp. 315-316). After all, if portfolio assessment can showcase the processes of producing pieces of writing as Clemmons et al. (1993) asserted, as well as polished pieces, it could be adopted as a writing teaching strategy since writing is a process as well as a product.

Based on the previous discussion, it can be concluded that portfolio assessment has become widely used in different educational settings. However, teaching writing and assessment has not received researchers' attention in Saudi Arabia. A considerable research has focused on writing products and writing errors made by students.

Accordingly, the focus of the present study is on how students develop as writers by emphasizing process, written reflection, multiple drafting, collaboration, and functional writing. It draws attention to the importance of the assessment process as one major element of school curriculum. In addition, the present study may modify the way assessment process is looked at as an end in itself, whereas it should be seen as an important and integral part of teaching. As instruction and evaluation are linked, portfolio assessment could be used for instructional purposes.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Experiencing writing processes is an effective strategy to produce a piece of writing. Monitoring and assessing of these writing processes may contribute to the students' mastery of the writing product skills, and ultimately to proficiency in writing in general.

1.3 Purposes of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the effect of using the portfolio assessment strategy on improving the writing performance of third year secondary students and to explore if it is feasible to apply it in the teaching of writing in EFL educational setting in Saudi Arabia.

1.4 Questions of the Study

Based on the above mentioned problem, the research attempts to answer the following main question:

- 1.4.1 What effect does the use of portfolio assessment strategy have on the writing performance of EFL third year secondary school students in Saudi Arabia?

This question could be branched into the following questions:

- 1.4.1.1 What is the actual level of the students' English writing ability?
- 1.4.1.2 How effective is the use of portfolio assessment strategy on developing the students' English writing product skills?
- 1.4.1.3 What are the effects of portfolio assessment strategy on enriching the students' use of writing processes?

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

- 1.5.1 There are statistically significant differences at 0.05 level in writing performance gains between the experimental (portfolio) and control (non-portfolio) groups, in favor of the experimental group.
- 1.5.2 There are statistically significant differences at 0.05 level between the mean scores of the portfolio and non-portfolio groups on the writing product skills i.e., purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics, favoring the portfolio group.
- 1.5.3 There are statistically significant differences at 0.05 level between the mean scores of the portfolio and non-portfolio groups in the post self-reporting questionnaire on writing processes i.e., planning, drafting, revising, and editing, in favor of the former group.
- 1.5.4 There is a statistically significant correlation at 0.05 level between the subjects' (experimental group) means of scores in the portfolio and their means of scores in the English Writing Assessment Test.

1.6 Significance of the study

The significance of the study can be described in the following points:

- 1.6.1 It attempts to propose a portfolio assessment model for Saudi EFL classroom, which may have a beneficial effect on the teaching and learning of writing skills.
- 1.6.2 It may provide teachers with useful information that can form the basis for improving their instructional plans and practices.

- 1.6.3 One important contribution of the study is a set of guidelines devised for teachers to use when reviewing their students' portfolio contents.
- 1.6.4 It may be helpful in providing a strategy to improve the writing performance of third year EFL students at the secondary stage.
- 1.6.5 Findings of the study might encourage relevant authorities to think seriously of incorporating the portfolio assessment procedures in addition to formal tests in the advanced EFL programs.
- 1.6.6 To the researcher's knowledge, the scarcity of research addressing the use of portfolio assessment in Saudi EFL classrooms enhances the significance of the study.
- 1.6.7 Hopefully, it will lead to more researches in portfolio assessment.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

The study is delimited to the following:

- 1.7.1 The study is limited to studying the effect of portfolio assessment strategy as an evaluation and teaching tool on students' writing performance in general and writing product skills and writing processes in particular.
- 1.7.2 The sample used in the study is limited to a number (N:63) of third year secondary school students at the third secondary school at Al-Jouf Region.
- 1.7.3 The writing materials dealt with in the study come from the prescribed curriculum for the third secondary school students at the Ministry of Education.

1.8 Definition of Terms

In order to facilitate the reading and full understanding of the current study, the following are some definitions of terms that are used throughout the study:

1.8.1 Portfolio assessment.

Moya and O'Malley (1994) viewed portfolio assessment as "the procedure used to plan, collect, and analyze the multiple sources of data maintained in the portfolio" (p. 14).

Hancock (1994) referred to portfolio assessment as "ongoing process involving the student and teacher in selecting samples of student work for inclusion in a collection, the main purpose of which is to show the student's progress" (p.4).

Defining the term, Puhl (1997) mentioned that portfolio assessment is "a meaningful collection of student work to give a fuller picture of what a learner has achieved" (p.9).

According to Sewell, Marczak, & Horn (1999), it is defined as "a way to examine and measure progress, by documenting the process of learning or change as it occurs" (p.1).

Furthermore, Neiman (1999) defined it as "a selected collection of work that shows not only the best work, but also the development of the individual's work over a period of time. An added dimension is the individual's reflection of his /her development to the present and for the future" (p. 1).

Eissa (2003) defined portfolio assessment as: "The practice of saving lots of things that a student writes so that the student and his or her teacher can look at the collection and see how they are doing" (p.13).

Based on the above definitions, portfolio assessment is operationally defined in this study as the strategy of keeping a purposeful collection of writing tasks a student performs during the course of English over a period of time (one term). The collection shows the different writing stages in the production of a piece of writing as well as the end product. It includes guidelines for selecting contents of the portfolio, and assessment criteria by which student performance is judged. The student's involvement in selecting contents and reflecting on her own works is of great concern.

1.8.2 Writing performance.

According to Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied linguistics by Richards, Platt, and Platt (1992), writing performance is "a person's actual use of linguistics" (p. 269).

Brown (2000) referred to language performance as "the overtly observable and concrete manifestation or realization of competence. It is the actual doing of something...." (p. 30). Regarding writing performance, he referred to as the actual production of linguistic events.

Writing performance can also be defined as the act or process of performing writing tasks (Wehmeier, 2001).

Abu Hjaj (2003) defined it as what students actually do regarding writing tasks (p.107) (Translated).

In the present study, it can be defined as the means of scores obtained by the students in the writing tasks (products) in addition to their scores in the self-reporting questionnaire on English writing processes.

1.8.3 English as a foreign language (EFL).

According to Snow (1986) EFL refers to "situations where English is taught to persons living in countries where English is not the medium of instruction in the schools , where English is taught as a subject, and where exposure to English is typically limited to the classroom setting "(p.1).

1.8.4 Writing process.

Crowhurst (1988) defined the writing process as" the thinking processes that go on during writing "(cited in Saskatchewan Education, 1998, p. 2).

Kirby (2002, p.1) wrote that " the creative writing process permits the author to construct through a series well planned out stages , a thorough piece of writing that is both organized in its presentation and thorough in its development " .

Seow (2005, p. 315) sees writing process as " a private activity which comprises four main stages: planning, drafting, revising, and editing".

In the present study, writing process refers to the four writing stages the students pass through to produce a text which are planning, drafting, revising, and editing.

1.8.5 Writing product.

In the current study, this term refers to the final writing product. It involves certain productive writing skills, which are taken into account in the assessment of the end product namely, purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics.

1.8.6 Assessment.

According to Ferrara (1994), assessment refers to "the process of gathering information about learners from various sources to help us understand these students and describe them. Teaching is one type of assessment" (Cited in Puhl, 1997, p.4).

Further, assessment is defined by Butler (2001) as "the act of collecting information about individuals or groups of individuals in order to better understand them. The twin purposes of assessment are to provide feedback to students and to serve as a diagnostic tool for instruction" (p.2).

Assessment is also defined as "the act of collecting information on individual learners' proficiency or achievement" (Carter & Nunan, 2001, p.218).

1.8.7 Alternative assessment.

Pierce and O'Malley (1992) defined alternative assessment as "any method of finding out what a student knows or can do that is intended to show growth and information instruction and is not a standardized or traditional test" (p.2).

Furthermore, alternative assessment is defined as "an ongoing process involving the student and teacher in making judgments about the students' progress in language using non-conventional strategies" (Hancock, 1994, p.3).

McNamara (2000) referred to the term as "a movement for the reform of school-based assessment, away from standardized multiple choice tests and towards assessments which are more sensitive to the goals of the curriculum. Typically includes portfolio assessment, exhibitions, records of participation in classroom activities, etc." (p.131).

1.8.8 Rubric.

Rubric can be defined as "a scoring scale used to evaluate student work. A rubric is composed of at least two criteria by which student work is to be judged on a particular task and at least two levels of performance for each criterion" (Muller, 2006, p.2).

1.8.9 Paper-and-pencil language tests

According to McNamara (2000) the paper-and-pencil language tests term refers to " a traditional test format, with test paper and answer sheet" (p.135).

1.8.10 Rote learning.

According to Richards, Platt, and Platt (1992, p.319), rote learning is "the learning of material by repeating it over and over again until it is memorized, without paying attention to its meaning".

1.9 Organization of the Study

In this study, chapter one includes the introduction, statement of the problem, questions of the study, hypotheses of the study, purposes of the study, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, and definition of terms. Chapter two presents the theoretical background and review of related literature and studies. Chapter three is about the methods and procedures. It includes design of the study, sample of the study, instruments and the procedures that are followed in the study. The computed data, its analysis and discussion of the results are presented in chapter four. Chapter five contains the summary, conclusions, recommendations, and some suggestions for further research.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Development of the Assessment Process

2.1.2 Origins of the Portfolio Concept

2.1.3 Types of Portfolios

2.1.4 Characteristics of Developing Portfolio Assessment Strategy

2.1.5 Models for Developing and Implementing Portfolio Assessment

2.1.6 Essential Principles of Portfolio Assessment Strategy Development

2.1.7 Portfolio Conferences

2.1.8 Advantages of the Portfolio Assessment Strategy

2.1.9 Challenges of Using the Portfolio Assessment Strategy in EFL
Classrooms

2.1.10 Portfolio Assessment and Writing Instruction

2.2 Previous Studies

2.3 Commentary

This chapter is divided into two major sections, i.e., a theoretical framework and a review of previous studies. A number of issues of concern is discussed as a theoretical framework: development of the assessment process, origins of the portfolio concept, types of portfolios, characteristics of developing portfolio assessment strategy, models for developing and implementing portfolio assessment, its essential principles, portfolio conferences, advantages and challenges of using such strategy. Also, the relationship between portfolio assessment and writing instruction is considered. The second section presents a survey of some previous studies that are related to the current study.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Development of the assessment process.

Assessment is an important component of the instructional process. Rather, they are "two sides of the same coin" (Fleurquin, 1998, p. 46). Brindly (2001) referred to the 'assessment' term as the different systematic ways of gathering data about a student performance. It can also be defined as the process of finding out who the students are, what their abilities, talents, and interests are, what they need to know, and how they perceive the learning will affect them.

Despite the fact that tests have always been one component of the assessment tools, assessment was viewed as formal / traditional paper and pencil tests. Many researchers (e.g., Wiggins, 1990; Crosby, 1997; Cohen, 2001;) realized that tests are not sufficient enough method to achieve instruction and assessment purposes. They are administered only once or twice as a separate procedure during the term and thus assess specific skills or knowledge at a specific period of time neglecting students' performance throughout the term. Depending on that, test scores can not be relied on as a basis of making decisions

concerning students' true abilities, needs, and interests as well as decisions concerning instructional reforms. Such product-oriented traditional assessments had limited possibility to influence teaching and learning positively and are no longer fit with current EFL classroom practices. It was something separate and different from usual classroom life activities and it tested student ability to recall and reproduce specific knowledge, lower-level skills, and concepts, rather than their ability to produce and apply knowledge, significant high-level skills, and concepts to authentic situations.

There exist many traditional forms of assessment "treat students as objects of evaluation and place the responsibility and task of assessment in the hands of teachers or other adults" (Genesee and Upshur, 2004, p.105). In such form of assessment, students are just the objects of assessment, neither collaborators nor even participants. But, the assessment process requires the concentration of teacher and students. Hence, using traditional methods of assessment alone are not enough because they do not test many skills and abilities students need as learners.

Clearly, assessment process receives an increasing interest these days. This may be as a result of the strong belief that improving assessment procedures and changing the way it is looked at as the means to reform the instructional process as a whole. Assessment should not be limited to providing information that was often reported as a number which was not useful for determining what students actually know and can do or what teachers need to do to help them learn. Its function goes beyond that to include identifying student needs, strengths, weaknesses, and interests to be addressed. Consequently, assessment has to be a part of instructional practices. Rudman (1989) asserted that assessment and teaching "are not separate entities" and that assessment "was, and remains an integral part of teaching" (p.1). When assessment and teaching are linked, both teachers and students benefit.

Teachers start focusing on what and how to teach, making the best use of their time. Students are more self-directed, motivated, and focused on learning. Therefore, the common picture of assessment was its being an end in itself. The aim of assessment must not stop at monitoring student's performance; instead it should improve their performance (Wiggins, 1990; Yunian & Ness, 1999; Liang & Creasy, 2004). Precisely, the aim of assessment has to be, above all, to support the improvement of learning and teaching (Frederickson & Collins, 1989, cited in Valencia, 1997).

Actually, EFL classrooms include students with unique strengths, skills, needs, abilities, interests, and even with weaknesses. As a result, one single assessment instrument will not enough to meet such diversity and judge students' progress (Wiggins, 1989; Moya & O'Malley, 1994). Teacher needs to develop complete and accurate pictures of their students' abilities and progress not only regarding the cognitive aspects but also affective and behavioral as well as using a range of methods. That is why the assessment tools need to be administered at various points of time during students' progress which will lead to a more comprehensive view of the students' learning process. Assessment should play a role that is completely different from the role it now plays.

The nature of language assessment has changed over the years to focus on what students can do with language: communicative competence rather than language knowledge (Wrigley, 1992; McNamara, 2000; Shaaban, 2001). There is obviously a great need to assess what EFL students really know and are able to do in a way that consistently reflects their true abilities in the second language. It is not enough for students to acquire knowledge, concepts, and skills; instead they have to apply knowledge, concepts, and skills they have acquired.

Assessment is not a limited responsibility of the teacher. Hancock (1994) argues that "assessment should be viewed as an interactive process that engages both teacher and student in monitoring the student's performance"(p.2). No doubt, when teachers and learners are involved together in the assessment process, a kind of good rapport is developed between them. Students should be involved in and play an active role in the assessment process (Wrigley, 1992). They can do so through various practices. They can follow their work improvement over time, create assessment criteria for a product, discuss the strategies they follow, work with peers to revise work, evaluate peers work, and identify difficulties they encounter during the performing of a required task. And when students are collaborators in the assessment process, they develop reflective skill and thus improve their performance. They learn the qualities of good work, how to judge their work against these qualities, how to assess their efforts and feelings of accomplishment, and how to set future goals for themselves. In this connection, Allwright (1988) further argued that putting the control over the learning process in the hand of the learners, to some extent, can improve the quality of learning. Many researchers have proved practically that students who have opportunities to reflect on their own work show greater improvement than those who do not (e.g., Wiggins, 1990; Sparapani, Abel, Edwards, Herbster & Easton, 1997; Wagner & Lilly, 1999; Coombe & Barlow, 2004; Liang & Creasy, 2004).

A new movement in language assessment variously called "True Testing" or "Authentic (alternative) Assessment" has appeared (Wiggins, 1989, 1993, cited in Hauser, 1994, p.3). Such movement "stresses the need for assessment to be integrated with the goals of the curriculum and to have a constructive relationship with teaching and learning" (McNamara, 2000, p. 7). The alternative forms of assessment have been developed as alternative to traditional systems of monitoring students' language performance and progress and all of the problems associated with such systems. It is noteworthy that

alternative assessment is a major component of the assessment process as a whole along with the formal normative tests. Cole (1994) asserted that "Educators must incorporate both traditional and authentic assessment procedures to accurately extrapolate growth" (p.3).

Alternative assessment is defined as "an ongoing process involving the student and teacher in making judgments about the students' progress in language using non-conventional strategies" (Hancock, 1994, p.3). Hamayan (1995) describes alternative assessment strategies as "those techniques that can be used within the context of instruction and can be easily incorporated into the daily activities of the school or classroom"(p.213). But according to Huerta-Macias (2005) there is no single definition of alternative assessment. Rather, she says, a "variety of labels has been used to distinguish it from traditional standardized testing"(p.339).

The alternative assessment concept has been associated with foreign language instruction because it focuses attention on what students can do with the language rather than what they are able to recall or reproduce. From this perspective, of course, it deserves to be given a great interest. The principle that students demonstrate what they know and can do remains central to authentic assessment. So, it does not encourage rote learning and passive tests taking. Instead, as Erfan (2005) emphasized, it values not only the finished products but also the learning processes that leads to the improvement of the teaching / learning process as a whole (Translated).

One of the most important characteristics of alternative assessment is that it reflects curriculum that is actually being implemented. It is based on the daily classroom activities so that neither separate block of time more change in classroom routines and activities are required. Therefore, rather than adopting a single procedure, alternative assessment

includes a variety of procedures of which the teacher and the students can collaboratively select to be used for assessment. Briefly, portfolio assessment, as a complement or an alternative to standardized tests, is one of the most interesting and widely discussed of the new alternative forms of assessment.

2.1.2 Origins of the portfolio concept.

It is important to note that portfolio is not a new concept. It surfaced in 1970s and 1980s in literacy classrooms (Valencia & Calfee 1991; Mathews, 2003). Before that portfolios were used as an approach in teaching arts.

Traditionally, portfolios are used by architects, artists, models, and other professionals as a means of assembling work samples to show to a potential employer or/and customer. These portfolios are developed by the job applicant who first decides what to include and then arranges the materials to show the breadth of the applicant abilities and illustrate his / her skill at applying knowledge to practice (Valencia & Calfee, 1991; Shaaban, 2001; Genesee & Upshur, 2004;).

In recent years, portfolios have come into wide use as an alternative form of assessment, as it includes the assessment of performance rather than the mere recall of memorized facts. They have appeared partly in reaction to standardized tests and partly as a result of the recognized mismatch between assessment and teaching. And with education increasing focus on performance standards and student- centered classroom instruction, the portfolio notion has become more than a repository of work samples. The philosophy of portfolio is based on what students should demonstrate, rather than tell about, what they know and can do. Most importantly, portfolios are far more than a storage place for

students work; "they are personalized, longitudinal representations of a student's own effort" (Collins, 1992, p.451).

The definition of a portfolio varies some, but there seems to be a general consensus that it is a meaningful, purposeful, systematic, and selective collection of student's work that exhibits a student efforts, achievements, and progress journey in a given area. The portfolio development process is a shared student-teacher responsibility as it requires students' active participation in selection of portfolio content, the criteria for selection, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection (Frederick & Shaw 1996).

Actually, portfolios have been predominantly used in many areas such as mathematics, chemistry, physics, teaching training, and language learning to document individual students' progress and accomplishments. As for the assessment of language skills, the use of portfolios is a growing trend and has been of considerable interest to teachers for the past few decades (Farr & Tone 1998; Douglas, 2000).

2.1.3 Types of portfolios.

Generally speaking, for some a portfolio is a folder containing all the student work; others see it as a collection of the student best work. The literature reviewed on portfolios revealed that there are many types of portfolios in use. The following are the three major types most often cited in literature (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996, as cited in Apple & Shimo, 2004; Mueller, 2006).

2.1.3.1 Showcase portfolios.

This type of portfolio is a collection of the student best or favorite work determined through a collaborative student - teacher selection. Only completed work is included; thus

the showcase portfolio emphasizes the products of learning. In addition, this type of portfolio is especially compatible with audio-visual artifact development, including photographs, video tapes, and electronic records of students completed work. The showcase portfolio includes reflections by students on the decision-making processes used to determine which work is included.

2.1.3.2 Collection portfolio.

This type is also known as the 'working portfolio', 'documentation portfolio', or 'growth portfolio'. This strategy involves a collection of work showing growth or change over time and reflecting and documenting students' achievements. Specifically, the collection portfolio includes every thing from brainstorming activities to rough and/or early drafts to finished final drafts of all student work. The collection can include the best and weakest of students work. It is clear that such type of portfolio emphasizes the process of learning.

2.1.3.3 Evaluation portfolio.

This type is also called 'assessment portfolio' or 'portfolio assessment'. It requires students to select work for assessment according to predetermined criteria given by the teacher. Such collection documents achievement and progress towards standards. This type of portfolio serves grading purposes.

It is obvious that these types represent the purposes of creating a portfolio. However, each type serves one or more specific purposes. For example a showcase portfolio might also be used for evaluation purposes, and a collection portfolio might also showcase final performances or products. It is always better and effective to use working portfolio as they

exhibit the different processes a student is immersed in to produce work samples (Sparapani et al., 1997).

Likewise, according to Epstein (2005) portfolios can be divided into two categories:

2.1.3.4 Process- oriented portfolio.

The process- oriented portfolio tells the story of a student growth over time. It documents learning process as well as portfolio development process. The portfolio includes early rough drafts, reflections on the process, and difficulties encountered along the way. Additionally, this approach inevitably emphasizes students' reflection on their learning process, including the use of reflection sheets, reflective journals, think logs, and related forms of metacognitive processing. It is necessary to organize the portfolio content in a way that exhibits a student work from the beginning, middle, and end of a learning period.

2.1.3.5 Product- oriented portfolio.

It is a collection of student best work. The purpose of such collection is to document and reflect on achievements rather than the processes a student immersed in to produce them. Students have to collect all their work until the end of a learning period, at which time they must choose samples that represent their best work. It is very common for each work sample in a product-oriented portfolio to be accompanied by self-reflection, usually in writing, on why and in what ways the samples represent work of high quality.

To sum up, both types of portfolios are used at all grade levels. It is proved; however, that a process-oriented portfolio is more common at the elementary level as individual growth is the object of concern rather than determining specific levels of performances. A

product-oriented portfolio, on the other hand, is more common at the secondary level as older students generally have higher thinking skills necessary to select their best work wisely as well as engage in self-reflection process deeply (Sweet, 1993; Epstein, 2005).

As a general rule, the purpose of the portfolio determines its type and consequently its content. However, portfolios typically are developed for one of three basic purposes; to show growth, to showcase current performance, or to evaluate an achievement (Mueller, 2006). And as cited in Puhl (1997), Gottlieb (1995) listed six purposes for creating portfolios: collecting, reflecting, assessing, documenting, thinking, and evaluation. Arter (1995), on the other hand, mentioned only two purposes for developing portfolios: assessment or instruction. Portfolios may be used to keep track of what a student knows and can do. They also can be utilized to promote learning through the process of assembling the portfolio. Thus, the teacher has first to identify the purpose (s) for creating a portfolio and then determine the portfolio type (s) that serves the purpose (s).

2.1.3.6 Portfolio assessment.

Portfolio assessment strategy has been of considerable interest to teachers not only in instruction but also in assessment for more than three decades now. However, it has been widely used in teaching and assessing language skills particularly with respect to the writing skill in addition to or instead of traditional testing (Champman, 1990; Pierce & O'Malley, 1992; Hancock, 1994; Farr & Tone, 1998; Douglas, 2000). Clearly stated, portfolio assessment becomes a natural component of the assessment process and teaching/learning process as well. Sometimes, it is used to complement existing traditional testing procedures, but more frequently is used in the place of such procedures.

Portfolio assessment is one of the most effective, interesting, and widely discussed of the new alternative assessment strategies (Valencia & Calfee, 1991). It is defined as " the purposeful, selective collection of learner work and reflective self- assessment that is used to document progress and achievement over time with regard to specific criteria" (Kohonen, 1997, cited in Douglas, 2000, pp.240-241). Definitions vary but the general consensus is that a portfolio assessment strategy is the purposeful and systematic collection of student work that reflects accomplishments relative to specific instructional goals or objectives (Pierce & O'Malley, 1992; Gomez, 2000; Coombe & Barlow, 2004). Such a collection records students' growth over time. Hancock (1994) provided a more specific definition when he referred to the portfolio assessment strategy as " an ongoing process involving the student and teacher in selecting samples of student work for inclusion in a collection, the main purpose of which is to show the student's progress"(p.4).

It is necessary to point out that portfolio assessment is a type of portfolios; whereas a portfolio is a collection of a student work samples, portfolio assessment is the process of creating, collecting, and evaluating the portfolio contents (Moya & O'Malley, 1994). Extending beyond providing scores, portfolios include samples of what students are doing and experiencing during a term.

Rather being merely a collection of work samples, portfolio assessment is the practice of collecting all the items students have been working on during a term or a learning period in a folder. Such collection tells the story of a student growth and achievement in one or more areas. Student-teacher interactions and/or conferences occur regularly about difficulties encountered, and suggested strategies to perform better in future. Moreover, the teacher encourages students to self -assess or reflect on their work identifying strengths as well as weaknesses in their work.

Most importantly, student involvement is required in "preparing his or her own portfolio, sometimes in collaboration with the instructor, sometimes not, placing in it examples of various types of language performance, including drafts and revisions as well as finished products"(Douglas, 2000, p.242).

2.1.4 characteristics of developing portfolio assessment strategy.

Many researchers (Moya & O'Malley, 1994; Barton & Collins 1997, as cited in Sewell et al., 1999; Kemp & Toperoff, 1998; Hamp-Lyons & Condon, 2000) have enriched literature with lists of characteristics that are crucial for the development of an effective portfolio assessment model. Moya and O'Malley (1994) suggested five key characteristics of the portfolio assessment strategy:

- Comprehensive: The portfolio contents present both depth and breadth of students' knowledge.
- Predetermined and systematic: the purpose and goals of developing the portfolio should be determined previously. Besides, careful planning is necessary.
- Informative: evidence must be meaningful to teachers, students, program staff, and parents.
- Tailored: items included in the portfolio must be related to its focus.
- Authentic: activities must be related to real-life situations.

Likewise, Barton and Collins (1997), as cited in Sewell et al. (1999) also provided a number of characteristics that are basic to the development of any type of portfolio used for assessment:

- Multisourced: the portfolio includes a variety of materials (e.g., drawings, photos, journals, reflection sheets, test scores, teacher observations, parents comments, audio or video tapes of performance, etc.)
- Authentic: the portfolio contents should reflect the program, activities, goals, and criteria.
- Dynamic: the portfolio artifacts are collected during an extended period of time rather than at specific period of time as the case with traditional testing. The portfolio must include evidence that exhibits the different stages of mastery, not just the best work. Items should be selected by the student himself/ herself, and sometimes in collaboration with the teacher. Thus, the portfolio measures growth and change over time.
- Explicit: the purposes and goals of the portfolio should be clear. By developing a portfolio assessment program, teachers, students, and parents should have a common vision of what students should know and be able to do. When students know what is expected of them, they can take the responsibility for creating their portfolios.
- Integrated: the program tasks should be the same as or closely resemble the tasks to be carried out in actual language-in-use situations. Students should be asked to demonstrate their knowledge by applying what they have learned to real-life situations.
- Based on ownership: the students should be involved in setting goals and determining what items to be included, so that they, can have the ownership of their own learning. Students should also be engaged in the reflection process by self- assessing and / or reflecting on their own work.

Further, Kemp and Toperoff (1998) mentioned five key characteristics of portfolio assessment:

- A portfolio is a form of assessment that students collaboratively do with their teacher.
- A portfolio is a selection of student work, rather than a collection of all work samples. A student must be involved in selecting items to be included.
- A portfolio exhibits samples of the student work which show growth over time. It also enables students to reflect on their own work identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the work.
- The criteria for selecting and assessing the portfolio contents should be clear to the teacher and the students alike at the beginning of the program.
- The items in the portfolio can show growth in all language domains as well as it can focus on only one domain.

Also, Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000) offered nine characteristics of good portfolios:

- Collection: the portfolio can measure a student progress in more than a single area.
- Range: the portfolio assessment approach enables student to write in a variety of topics of different genres.
- Context richness: Student experiences are a matter of concern in the assessment process.
- Delayed evaluation: student can revise his/her work.
- Selection: student is involved in the selection process.
- Student-centered control: the student is responsible for his / her learning.

- Reflection and self -assessment: Student self-assesses and /or reflects on his/her own work.
- Growth along specific parameters: the portfolio shows student growth overtime in a specific domain.
- Development over time: the portfolio exhibits the development of each single piece included.

However, researchers stressed that it is not necessary that these characteristics are found in all portfolio programs equally. Besides, the elements of collection, selection, and reflection guide the implementation of any portfolio experience.

2.1.5 Models for developing and implementing portfolio assessment.

Reviewing the literature (Moya & O'Malley, 1994; Kemp & Toperoff, 1998; Gomez, 2000; Mueller, 2006), different models of portfolio assessment are suggested for developing and implementing portfolio assessment programs in EFL classrooms.

Moya and O'Malley (1994, pp16-17.) proposed a portfolio assessment model for EFL learners which included six interrelated levels of assessment activities:

- *Identify purpose and focus of portfolio*
- *Plan portfolio content*
- *Design portfolio analysis*
- *Prepare for instructional use*
- *Identify procedures to verify accuracy of information*
- *Implement the model*

Another model of portfolio assessment was presented by Kemp and Toperoff (1998, pp.4-7). It is composed of six stages:

- *Identifying teaching goals to assess through the portfolio*
- *Introducing the idea of portfolios to class*
- *Specifying portfolio content*
- *Giving clear and detailed guidelines for portfolio presentation*
- *Notifying other interested parties*
- *Assessing the portfolios and giving feedback*

A more detailed model of portfolio assessment was offered by Gomez (2000, pp.4-5):

- *Decide about goals and content*
- *Design the portfolio assessment program*
- *Develop scoring criteria and standards of performance*
- *Align tasks to standards and curriculum*
- *Implement at pilot sites, provide staff development, and analyze results*
- *Implement at all sites*
- *Train teachers to score*
- *Establish guidelines for administration*
- *Score the portfolios*
- *Report the results*
- *Evaluate the program*

Another portfolio model for EFL instruction was suggested by Mueller (2006, p.4) which comprised seven phases:

- *Identify purpose(s) of the portfolio*
- *Select portfolio audience(s)*
- *Specify portfolio contents*
- *Focus on processes that will be engaged in during the development of the portfolio*
- *Manage time and materials in the development of the portfolio*
- *Share portfolios with pertinent audiences*
- *Evaluate the portfolio*

2.1.6 Essential Principles of Portfolio Assessment Strategy Development.

Collecting, selecting from, and reflecting on students' work are key principles for creating any type of portfolios successfully. These principles should be taken into account to appropriately implement the portfolio assessment strategy (Kieffer & Morrison, 1994; Wagner & Lilly, 1999; Hamp-Lyons & Condon, 2000).

From the outset of the process of developing a portfolio program, students must collect all the activities, projects, and assignments that have been done during a learning period. Students need to be given clear instructions regarding what goes into their portfolios (collection or working portfolios). They must get limited opportunities for controlling what goes into their collections to enhance their sense of responsibility for developing their own portfolios. To assure that portfolios will promote sense of ownership, it is essential that students should be allowed to put things in it. But students should also know from the beginning that the teacher, too, may add materials and/or items to the collection, even though, portfolios must remain students' domain.

Rather than including only final drafts, Farr and Tone (1998) assured that students' collections should include both work in progress and finished work. The collection process, thus, should be continuous and ongoing providing opportunities, not to evaluate or criticize it, but to monitor students' progress toward achieving the objectives and goals the teacher has set for a specific level. Such collections of varied items enable students, teacher, and others to look at the processes students use during their learning.

Based upon the purpose of developing a portfolio, the selection process is driven (Mueller, 2006). Different samples of student work are to be selected and included into the portfolio for different purposes. Actually, the portfolio contents should reflect the instructional objectives and goals. Moreover, the selected items must clearly mirror the criteria and standards identified for evaluation. Additionally, how samples are selected might differ depending on the purpose. For instance, the teacher plays a crucial role in developing an evaluation portfolio. He/she might decide which samples to be included to assess student growth and accomplishment. On the other hand, for a growth portfolio, students' involvement in the selection process of determining significant samples for inclusion is crucial. Meanwhile, the teacher needs to observe each student selection process to make sure that the portfolio contents reveal whether the student is reaching the instructional objectives and goals. Finally, the contents of a showcase portfolio can be selected by the student, who might include meaningful items that best highlight achievement and progress, or by the teacher who might primarily make those decisions.

Unlike traditional testing, the portfolio is something done by and for the students. It holds the most promise for promoting students' involvement in the assessment process by asking them to reflect upon the quality and growth of their work. Around the same issue, Genesee and Upshur (2004) stated that "portfolios make students the agents of reflection

and decision making and thus give control of their own learning" (p.105). Students, as part of the portfolio development process, are encouraged to think deeply about their learning experiences assessing work samples. Reflection, that should be ongoing throughout the development of portfolio, provides information about students' perceptions of their own work and of themselves as learners that the teacher can take into account during the assessment of students' work. Pointing out to importance of reflection, Camp (1992) pointed out that "we learn in a part by looking back-reflecting on what we have done" (p.61). His experiments with portfolio activities showed that giving students the opportunity to look back at their work is of great value to students as well as to teachers. Reflective activities help students become aware of strategies and processes they use in learning. In addition, such activities encourage students to develop criteria and standards for their work. Moreover, the reflection practice increases the feeling of students' ownership of their work and causes opportunities for interactions between students and the teacher (Camp, 1992; Clemmons et al., 1993; Coombe & Barlow, 2004). In addition, Wagner and Lilly (1999) found that "when teachers employ students' reflections along with diagnostic data, notes about classroom observation, and work samples, they will likely create more complete and accurate pictures of their students' abilities and progress" (p.41).

Further, Killion and Todnem (1990), as cited in Cole (1994), suggested that reflection can be classified into three forms. First, reflection-on-action which requires looking back on what student has accomplished and revising the processes, thoughts, and products. Second, reflection-in- action, in which, student reflects on the process of carrying out the task. The final form of reflection is reflection-for-action which expects student to review what he/ she has accomplished and identify constructive guidelines and strategies to be followed successfully to do the task better in the future.

Additionally, when the practice of reflection is not familiar to students, or even if they are young to engage in such experience, the first step toward creating a good portfolio is to engage students in simple forms of reflection. Such practice requires providing enough support and creating a climate of trust. In this way, students can reflect orally by looking at their work, talking about it aloud, and listening to others' talk about their work. The teacher is involved in this oral reflection activity by modeling questions that speakers and listeners can ask of one another as well as possible responses that each might give in return. Regarding adult students, who are ready for the experience as they may be familiar to such process or as they generally have higher thinking skills necessary to engage in reflection deeply, they can use writing to reflect on their work. Students engage in reflection by answering questions about a single piece of their writing. Reflection can take the form of learning logs, reflective journals, reflection sheets, and other forms of reflections.

As being unfamiliar experience, it is essential for students to learn to effectively reflect on their learning and progress. Thus, developing good reflective skills requires instruction, modeling, and lots of practice. Students need to learn how to respond to questions and / or prompts in a reflection sheet or to any reflective activity. They need to learn how to effectively identify strengths and weaknesses, to set goals for themselves, and to develop meaningful strategies for improvement.

In summary, once opportunities for practicing reflection is given, feedback and reflection to student's responses can be provided through face-to- face interactions between the teacher and the student. Such interaction can provide the teacher with valuable information about the students' thinking and growth and the student with significant feedback.

2.1.7 Portfolio conferences.

Conferencing is an important step in the portfolio assessment strategy development and guidance as it is an effective strategy of the portfolio philosophy of shared and active assessment. Generally, conferencing takes the form of a conversation or discussion between teacher and students about his/her work to discuss collaboratively progress and set goals for future. It typically takes several forms: individual students, several students, or even the whole class. Anyway, students need to feel that conferences are for their benefit at all times.

Farr and Tone(1998) stated that " the portfolio conference is a regular time for student and teacher to sit down one-to- one and discuss what they believe the collection shows" (p.155). Questions are asked about the collection and about the learning process. Moreover, exchange of thoughts takes place during these conferences while the student and teacher examine the portfolio contents in an attempt to assess student development as language user.

Conferences can be used to achieve many purposes. They can be conducted on a regular basis through a semester in order to review the contents of portfolios, monitor progress and obstacles that might stand in the way of learning and, as Genesee and Upshur (2004) mentioned, "to plan lessons or instruction that is responsive to students' ongoing needs " (p.112). And as conferences can be discussions about completed work or work in progress, they are widely used at the end of a learning period for grading purposes to assess learning in respect of major instructional objectives.

Again, Farr and Tone (1998) emphasized the importance of portfolio conferences as teaching and assessment strategies. As the main focus of conferences is process, they communicate not only how students are doing but also what the students have to say about how they are doing and why. Such organized conferences help teacher to learn more about

his / her students. They are also very useful for understanding the processes, strategies, and approaches students use to perform school work and language tasks. Effectively used, such valuable insights promote understanding of students' progress and achievements (Anwar, 2002).

Conferences, as shared discussion, give students a sense of ownership and involvement in learning and assessment processes. The teacher encourages the student to share his /her portfolio by reviewing and discussing the contents and by reflecting on his / her growth. Students, in preparation for these conferences, are given time to review their work, to think deeply about the collection, and to reorder it if necessary.

To start a conference, positive comments and observations that promote student responses are much better than questions that demand an answer. The teacher, for example, may use praise and observations about the student organization of the portfolio or the thoughtful selection of pieces, as attempts to get a conversation started.

The successful conference should help the student, under teacher guidance, set some meaningful objectives or goals to become a better learner during the weeks that follow. These objectives may focus on strategies. Often these objectives are practical to reveal student desire to read books or stories by a certain author or on a certain topic. Sometimes, those objectives are a short list of intentions to avoid certain errors. Also, an objective may acknowledge that a particular item needs revising or developing. More importantly, it is better to use a conference sheet, as Clemmons et al. (1993) pointed out, to record questions and comments. Recording comments about conferences is important and useful because such comments help students recognize their strengths and improvements as language learners.

2.1.8 Advantages of the portfolio assessment strategy.

Many researchers have referred to the countless advantages of portfolio assessment (Valencia & Calfee, 1991; Murphy & Smith, 1992; Sweet, 1993; Moya & O'Malley, 1994; Neiman, 1999; Apple & Shimo, 2004). Instead of judging students' performance at a specific separate point of time, portfolios examine students' progress toward goals by collecting a variety of the artifacts of instruction over an extended period of time. Thus, assessment flows directly from the instruction. Valencia and Calfee (1991) further maintained that portfolio offers an effective strategy for reinforcement of instruction (teaching and learning) and assessment. As a major advantage, such strategy provides valuable information that, if effectively used, enriches the learning, teaching, and assessment processes and makes them work together (Murphy & Smith, 1992). And being a promising alternative assessment strategy, portfolio assessment links assessment to daily teaching practices and thus allows assessment to become a teaching strategy to improve learning (Moya & O'Malley, 1994; Epstein, 2005). So, portfolios are valued as they complement rather than take time away from instruction (Sweet, 1993).

One of the major strengths of portfolio assessment strategy is that it provides, if it is systematically planned, implemented, and evaluated, accurate and in-depth information about student abilities in different learning domains. The portfolio contents document progress toward predetermined instructional goals or objectives. According to Sewell et al. (1999), contents of portfolios are sometimes called 'artifacts' or 'evidence'.

Being a shared responsibility, the portfolio assessment strategy requires students and teacher involvement and collaboration in the learning process and its assessment. Thus, it provides an occasion for teacher- student classroom instruction. Teachers should do more than teaching to tests likewise students, should do more than studying for tests. In other

words, teachers and students should collaborate in the process of assessment. A crucial transformation in the student and teacher roles in the assessment process, during the process of portfolio development, seems to occur. Portfolios provide the chance, as Hahn (1985) said, "to put the ball in the student's court" (cited in Murphy & Smith, 1992, p.58). The greatest value of portfolios is that, through developing them, students become active, thoughtful, reflective participants. By using the portfolio assessment strategy, students can have the opportunity to manage, monitor, and assess their learning.

During the process of portfolio assessment development, students with teacher assistance and guidance are immersed in preparing their own portfolios, immersed in meaningful activities, select work samples that exemplify growth in specific area for inclusion in their portfolios, and even more importantly reflect on their work and progress in language learning. This helps students gain a sense of responsibility towards their work. When students are involved in reflection activities and setting goals for future progress, they become more self-critical and reflective about their activities, using time, and about the quality of their products, take more responsibility for their own learning, and consequently develop increased motivation to achieve their own goals (Clemmons et al., 1993; Hancock, 1994; Douglas, 2000; Todd, 2002). In addition, such strategy assists students in revising, correcting, and organizing their work. Several chances are given to demonstrate what they can accomplish (Johns, 1995).

Instead of being error hunter and dominating the fully teaching/ learning process, EFL teacher should take into consideration the radical shift in his role in the teaching / learning process. He/she should observe students' progress, guide them throughout the various processes of developing portfolios, encourage them to learn, and provide help. He/she

should give the students the opportunities to think, identify errors, correct them, and thus improve their work.

As being developmental pictures of students' progress, portfolios allow teachers to find out who each student is, what that student knows and does not know, and where each student strengths and weaknesses lie to help them improve their performance in ways not possible with other types of assessment. It enables the teacher to see students as individuals, each with his or her own unique of characteristics, needs, and strengths. In other words, portfolio assessment "can accommodate the diverse learning patterns of all students and enable each of them to realize and experience success" (Brown, 1997, p. 2).

Perhaps, the portfolio assessment strategy would provide teachers with a tool not only for assessing students' performance but also for thinking about teaching and learning processes (Wagner & Lilly, 1999). The information gained through such thinking can be used to make decisions regarding the improvement of instruction. By looking at students' portfolios, teachers gain constant and valuable insights into their teaching; accordingly they can modify their instructional plans and strategies for improving the instructional process as a whole. Other benefits include encouraging teachers to shift their emphasis away from achievement comparisons toward improving students' performance. Portfolios enable teachers to give students immediate, constant, and valuable feedback in a meaningful concrete way to improve their work in future.

A distinct value underlying the use of portfolio assessment strategy is its potential to provide an effective means for assessing not only the final products but also the processes by which work is done (Clemmons et al., 1993; Mueller, 2006). Such focus on learning processes and strategies enables students to learn, think, and produce and consequently facilitates learning (Sweet, 1993; Baak, 1997). In addition to these, such strategy provides

both practicing and assessment of language skills as it is a part of teaching practices (Farr & Tone, 1998).

Finally, the portfolio assessment strategy enhances the home-school connection by involving parents in their children learning process. Portfolios give parents an opportunity to see, from time to time, what their children have accomplished and what they want to achieve. Parents can review, read, carefully examine, and respond to the contents of their children portfolios. Thus, they can construct a coherent picture out of children work: the processes, products, and progress of their children learning to get a real sense of their growth, accomplishment, or progress toward a set of goals. "Many teachers intentionally involve the parents in the development of the portfolio or make parents an audience or both" (Mueller, 2006, p.17).

2.1.9 Challenges of using the portfolio assessment strategy in EFL classrooms.

Portfolio assessment is not a panacea for all what is wrong in education. Rather it is an innovative, alternative assessment strategy that is rich in both advantages and weaknesses that should be fully considered for successful implementation.

There are, of course, drawbacks for portfolio assessment. Many studies revealed that there are issues of concern regarding portfolio assessment use that all new assessment tools

encounter (Belanoff & Elbow, 1991; Hauser, 1994; Moya & O'Malley, 1994; Brown, 1997; Sparapani et al., 1997; Neiman, 1999; Gomez, 2000; Apple & Shimo, 2004; Epstein, 2005).

One major concern is time. Portfolio can be very time-consuming for teachers and staff especially if portfolios are done in addition to traditional grading. The strategy makes more for teacher; it puts more pressure on teachers and makes some feel anxious especially those using it for the first time. Teachers, who intend using portfolios, need not only a thorough understanding of their subject area and instruction skills but also additional time for reading and studying about portfolios. One of the biggest disadvantages of portfolio assessment for teachers is that it can be something new and unfamiliar which demands study. So, teachers need knowledge to manage portfolios easily and successfully.

Unlike traditional tests which are administered at a certain amount of time, portfolios are created during an extended period of time such as an entire term or even academic year. Designing, implementing, and grading portfolios is costly and timely. Developing a portfolio assessment program requires intensive staff development, training, talking, and collaboration with other teachers who have enough experience in portfolios management. This can decrease instruction time.

Teachers need time and energy for portfolios' management: developing strategies and materials, conferencing with individual students or small groups, reviewing portfolios contents, commenting on students' work, and provide feedback. During the process of developing portfolios, EFL students must receive feedback from the teacher. In addition, most students must be guided through the process of developing portfolios as portfolios may be a new experience for them.

There is also concern about using portfolios. Such concern revolves around the number of decisions that have to be made constantly about what to include and how to evaluate and interpret the contents of the portfolio. In fact, developing reliable, valid, and effective scoring guides, rubrics, and criteria for assessment of portfolios and its contents, which can be initially difficult and unfamiliar, poses another problem of portfolio assessment strategy. Apple and Shimo (2004) pointed out that assessment of the portfolio can be done holistically and analytically: individual pieces included in the portfolio can be assessed analytically while the portfolio itself receives an overall holistic grade. Therefore, scoring students' portfolios which include a variety of work samples of different purposes collected over time is more time-consuming than scoring a traditional test.

Further, it is difficult to establish the validity and reliability of portfolio assessment, as a qualitative strategy, compared to the case with quantitative assessment tools. With the amount of assistance and guidance provided by teachers during the process of developing portfolios, there is an important issue need to be considered which is whether portfolios are an actually representative of students' performance. Thus, the amount of assistance students receive and competency interpretation are issues of concern. For successful validation, multiple judges, careful planning, and proper training of raters are required. So, validation of the portfolio procedure is costly and time-consuming.

Moreover, one of the main challenges regarding using the portfolio assessment strategy is related to reliability. As portfolio contains a variety of work samples of different purposes, which collected over time problems in scoring emerge. Such challenge of scoring reliability over time can be effectively met with when raters are on acceptable rating rubrics and are sufficiently practiced in portfolio grading. One other drawback here

is the quality of inter-rater reliability. If portfolios are scored, are the scoring rubrics strong enough to enable several teachers to agree on final scores for a single portfolio.

Finally, some instructional institutions and parents can often be skeptical about assessment instruments other than traditional testing as they may lack an understanding of portfolio use and interpretation.

To sum up, the portfolio assessment strategy is found not to alter the traditional forms of assessment; its value represents in its being a complementary strategy. Portfolio assessment and standardized testing can coexist and complement each other.

2.1.10 Portfolio assessment and writing instruction.

Writing is the process of documenting thoughts and experiences. It is viewed as a communicative social activity through which one can communicate a variety of messages to a close or distant, known or unknown reader(s) (Olshtain, 2001; Reid, 2002). Rather than being merely one of language skills, writing is one of the major skills in language acquisition (Sebranek, Meyer, & Kemper, 1992).

Many researchers (e.g., Celce-Murcia, 2001; Olshtain, 2001) agreed that writing is essential but a difficult skill for EFL students to accomplish. Unlike speaking skill, writing imposes greater demands on the text as written interaction lacks immediate feedback from the writer who has to try to write a clear, relevant, and interesting text.

Writing is not merely putting down word after word to form a sentence or writing one sentence beside the other to form a paragraph. The difficulty lies in generating and organizing ideas as well as in translating these ideas in writing in English Language (EFL

Writing) into coherent, accurate, informative and readable text (Richards & Renandya, 2005).

Writing is a process as well as a product. EFL writers have to pay attention to the processes, i.e., planning, drafting, revising, and editing they use to produce an outcome (product) as well as to the finished product with regard to spelling, punctuation, word choice, grammar, content, and so on. In fact, students need to be well-versed in the basic stages of the writing process for individual language development. Such strategy helps teacher examine students' writing growth.

In view of the role EFL writing plays in students' academic, social, and practical lives, the improvement of their writing ability is a main priority of schooling. Recently, in teaching writing emphasis is shifted away from students' products toward the processes they are involved in, while writing as students should experience the different stages in the production of a piece of writing. No doubt, such emphasis on the writing processes help students writing development and enables teachers to examine this development.

These days, teachers tend to use a process-based strategy in writing instruction. In such strategy students spend time selecting the topics they will write about, gathering information about the topics, drafting, revising, and editing before submitting a finished piece of writing.

The new trend in writing instruction in EFL classrooms is to focus on writing processes required to produce a certain outcome (a product) as well as on writing outcomes (Champman, 1990; Wrigley, 1992). Thus, it is necessary to adopt an assessment strategy that encourages such trend as teaching and assessment are two sides of the same coin. Regarding this issue, Valencia and Calfee (1991) pointed out that the rise of the portfolio

concept is primarily associated with the use of the process writing approach in the field of writing instruction. This form of assessment includes " not only an assessment of what the result was, but the how and the why: how a student reached the result and why the result came about" (Apple, 2004, cited in Apple & Shimo, 2004, p.4).

Portfolio assessment, as an alternative innovative strategy of assessment provides a means of assessing not only the writing products but also the processes of writing that occur to create such products. Unlike traditional tests, portfolios can showcase the processes of producing pieces of writing as " students include not only their final polished pieces but also their planning as well-brainstorming notes, mapping, webs, chats, and drafts showing revisions and rewriting " (Clemmons et al., 1993, p.11). Thus, portfolios show the stages of the writing process a text has gone through and the stages of students' growth (Coombe & Barlow, 2004).

Portfolio assessment is a mechanism for improving students' writing performance. Such strategy allows students to write daily, have a choice in what they write. In addition, they write in a variety of genres and for different audiences. Students can reflect such variety in the collections they collect to compile their portfolios. Students, at the end of a portfolio assessment program, are asked to select improved or best pieces of writing to include in their portfolio to submit assessment. Students also include writing samples that exhibit the stages in the writing process, including planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Such process develops students' planning, drafting, revising, and editing skills. And because of students' involvement in selecting pieces for their portfolio and reflecting on them, portfolio assessment respects students and their abilities. Accordingly, portfolios encourage learner autonomy and increase linguistic competence while assessing the

learning process over an extended period of time. (Valencia & Calfee, 1991; Clemmons et al., 1993; Santos, 1997; Apple & Shimo, 2004; Penaflorida, 2005; Seow, 2005;).

Since portfolio assessment strategy is a formative assessment, it provides students with advice and guides during the portfolio development process for future performance, and consequently encourages and motivates students to learn to improve their writing ability.

As portfolio assessment becomes a way of learning about students and how they write; it enables teacher to monitor the processes students use as they write and examine the quality of students' finished writings. Moreover, portfolios are a natural component of teaching and learning practices (Tompkins, 1994). They are continuous, systematic, authentic, and meaningful collections of students' writings and other work that show students' progress. They are dynamic as they reflect and document students' day to day learning activities.

In brief, the most important point concerning portfolio assessment strategy is that the assessment is not just based on the quality of the writing products; rather the portfolio creation process allows students to experience the different stages of the writing process necessary to create the product and thus portfolio assessment, as Weiser (1992) ascertained, supports the notion that writing is a process which involves development, growth, and learning as well as a product.

2.2 Previous Studies

The following is a survey of some related studies which deal with portfolio assessment and its impact, as an innovative instructional strategy, on teaching and learning writing.

Weiser (1992) discussed how the portfolio grading system at Purdue University is used to encourage and motivate weak writers. At the end of the semester each student had to submit a portfolio of six to eight completed papers. The portfolio contained all of the formal papers the student has written for the course including the required planning assignments, the drafts that have been read and critiqued by classmates, and the initial revision of each paper that has been read and responded by the instructor. During the last two weeks of the semester, students were involved in selection and revision processes, which were the main features of the implemented system, through holding teacher-student conferences and revision workshops. Much of class time during the last few weeks of the semester was devoted for peer review. Instead of grading each of the formal completed papers included into the portfolio, a single grade was assigned to each student writing portfolio at the end of the semester. Portfolios were used to support the instructional goals of a process-oriented composition course and address the difficulties of grading student work in basic writing classes. It was also concluded that portfolio can be used as a teaching strategy in writing classes to improve students' writing ability.

Enginarlar (1994) examined the students' attitudes to both portfolio grading method and process writing approach in the department of foreign language education programs at the Middle East Technical University, Ankara. The study was limited to one section (27 students). They had to write four essays and in the end, they were asked to choose two with the earlier drafts. The instruments were an interview and a short questionnaire. Results revealed that the students had favorable attitudes to process writing approach and portfolio grading. The study also got to the fact that editing, when properly guided, has an immediate benefit to the writing process and is more easily achieved than revising.

In a study by Nounou (1995), an attempt was made to investigate the use of portfolio, as a new form of performance assessment, with a group of ESP students at the American University in Cairo. A recording sheet was used to measure the students' work samples against the criteria decided upon for the course. Results showed that the use of a wide variety of pieces collected over a period of time gives a clear indication of a student's ability level. The study presented some guidelines regarding how portfolios are set up, and how the contents as well as the criteria for evaluation are selected.

In a descriptive study, Johns (1995) suggested portfolio value to first year university students in ESP literacy programs. A survey was made to determine what types of pedagogical text students in an EAP composition program at San Diego State University would be asked to process in content classrooms. Observation and interview were used to make decisions about entry categories. The study revealed that, whereas reading requirements were quite simple to identify, essay examinations were the most common type of pedagogical writing. Some key steps that should be considered for developing an ESP portfolio program were provided. It could be concluded that the study came to valuable results with regard to the professional role that portfolio plays in ESP programs, as well as, the significance of reflection element through which students can develop metacognitive awareness of texts and situations and their processes and strategies when approaching various texts or tasks.

A research study was conducted by Frederick and Shaw (1996) to determine the prevalence of reading and language arts portfolios used as a form of authentic assessment in selected public elementary schools. The population of the study was composed of 162 teachers representing 12 elementary schools in a large public school system in southwest Alabama. Additionally, the survey involved asking the participants if portfolios were an

effective means of communication between teacher, students, parents, and administrators. A questionnaire was developed by the researchers to access teachers' views concerning the use of portfolios in their classrooms. The results of this survey showed that the majority of the teachers (88%) use portfolios in their classrooms. Half of the teachers indicated that portfolios were effective for communication between teacher and students and teacher to teacher (42%) but not between principal and school board (44%). The impact of portfolios for reporting students' progress to parents is not supported by these teachers' responses.

What is important to note in Baak's study (1997) is that how portfolio, the end product as well as the process, could be applied in the intermediate advanced ESL composition classes in both U.S and Mexico. Only four essays of seven were required in the completed portfolio, the end product. One of them must contain the original outline, rough drafts, peer comments, and revision (s) in addition to the final copy to show the process by which students developed their portfolios. Results showed that students' involvement in such experience enabled them to become active and critical participants in their own learning process. These results demonstrate the effect of collection, selection, and reflection as key elements on the success of portfolio implementation as well as on the improvement of students' writing composition.

Puhl (1997) explored key aspects of the continuous assessment (CA) approach through two case studies. In the first study, the effect of two key strategies (self-assessment and peer- assessment) on ESL writing performance was examined. Subjects were university level students enrolled in second –year ESL writing course at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. The instruments used were CA devices: self and peer assessment sheets, teacher evaluation form, and portfolio. The students' assignment was to produce four short stories on topics of their choice. In the second study, portfolios were implemented for three

purposes: collecting, reflecting, and assessing. Students had to make up a portfolio of their four stories, choose one for class publication, and tell why they chose it. Findings indicated that students began to experience the drafts not as required rewrites but as another chance to produce their best. The study also revealed the effectiveness of using portfolio as one of continuous assessment strategies used on developing learners' narrative and descriptive skills. It could be concluded that using CA approach improved the teaching / learning process as well as the assessment process.

Neiman (1999) provided further support for the importance of portfolio assessment. She described her experiment of using portfolio assessment in writing and literature classes both at Burlington high school and Carthage College. Writing and a literature portfolio were used as graduation requirements. The study proved that students' involvement in the portfolio assessment process improved their achievements. Furthermore, certain issues regarding implementing and grading were discussed. Obviously, Neiman's trial (1999) developed and improved the use of portfolio.

Ross (1999) investigated students' attitudes towards the use of portfolios in an English composition course. During the course of a semester, students in an English 101 course at Central Arizona College were asked to create a portfolio of three essays known as a three-paper portfolio. The portfolio included a rewriting of the first assigned essay (known as p-1) which was due in the second week of the semester. The students were given the choice of which other two essays to include from the other five assigned papers. 83% of the students found that the p-1 essay was easy to revise and 96% believed the p-1 should be included in the portfolio. Responses indicated that the students understand the purpose of the assignment and are able to reflect on their improvement as writers and editors. The study also revealed that students' self- recognition about the portfolio process and their

own growth as writers portrays their growth as critical thinkers- not just within the assignment but also about the assignment as well.

In his descriptive study, Aly (2000) investigated the impact of using portfolio assessment on freshman in writing composition. The subjects were freshman first year students at the Faculty of Education, Cairo University. The data collection instruments used were paragraph writing , the performance checklist, and informational texts .After successfully completing a predetermined number of course assignments , the students were asked to select three pieces of writing to compile a portfolio for a final assessment. About 95% of the students completed portfolios. This finding showed that the students had positive attitudes towards the use of portfolio. Also, the study arrived at the conclusion that portfolio strategy improved students' ability to recognize strengths and weaknesses in their writing. It could be concluded that such strategy promotes students' self-assessment skill.

Song and August (2002) conducted a quantitative study that compared the performance of two groups of advanced ESL students in ENG 22, a second semester composition course, at Kingsborough Community College , City University of New York. Both groups had been enrolled in ENG composition 2, a compensatory version of freshman English for students with scores one level below passing on the writing assessment test. At the end of ENG composition 2, one group was assessed on the basis of portfolios, as well as the writing assessment test; the other was assessed using the writing assessment test only. The study found that the students were twice more likely to pass into ENG 22 from ENG 2 when they were evaluated by portfolio than when they were required to pass the writing assessment test. Portfolio assessment seems to be a more appropriate assessment alternative for the ESL population.

Addressing the issue of teaching writing, Aly (2002) suggested a process- based writing approach (writing workshop) to develop the students' writing skills. The experiment was conducted at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Ain Shams University. Forty, second year male and female students were randomly assigned to the experimental group. The instruments of the study included a student questionnaire and a pre-post writing composition text. Conferencing was an integral component in the workshop to teaching writing as an attempt to create interaction between the teacher and the student. Findings showed that using writing workshop approach improved the students' writing. It is clear that such approach helped students to have some more sense of responsibility towards group and individual work.

A successful experience of using portfolio for integrated language skills development and assessment in an EFL classroom was made by Krigere and Sardiko (2002). The subjects were seven pupils chosen from Aizkraukle Village primary school, Latvia. The portfolio was meant for the pupils' learning (the working portfolio) and for their self-assessment (the presentation portfolio) .The portfolio tasks consisted of two parts: compulsory and optional; they included worksheets on listening, reading, and writing and assignments on writing and speaking. After each lesson, the pupils had to fill in a self - assessment sheet. A questionnaire was given to students to examine their opinion on portfolio use which revealed that fourteen respondents out of fifteen enjoyed the experiment; thirteen would like to continue it. It is noteworthy that all the class was doing the same tasks. The study found that portfolio work allowed for all pupils to progress though at a different pace .The study showed the effect of portfolio including self-assessment aspect on learning as well as assessment process. It also proved that using portfolio is quite acceptable for young learners.

In another study, Anwar (2002) studied the effect of using writing conferences in teaching a composition course to fourth year English Majors, Faculty of Alson, Cairo University, on their writing performance, reflective and critical thinking. The post control group design was followed. The sample consisted of twenty nine, fourth year male and female students who were randomly assigned to either control or experimental group. Tools included a rubric (a composition grading scale), a test of reflective thinking, and a language proficiency exam. Students of the experimental group were instructed using writing conferences, whereas, the control group received no such instruction and received the usual treatment (teacher's written comments). Results revealed that writing performance of the experimental group improved significantly. Also, there was noticeable improvement with regard to students' reflective and critical thinking. Accordingly, it was recommended to use the writing conferences in teaching English writing.

The effectiveness of reflection as an integral component of the portfolio development process was investigated as a teaching practice by Kowalewski, Murphy, and Starns (2002). The study was designed to include strategies to improve student writing skills. The targeted population consisted of fourth and fifth grade students (a fourth grade classroom and two fifth grade classrooms) in a growing middle class community, located in northern Illinois. Five strategies were implemented to improve student writing skills. The strategies used included: establishing sufficient writing time, analyzing literature for writing techniques, modeling of skills by the teacher, providing different audiences for student writing, and introducing the use of self-assessment, reflection, and portfolio assessment to evaluate student progress and growth. Students were asked to include items demonstrating student progress in process writing and reflection about each artifact in their portfolios. The results of this action research project revealed a marked improvement in student

writing scores for all these classes. The implemented teaching strategies seemed to have contributed to the improvement of student writing.

In another study, Eissa (2003) attempted to investigate the effectiveness of portfolio on developing reading and writing of EFL students at the secondary stage. Subjects were (50) first year secondary male and female students. The tools used to carry out the experiment were: the pre–post students' reading and writing test, the pre-post students' self - assessment questionnaire, the marking scheme; the writing analytical scoring rubric, the portfolio holistic scoring rubric, the checklist for portfolio self-peer and rater, and the students' working portfolio program. Findings showed that the working portfolio program was successful in enhancing the students' reading and writing skills.

Portfolio assessment was implemented by Koelper and Messerge (2003) to make students and parents aware of students' academic growth in writing for first and second grade students and math for seventh grade students. The targeted students were from an elementary and a middle school. The two sites involved were located in the northwest suburbs of major metropolitan city. Site A was an elementary school and site B was a middle school. Tools of the study included surveys, open-ended questions, and anecdotal records. Literature revealed probable causes for the lack of the awareness of students' growth: lack of communication between school and home, use of traditional assessments, and reliance on standardized tests. A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem, resulted in the selection of implementing portfolio assessment as a strategy of intervention. The results of the intervention were assessed using data collected from teacher journaling, student reflection, review of final portfolios, post-surveys by parents, teachers, and seven grade students, and a post-questionnaire by first and second grade students. Data analysis provided evidence as

to the effectiveness of using portfolios in the classroom. Results also indicated that the students felt more empowered in their own learning and become more reflective about their writing.

An action research was conducted by Anderson, Mallo, Nee, and Wear (2003) to improve writing skills at first and fifth grade levels. These skills included capitalization, punctuation, word spacing, and the use of descriptive words. The targeted population consisted of 41 first grade students and 69 fifth grade students enrolled in one elementary school located in a Midwestern suburb. Journal writing and portfolios were selected as intervention strategies for the proposed study. A survey, checklists, rubrics, and document analysis logs were used to document the progress of students' writing skills. On a bi-weekly basis, the researchers discussed students' writing samples during teacher-student conferences. It was found that journal writing and portfolios were effective interventions that showed growth and improvement in writing and reflection.

Apple and Shimo (2004) examined students' perceptions of portfolio creation in an EFL setting in Japan. The subjects were sixty one students in two separate universities attending English writing course .A portfolio of student-selected work was used as the primary means of assessment. Tests were not used at all for assessment. A self report questionnaire was used to measure the learners' responses which showed that they strongly believed that portfolio construction helped them improve compositional and expressive writing ability. The study also indicated the benefits of portfolio assessment compared to traditional testing.

Two case studies about planning and implementation of portfolio assessment at two institutions in the UAE were presented by Coombe and Barlow (2004). The first study was carried at Dubai Men College where a five entry writing portfolio was to be completed

during the fall 2000, 18- week semester. The portfolio included a letter of introduction, an important past event, a formal complaint letter, a topic of the students' choice, and a reflection letter. The second study was done at the U.A.E University where a portfolio was implemented in two level-3 classes. A similar five entry portfolio was used with an expanded reflective element. A reflection survey and a cover letter were required for each completed entry. Results showed that portfolio proved its effectiveness in improving the students' writing. The second study indicated that inclusion of reflection in the portfolio construction strengthened students' writing.

2.3 Commentary.

In the light of the previous literature review, it is clear that the majority of the studies showed positive effects of portfolio assessment (Nounou, 1995; Baak,1997; Puhl,1997; Neiman, 1999; Aly, 2000; Anwar ,2002; Krigere & Sardiko, 2002; Song &August,2002; Eissa,2003; Coombe & Barlow,2004). The portfolio assessment strategy gives main emphasis to the processes through which the students' writing performance is improved rather than the writing end product as cited in a number of studies such as (Baak, 1997; Apple & Shimo, 2004). Such strategy provides teachers with a clear indication of the students' ability level and at the same time allows the students of different levels to thrive (Johns, 1995; Krigere & Sardiko, 2002).

A striking gain which is worth mentioning in Baak's study (1997) is the three key stages of portfolio assessment implementation in ESL composition class; collection, selection, and reflection. Inclusion of the reflective element in the portfolio construction strengthens the students' writing performance (Baak, 1997; Kowalewski et al., 2002; Krigere & Sardiko, 2002; Song & August, 2002; Coombe & Barlow, 2004).

Within the field of teaching writing, conferencing seems to be an important technique to create interaction between the writer and the reader through a text. The effectiveness of conferencing activity was examined by both Aly (2002) and Anwar (2002). The two studies arrived at the same finding that using conferences improves the students' writing performance. So, in the present study, conferencing is included as a reflective activity.

Most importantly, Aly's study (2000) offered some guidelines that are well-considered in planning for the implementation of the portfolio project program of the present study. Moreover, Aly's study (2000) and Eissa's study (2003) helped in developing the instruments for the present study.

Since implementing portfolio program requires the students' involvement in, ownership of, and responsibility for their own learning, it is better to use it with adult learners as they play the greatest and the biggest role in the success of the program. On the contrary, Krigere and Sardiko (2002) reported that portfolio worked effectively with young learners but it gave great work to the teacher as young students may need more directed help all the time. In the present study, the portfolio assessment strategy worked effectively with adult learners by leading them through the various writing stages; planning, drafting, revising, and editing.

Much of the research work investigated the effect of portfolio assessment on a sample of university level students (Weiser, 1992; Enginarlar, 1994; Johns, 1995; Nounou, 1995; Puhl, 1997; Aly, 2000; Anwar, 2002; Song & August, 2002; Apple & Shimo, 2004; Coombe & Barlow, 2004). Other studies were done on secondary school male and female students (Baak, 1997; Krigere & Sardiko, 2002; Eissa, 2003). The current study is different from the previously mentioned researches. It is conducted on a sample of secondary level female students.

Furthermore, a number of studies examined the effect of portfolio assessment on writing (Enginarlar, 1994; Baak, 1997; Puhl, 1997; Neiman, 1999; Aly, 2000; Song & August, 2002; Anderson et al., 2003; Apple & Shimo, 2004; Coombe & Barlow, 2004). Likewise, the main focus of the current study is on the writing skills too. On the other hand, there are other works like Eissa's study (2003) that focused on the effectiveness of portfolio on developing both reading and writing skills.

In writing classrooms, portfolio creation requires student active involvement in four main practices. These practices include collection, selection, reflection, and conferencing. Students are asked to collect work samples, select their best writing samples, reflect on work, and confer with teacher regarding learning products and processes. Such practices encourage and motivate students to improve their writing performance. Therefore, portfolio development process enables students to experience the different stages of the writing process including: planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Thus, portfolio can be considered an effective teaching strategy in writing classes, as asserted by Weiser (1992), and this what the current study tries to prove.

It is worth mentioning that the present study is an attempt to draw attention to the fact that evaluation is an integral component of the instructional process. Unlike Apple and Shimo's study (2004) where tests were not used at all for assessment, portfolio assessment is used along with the writing assessment test for final evaluation.

Throughout the above mentioned review, a number of studies (e.g., Enginarlar, 1994; Ross, 1999; Aly, 2000; Apple & Shimo, 2004;) were conducted to determine the students' attitudes towards using the portfolio assessment strategy. The findings of these studies agreed in that the students had positive attitudes to such strategy. However, this issue is not tackled in the current study.

What clearly appeared through this survey is that portfolios foster communication among students, teachers, and parents (Frederick& Shaw, 1996; Koelper& Messerge, 2003). Using portfolios, teachers, students, and parents become aware of students learning and progress. However, parents are not involved in the current study for some reason.

Assessment of the portfolio can be done either holistically or analytically. Holistic grading, a method followed in Weiser's study (1992), gives the entire portfolio a single grade based on set criteria. On the other hand, analytic grading judges each criterion separately. Apple and Shimo (2004) pointed out that the most effective way to assess portfolios includes both of these methods: individual pieces included in the portfolio can be assessed analytically while the portfolio itself can be given a holistic grade. In the present study, students' portfolios are assessed holistically, whereas, the analytic method is used only for scoring students' writing test papers.

In spite of the countless advantages of portfolio assessment, it faces some challenges, as reported by some researchers. For example, Brown and Hudson (1998) arrived at five disadvantages or drawbacks of using portfolio assessment, namely the issues of design decision, logistics, interpretation, reliability and validity(Cited in Song & August,2002). This conclusion provides further support for what Song and August (2002) mentioned that the time consuming nature of assessment and the issues of reliability and validity are of great concern.

To conclude, most of the studies discussed support the idea of adopting portfolio assessment in EFL writing classes as it is a process-product-based strategy. So that, the present study is an attempt to provide another set of data from the Gulf region to see if portfolio assessment can operate well and hopefully be assimilated into the Saudi Educational System.

Chapter III

Methods and Procedures

3.1 Variables of the Study

3.2 Design of the Study

3.3 Sample of the Study

3.4 Instruments of the Study

3.4.1 English Writing Assessment Test (EWAT)

3.4.2 Analytic Scoring Rubric (ASR)

3.4.3 Self-reporting Questionnaire (SRQ)

3.4.4 Portfolio Assessment Model (PAM)

3.4.5 Portfolio Holistic Scoring Rubric (PHSR)

3.5 Procedures of the Study

3.6 Treatment of the Data

This chapter describes the methods and procedures used in the present study. It includes: variables of the study, design of the study, sample of the study, instruments of the study, procedures of the study, and treatment of the data.

3.1 Variables of the Study

The variables of the study are: (1) portfolio assessment strategy (independent variable), (2) writing performance in English (dependent variable); it has two dimensions: product and process.

3.2 Design of the Study

It is very hard to arrange a true experimental design, particularly in school classroom experimental research. For this reason, the current study adopts one of the quasi-experimental designs, which is "The pretest-posttest non-equivalent groups". Discussing the concerned design, Best and Khan (2006) mentioned that "This design is often used in classroom experiments when experimental and control groups are such naturally assembled groups as intact classes, which may be similar". (p.129)

To carry out the experiment of the present study, two classes were randomly selected. One class was assigned to serve as an experimental group (portfolio) and the other class as a control group (non-portfolio) by tossing a coin. Prior to the introduction of the treatment (portfolio assessment procedures) and again at the end of the experiment, the difference between the mean gain scores of the control and experimental groups were compared and tested for statistical significance.

3.3 Sample of the Study

The subjects selected for this study were chosen from students of EFL enrolled in the third year of the secondary stage in Skaka (AL-Jouf region). Two classes were randomly chosen. Subjects were 63 female students attending two separate classes in one school (3rd Secondary School for Girls). To carry out the experiment, one class was randomly assigned to serve as a control group (30 students), while the other as an experimental group (33 students).

The socio economic background of the chosen school population ranges from upper middle class to lower class families. All subjects are Arabic speaking students learning English as a foreign language. They have been studying English language for five years. The average chronological age of the subjects is 17.97 years old. However, there is some evidence of the equivalence of the two groups in English writing achievement (see results reported in table 4.1).

3.4 Instruments of the Study

To investigate the effect of portfolio assessment procedures on writing performance, five instruments were constructed by the researcher.

3.4.1 English Writing Assessment Test (EWAT)

3.4.1.1 Description of the English Writing Assessment Test.

The EWAT is developed to assess the students' writing performance in English. It tests primarily the students' narrative and descriptive skills (main-writing domains). In addition, certain writing product skills (sub-writing domains) are measured: purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics. The English Writing

Assessment Test is of an authentic assessment type. And, it is also a criterion-referenced test in which a given score is interpreted relative to pre-set criteria rather than to the performance of other test takers.

The English Writing Assessment Test is divided into two parts. Each part consists of one paragraph writing on a randomly selected prescribed topic that is familiar to students. Test materials represent two styles of writing: narrative and descriptive along with the nature of the writing materials for EFL third year secondary students (first semester). In part one, students have to write a descriptive guided paragraph on Al-Nusl hotel while in part two a narrative guided paragraph about grandmother's youth is requested.

Instructions are provided. They are written in English. They are brief, simple to understand, and free from any possible ambiguities. They contain information about the purpose of the test, the time allowed to complete the test, and the criteria on which scoring will be based.

The EWAT is scored analytically by using an analytic scoring rubric which is developed by the researcher. Students' writing performance is assessed separately on each of the six predetermined criteria: purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics. Performance on each criterion is judged along four levels of performance. The rater gives each student a score on each of the criteria (sub-writing domains) out of sixty.

To prevent the possibility of the researcher's bias, another rater scored the students' papers. Each paper was scored independently by the two raters. The final score consisted of the average score of the two raters.

3.4.1.2 Piloting the English Writing Assessment Test.

The English Writing Assessment Test was piloted on a random sample of third year secondary students (n=22) other than those assigned to the experiment. The pilot study was conducted to (1) determine the validity and reliability of the test; (2) measure the internal consistency of the test; (3) estimate the time allocated for completing the test. The EWAT was conducted at the first semester of the academic year 1427/1428 H in the 3rd Secondary School for Girls in Skaka (AL-Jouf). It was accompanied by a cover letter including information about the purpose of the instrument as well as clear and simple instructions about how to answer the test prompts.

3.4.1.2.1 Validity of the English Writing Assessment Test.

To determine the face and content validity of the EWAT, it was submitted to a jury of experts (see Appendix J). The jury members examined the instrument and expressed their opinions regarding clarity, adequacy, and difficulty level of the test items, and its relevancy to the writing product skills (sub-writing domains) which are intended to be assessed. As the preliminary version of the EWAT had two forms, the jury members suggested using one form. Besides, a few slight modifications of the test materials was provided. Suggestions and comments of the jury members were taken into consideration when making the final version. For final form of the test, see (Appendix, B).

Intrinsic validity of the test was also obtained by using the following formula (Al-Saeed, 1978, p.402) (Translated):

$$\text{Intrinsic validity} = \sqrt{\text{Reliability item}}$$

$$\text{Intrinsic validity of the test} = \sqrt{0.86} = 0.92$$

3.4.1.2.2 Reliability of the English Writing Assessment Test.

To establish the EWAT reliability, one type of reliability was used: the split halves method. This was accomplished by correlating the scores on the first half of the test with scores on the second half of the test. The coefficient of correlation between the two halves was computed using Spearman-Brown Formula. Results are reported in table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1. The Correlation Between the Two Halves (Part 1 & Part 2) of the EWAT

EWAT	M	SD	Spearman's Correlation 'r _s '
Part one	9.68	10.82	
Part two	6.77	9.93	.86**
Overall score	16.45	20.62	

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As shown in table 3.1, the correlation between the two halves was .86. It was statistically significant at the level of 0.01.

To determine the internal consistency of the two parts of the test, the correlation coefficient for each part with the whole test was computed. Results are shown in table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2 The Coefficient of Correlation Between the Two Parts of the EWAT with the Overall Test

EWAT	Spearman's Correlation 'r _s '
Part one	.96**
Part two	.95**

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Based on these results, the test is valid and reliable.

3.4.1.2.3 Time allowance for the English Writing Assessment Test.

To determine the proper time for the EWAT, the average time needed for the students to answer the test was calculated. The total time was divided by their number. It was 60 minutes: (30 mins) for each part of the test.

3.4.2 Analytic Scoring Rubric (ASR)

3.4.2.1 Description of the Analytic Scoring Rubric.

A 4-point rubric is developed for grading English writing test papers of the students. It measures the students' writing performance against a pre-determined set of criteria.

The ASR is composed of four major components: criteria/standards, indicators, levels of performance, and descriptors. Six criteria including (sub-writing domains): purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics are listed in the left-hand column in the rubric. For each criterion, the rater applying the rubric can determine to what degree the student has met the criterion, i.e., the level of performance. The rubric contains five levels of performance: accomplished writing, proficient writing, basic writing, limited writing, and not applicable (N/A). In the second-to-left column, fifteen indicators of when a criterion is met are added. The indicators help better know the quality of the performance. Descriptors are also supplied to further explain what is expected of students at each level of performance for each criterion.

The developed Analytic Scoring Rubric provides a mechanism for assigning a score to each criterion (sub-writing domain). Students can receive 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 points for each indicator within a criterion. For instance, placement in the score point 3 for one indicator (*e.g., utilize varied vocabulary*) of vocabulary would earn the student 3 points for that criterion. But placement in the score point 4 for the same indicator and in the score point 2

for the other indicator (*uses appropriate vocabulary for topic*) of the same criterion would earn the student six points. The total possible points are sixty.

In addition, clear instructions are provided for training raters to ensure rating consistency. The instructions contain a brief description of the rubric design.

3.4.2.2 Validity of the Analytic Scoring Rubric.

The ASR was submitted to a jury of specialists for face and content validity. The jury members were asked to give their opinions concerning the adequacy and appropriateness of performance levels and clarity of each indicator, its relevance to the criterion, and its consistency with other indicators. Since the Analytic Scoring Rubric included organization and content as one criterion, they suggested separating them into two criteria as they were two different writing product skills. In addition, the jury members provided certain modifications, additions, and deletions to the descriptors which were considered in the final version. (For final version, see Appendix C).

3.4.2.3 Reliability of the Analytic Scoring Rubric

There are two forms of reliability that are considered in rubric development: inter-rater reliability and intrarater reliability (Moskal & Leydens, 2000). Rater or scorer reliability generally refers to the consistency of scores that are assigned by two independent raters (inter-rater reliability) and that are assigned by the same rater (intrarater reliability) at different points in time.

The ASR was piloted to make sure that it could be applied reliably by raters. Inter-rater reliability was used to establish the rubric reliability. It was measured by having the researcher and another rater independently score the same set of test papers of a sub-sample of students (n=22) and then calculating a correlation between their scores. The

correlation coefficient was computed using Spearman- Brown Formula. Results are shown in table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3 The Correlation Between the Two Raters for the ASR

Rater	M	SD	Spearman's Correlation 'r _s '
First	26.28	2.65	.93**
Second	25.39	2.53	

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As shown in table 3.3 above, the correlation between the two raters was .93. It was statistically significant at the level of 0.01.

For internal consistency of the ASR, the correlation coefficient of each criterion (i.e., purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics) with the overall Analytic Scoring Rubric was calculated using Spearman-Brown Formula. Table 3.4 below presents the correlation coefficient of each criterion with the overall ASR.

Table 3.4 The Coefficient of Correlation Between the Six Criteria of the ASR with the Overall Rubric

Criteria	M	SD	Spearman's Correlation 'r _s '
Purpose	2.01	0.70	0.70**
Content	3.08	0.96	0.80**
Organization	2.34	1.30	0.91**
Vocabulary	2.52	0.93	0.84**
Sentence structure	1.48	0.79	0.83**
Mechanics	4.85	1.47	0.79**
Total	16.28	5.33	

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Results showed that the Analytic Scoring Rubric is valid and reliable.

3.4.3 Self-Reporting Questionnaire (SRQ)

3.4.3.1 Description of the Self-Reporting Questionnaire.

The SRQ is intended to identify writing processes that the students were using in the performance of writing tasks and to determine whether they had these processes or not. This questionnaire consisted of 25 statements (items) representing four different writing processes, namely planning, drafting, revising, and editing. It was based on a 3-point scale: always, sometimes, and never. These were given numerical values: always=2, sometimes=1, and never=0. The SRQ was translated into Arabic to facilitate responding to it by the students (see Appendix D). Clear and simple directions regarding students' responses to the questionnaire were provided in both English and Arabic versions as a cover letter.

3.4.3.2 Piloting the Self-Reporting Questionnaire.

The Self-Reporting Questionnaire was piloted on a random sample (n=22) of third year secondary students. The pilot study was conducted to (1) determine the validity and reliability of the SRQ; (2) estimate the time allocated to complete the SRQ. The SRQ was administered in the 3rd Secondary School for Girls on the seventeenth of Shaaban. Two weeks later, the instrument was administered again.

3.4.3.2.1 Validity of the Self-Reporting Questionnaire.

The SRQ was submitted to expert judges for face and content validity. The judges were asked to provide their input and comments concerning clarity of the statements and relevance of the statements to the writing processes they were included in. The preliminary version of the Self-Reporting Questionnaire consisted of 35 statements. The judges' suggestions revealed unclear and unrelated statements (items) that did not contribute to the questionnaire's purpose were deleted. In addition, they suggested necessary modifications

and additions to some statements (items) and their suggestions were considered in the final version (see Appendix D).

Intrinsic validity of the Self-Reporting Questionnaire was also calculated by using the following formula:

$$\text{Intrinsic validity} = \sqrt{\text{Reliability item}}$$

$$\text{Intrinsic validity of the SRQ} = \sqrt{0.95} = 0.97$$

3.4.3.2.2 Reliability of the Self-Reporting Questionnaire.

Reliability of the SRQ was obtained by a second administration of the instrument (test-retest). The students' responses on the questionnaire were correlated with responses on the second administration of the same instrument. The coefficient of correlation between the two administrations was computed using Spearman- Brown Formula. The reliability coefficient was .95 and it was significant at 0.01 level. Results are presented in table 3.5.

Table 3.5. The Correlation Between the Two Administrations of the SRQ

Administration	M	SD	Spearman's Correlation 'rs'
First	36.32	8.81	.95**
Second	38.55	9.33	

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Results indicated that the self-reporting questionnaire is valid and reliable.

3.4.3.2.3 Time allowance for the Self-Reporting Questionnaire.

To estimate time allocation for the SRQ, the average of maximum time and minimum time needed to complete the Self-Reporting Questionnaire was calculated. The total time was divided by two. It was 25 minutes.

3.4.4 Portfolio Assessment Model (PAM)

3.4.4.1 Description of the portfolio assessment model.

The PAM is developed to improve as well as to assess subjects' writing performance beside the English Writing Assessment Test as "a single measure is incapable of estimating the diversity of skills, knowledge, processes, and strategies that combine to determine student progress" (Moya & O'Malley, 1994, p.15). It is the treatment given to the experimental group, where 20 writing assignments are developed by the students throughout 24 classes. The proposed portfolio model for EFL writing instruction includes five interrelated levels of activities:

3.4.4.2 Establish portfolio committee/audience.

The students, the class teacher, and the researcher were the audience to follow the development of the students' writing performance. Under the teacher's guidance, the students had been given the responsibility of managing their portfolios in the classroom. Classmates also had access to portfolios on a regular schedule.

3.4.4.3 Identify instructional goal/specify learning objectives.

3.4.4.3.1 Instructional goal.

The PAM was designed to improve the writing performance of a sample of EFL third year secondary students.

3.4.4.3.2 Learning objectives.

By the end of the program, the students supposed to be able to:

- Write in a legible handwriting.
- Exhibit complete or high level of awareness of writing mechanics (i.e., spelling, capitalization, and punctuation).

- Make a variety of structures.
- Plan before writing.
- Write a number of drafts then a final version.
- Reread and revise their writings.
- Edit their drafts.
- Proofread classmates' papers.
- Write well-organized paragraphs of different genres.
- Write for different purposes.
- Use varied vocabulary appropriate for the purpose.
- Effectively, reflect on and evaluate their own work.

3.4.4.4 Portfolio contents.

The required portfolio contents are:

- Title page which shows student's name, grade, school; teacher's name; and the word portfolio (in big letters).
- Table of contents which includes a list of portfolio items. It comprises title of each entry, date of entry, student's signature, and teacher's signature.
- Entries are both core (items students have to include) and options (items of the students' choice). The core items are required from each student and provide a common base from which to make decisions on assessment whereas the optional items allow the folder to represent the uniqueness of each student.

Core items are as follows:

- One descriptive paragraph
- One narrative paragraph
- Five language exercises on writing

Optional items include three of the following:

- Drafts of writing tasks selected to show effort and achievement
- List of future goals regarding student writing ability
- Commentary on student strengths and weaknesses as a writer
- List of topics the student likes to write about
- Records of student-teacher conferences

Each student has two portfolios: developmental or process portfolio (a collection of work, which focuses on the student development of a process or a product) and a showcase portfolio. As writing samples produced, they are stored in the collection portfolio. Students periodically review the collection portfolio to select certain pieces to be included in the showcase portfolio. Portfolios are kept in a cupboard inside the classroom as that place is accessible for all students any time. For a sample of students' portfolios, see Appendix (I).

3.4.4.5 Plan for portfolio instructional materials.

The instructional materials include:

- Student-teacher writing conference form which is used by the students to write about the things they do well and the things they want to improve in their writing. They, also, set future goals for themselves regarding their writing ability.
- Reflection sheet which accompanies each final writing piece. It includes comments and reflections written by the students on their work.
- Writing log in which the student has to evaluate her own work by assessing a score for every draft of each writing assignment on a scale from one to five.
- Evaluation form which is filled periodically by the teacher giving a score for each piece of written work completed by the student.

- Portfolio evaluation form which is filled by the teacher evaluating the portfolio as a whole after reviewing its contents.
- Recording sheet for every student. The teacher has to record observations and insights regarding each student's weaknesses and strengths and her strategy to improve the student's performance.
- Peer editing form in which the students respond to each other's work.

3.4.4.6 Set standards and criteria for evaluation and interpretation of portfolios' contents.

During the implementation of PAM, the teacher regularly reviews the students' portfolios contents evaluating every writing assignment separately and providing feedback. No grades are reported on the first, second, and third drafts; grading is delayed until the final version of each chosen assignment is submitted. The class teacher responds to those drafts not to provide a grade but to provide suggestions for revision as well as some general commentary about the students' development as writers. The scores are recorded secretly to keep track of students' writing growth.

At the end of the experiment, portfolios are submitted for final assessment. Entries are not to be graded separately. Instead, a grade is assigned for the portfolio as a whole using holistic scoring rubric.

Two evaluators (class teacher and the researcher) participate in rating the portfolio contents to achieve consistency in grading. Each reads and evaluates the students' portfolios independently using the rubric. Then the average of the two scores is calculated to assign a final score. A calibration session is held in which the judges evaluate some sample portfolios and then share ratings to reach some consensus on what each criterion and level of performance within the rubric means. This provides opportunity for judges to achieve some competence and consistency in applying the rubric.

In addition, the Portfolio Assessment Model contains instructions for the class teacher, portfolio guidelines for the students, guidelines for conducting student-teacher conferences, and others for reviewing portfolios (see Appendix E).

3.4.4.7 Validity of the portfolio assessment model.

To ensure that the PAM is appropriate and feasible, it was submitted to a jury of experts for comments. The jury members examined the Portfolio Assessment Model and provided their inputs and comments regarding goals and learning objectives, portfolio contents, writing assignments, instructional materials, portfolio committee (audience), and standards and criteria for evaluation.

The jury members' comments revealed that:

The objectives were clearly stated, appropriate for the intended writing skills, and could be measured on the spot. The portfolio components were varied and purposeful. The writing assignments were varied, comprehensible, consistent, and well sequenced. Portfolio committee was appropriate for the portfolio purpose. The guidelines were clearly presented and would hardly pose any difficulty for the teacher or students.

In addition, the jury members provided some suggestions of great value which were considered in the final version (see Appendix E), e.g., sequencing the learning objectives logically and modifying the procedures of some writing assignments.

3.4.5 Portfolio Holistic Scoring Rubric (PHSR)

3.4.5.1 Description of the Portfolio Holistic Scoring Rubric.

The PHSR is developed to determine a grade for the portfolio as a whole. It has ten criteria: portfolio completeness, variety of entries, focus, sense of audience and purpose, use of the different stages of the writing process, reflection, quality of drafting, quality of

writing, organization and presentation, and overall improvement. All the assessment criteria are considered together (or holistically) when evaluating the students' portfolios to arrive at a more global (or holistic) impression of the students' writing performance.

The rubric consists of six levels of performance: score level 60-51 (Excellent), score level 50-41 (Very Good), score level 40-31 (Good), score level 30-21 (Average), score level 20-11 (Fair), and score level 10-0 (Poor). Each level reflects student performance across all the criteria. Under each level, a number of descriptors is included. Such descriptors can make each score level distinct from the others. The total possible score is sixty. Explicit and written instructions regarding how to use this rubric were provided.

3.4.5.2 Validity of the Portfolio Holistic Scoring Rubric.

The PHSR was submitted to a jury of experts for face and content validity. The jury members examined the instrument and expressed their opinions concerning (1) adequacy, appropriateness, and variety of performance levels; (2) clarity of each descriptor, its relevance to the scoring criterion, and its consistency with other descriptors. Certain modifications, additions, and deletions to the descriptors of performance levels were provided and consequently considered in the final version (see Appendix G).

3.4.5.3 Reliability of the Portfolio Holistic Scoring Rubric.

To achieve the PHSR reliability, scorer reliability was used. The researcher and another rater independently evaluated a random sample of portfolios (n=22) utilizing the PHSR. A correlation between their scores was calculated using Spearman- Brown Formula. The reliability coefficient was .98 and which was significant at 0.01 level. Results are reported in table 3.6 below.

Table 3.6. The Correlation Between the Two Raters for the PHSR

Rater	M	SD	Spearman's Correlation 'r _s '
First	46.45	9.70	0.98**
Second	49.09	9.13	

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Based on these results, the Portfolio Holistic Scoring Rubric is valid and reliable.

3.5 Procedures of the Study

Prior to the experiment, the subjects (both experimental and control groups) were given the English Writing Assessment Test as a pre-test. The researcher with the help of a teacher of English administered the English Writing Assessment Test in two consecutive classes as follows:

- Class one: part one (writing a descriptive paragraph) 30 minutes
- Break
- Class two: part two (writing a narrative paragraph) 30 minutes

The Self-Reporting Questionnaire on English writing processes (Arabic version) was also administered to the subjects immediately after the pre-administration of the English Writing Assessment Test.

The experiment lasted 12 weeks (two classes per week). The same writing assignments of the textbook were given to both experimental and control groups. The two groups were taught by the same teacher; the experimental group received the treatment (portfolio assessment strategy). The researcher provided each student of the experimental group with two folders with plastic bags inside. The students would keep the writing assignments in one folder (collection portfolio); the returned pieces of writing selected for the portfolio would be put in the other folder (showcase portfolio) according to the portfolio contents.

Three simple principles guided the implementation of the Portfolio Assessment Model: collection, selection, and reflection. From the very beginning of the experiment and at specific classes during the term, the students (experimental group) collected and submitted twenty finished drafts of writing assignments together with early drafts that were drawn from the students' textbook and developed in class work throughout the term and put them in a folder (collection portfolio). For sample of writing assignments, see Appendix (F).

After completing the predetermined writing assignments, the students were directed to select and choose their best and preferred (a variety of writing styles) seven pieces of writing to compile a portfolio (showcase portfolio) for final assessment. Selection of items had been made depending upon the purpose of the portfolio.

Finally, reflection occurred. The students were encouraged to fill in their reflection sheets about the pieces of writing they had chosen and what they would still like to learn about their writing. It was optional to fill in the reflection sheets in the native language as Apple and Shimo(2004) claimed that "writing a reflective essay in one's mother tongue rather than the target language does not detract from the value of the reflection, and in fact can even add to it"(p.3). Students were paired in teams as readers or editors of each other's work. Peer editing forms were used for that purpose and went into the portfolio.

Besides, two separate conferences of fifteen minutes each were held in which the student presented her work and justified her reasons behind each choice, sharing their thoughts, strengths, and weaknesses with the teacher. The researcher provided the class teacher with assistance and support when they were needed (as long as she was in the classroom with her).

A training session was held for the evaluators before scoring the students' portfolios to practice the rubric application. Copies of the subjects' actual portfolios were used during the session.

At the end of the experiment, the English Writing Assessment Test and the Self-Reporting Questionnaire were administered for the second time to both experimental and control groups.

3.6 Treatment of the Data

The quantitative analysis of data was conducted to assess the effect of the Portfolio Assessment Model on the writing performance of a sample of EFL third year secondary students.

Collected data were statistically treated through the computer package SPSS (version 10.0). Descriptive statistics such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were computed. Independent samples t-test (2-tailed test) was used to determine if there were any significant differences in the mean scores between the experimental and control groups on the pre and post administrations of the EWAT and the SRQ (before and after the treatment). For statistical analysis, the alpha level of significance 0.05 of confidence was set. Pearson product - moment correlation was also used to assess the correlation between the subjects' (experimental group) means of scores in the portfolio and their means of scores in the English Writing Assessment Test.

Chapter IV

Results and Discussion

4.1 Results of the Data Analysis

4.1.1 Results Concerning the Writing Performance

4.1.2 Results Concerning the Writing Product Skills

4.1.3 Results Concerning the Writing Processes

4.1.4 The Coefficient of Correlation between the Subjects' Scores in the Portfolio and their Scores in the English Writing Assessment Test

4.2 Results Concerning the Hypotheses of the Study

4.3 Discussion and Interpretation of the Results

4.3.1 Writing Performance

4.3.2 Writing Product Skills

4.3.3 Writing Processes

4.3.4 Correlation Between Portfolio and English Writing Assessment Test

4.4 Summary of the Results

This chapter presents results of the data and their interpretations in light of the reviewed literature. It includes: results concerning the writing performance, results concerning the writing product skills, results concerning the writing processes, the coefficient of correlation between the subjects' scores in the portfolio and their scores in the English Writing Assessment Test, and results concerning the hypotheses of the study. A summary of the results is provided as well.

4.1 Results of the Data Analysis

4.1.1 Results concerning the writing performance

4.1.1.1 Results concerning the writing performance of both groups in the pre-administration (EWAT & SRQ).

To check whether the experimental and control groups are identical and homogenous in writing performance before conducting the study, independent samples t-test was used. Table 4.1 shows the mean scores, standard deviation, t value, and t significance of the writing performance of both the experimental and control groups on the pre-administration.

Table 4.1 t-Value for the Writing Performance in the Pre-administration (EWAT& SRQ) of both Groups.

Groups	M	SD	t-value	Sig.(2-tailed)
Experimental	22.51	9.02	0.634	0.528
Control	20.92	10.87		

Results of the t-test revealed that no statistically significant differences were found in the mean scores between the experimental and control groups regarding writing performance. This finding indicated that the two groups were almost equal to each other before the treatment. The writing performance level of the two groups was below average (poor). Figure 4.1 illustrates the result of table 4.1.

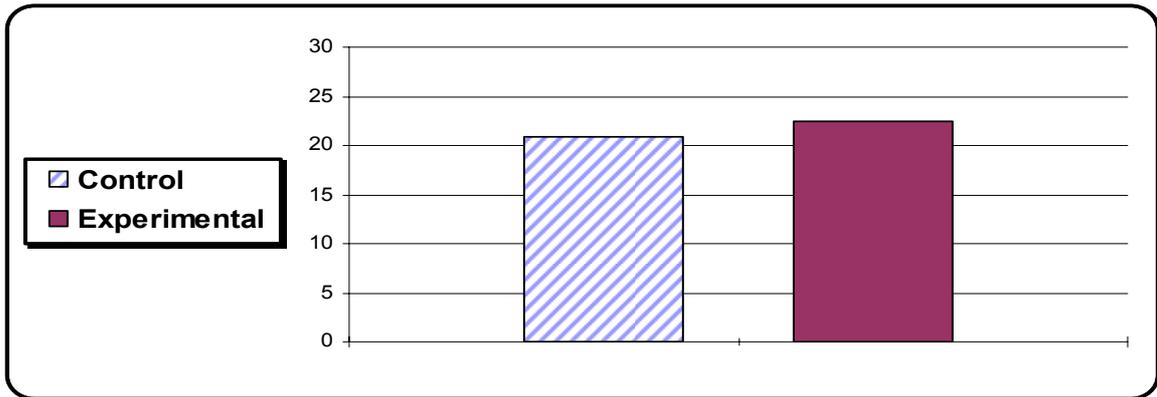


Figure 4.1 Comparison between scores of both groups in writing performance (pre-administration)

The total score, higher quartile, mean, and lower quartile of the possible writing performance on both the English Writing Assessment Test and the Self-Reporting Questionnaire are presented in table 4.2 below; bearing in mind that the highest scores obtained on the two instruments are 60 and 50, respectively.

Table 4.2 Total Score, Higher Quartile, Mean, and Lower Quartile of the Possible Writing Performance

Total score	Number of cases	Higher quartile	M	Lower quartile
110	63	82.5	55	27.5

In order to determine the subjects' (both experimental and control groups) actual level of writing performance, the frequencies and percentages of their scores on both the EWAT

and the SRQ were computed. Descriptive statistics i.e., mean of scores, standard deviation, minimum score, and maximum score are reported in table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 Descriptive Statistics of the Subjects' Writing Performance

N	Missing	M	SD	Min.	Max.
63	0	22.77	9.04	3.75	56.75

As shown in table 4.3, the subjects performed below standard. Their mean scores of the writing performance in the pre-administration was 22.77, as compared with 55 the possible writing performance.

4.1.1.2 Results concerning the writing performance of both groups in the post-administration (EWAT & SRQ).

The post-administration scores were analyzed using the independent samples t-test. The mean scores, standard deviation, t value, and t significance of the writing performance of both the experimental and control groups in the post-administration are shown in table 4.4.

Table 4.4 t-Value for the Writing Performance in the Post-administration (EWAT& SRQ) of both Groups.

Groups	M	SD	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Experimental	79.89	27.05	2.167	.034*
Control	68.14	12.81		

* $p < .05$.

Results of the t-test revealed that there were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups at $p < .05$. The mean scores of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group. This means that the

experimental group outperformed the control group in writing. Figure 4.2 illustrates the result of table 4.4.

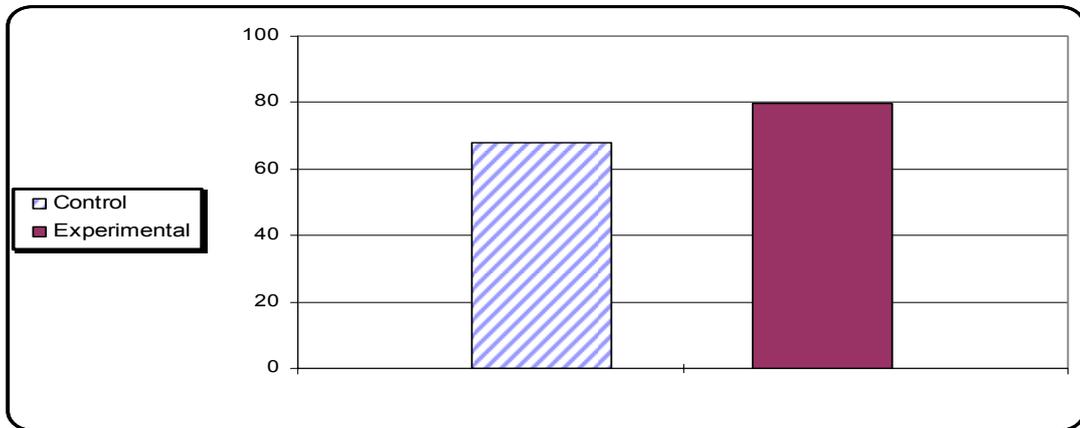


Figure 4.2 Comparison between scores of both groups in writing performance (post-administration)

4.1.2 Results concerning the writing product skills

4.1.2.1 Results concerning the writing product skills of both groups in the pre-administration (EWAT).

The mean scores, standard deviations, t-value, and t significance of the two groups (experimental and control) prior to the treatment are demonstrated in table 4.5.

Table 4.5 t-Value for the Writing Product Skills in the Pre-administration (EWAT) of both Groups.

Groups	M	SD	t-value	Sig.(2-tailed)
Experimental	4.93	7.32	0.074	0.942
Control	4.79	7.80		

Results of the t-test revealed that there were no statistically significant differences at $p < .05$ in the mean scores between the experimental and control groups concerning writing product skills. Figure 4.3 illustrates the result of table 4.5.

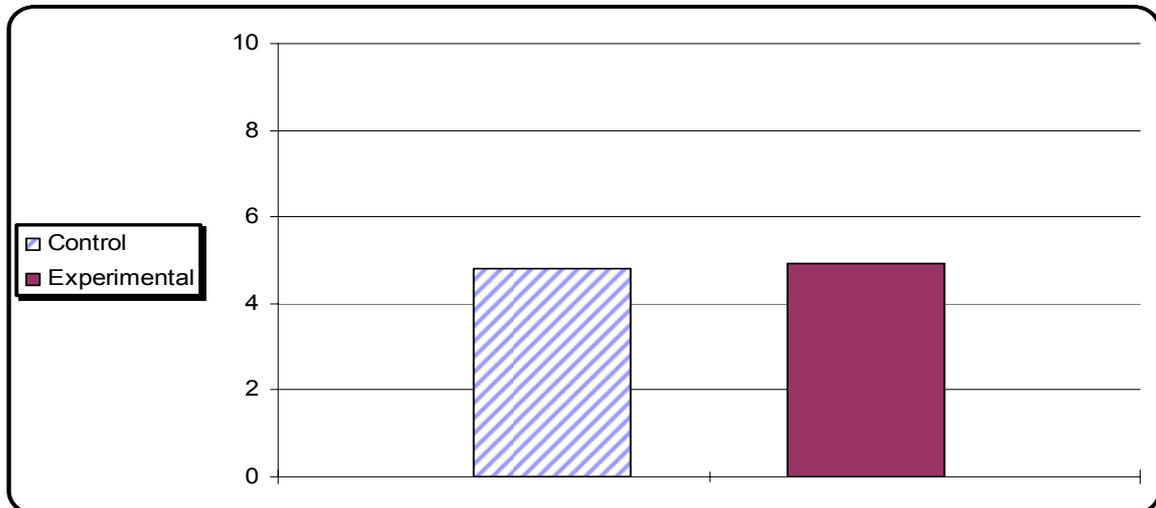


Figure 4.3 Comparison between scores of both groups in the writing product skills (Pre-administration)

4.1.2.2 Results concerning the writing product skills of both groups in the post-administration (EWAT).

Independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the gain scores of the experimental group and those of the control group. The mean scores, standard deviation, t-value, and t significance of the writing product skills of both groups on the post-administration of the EWAT are reported in table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6 t-Value for the Writing Product Skills in the Post-administration (EWAT) of both Groups.

Groups	M	SD	t-value	Sig.(2-tailed)
Experimental	52.52	3.15	2.350	0.025*
Control	48.17	9.68		

* $p < .05$.

Results indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups at $p < .05$ in the writing product skills, favoring the experimental group. Figure 4.4 illustrates the results of table 4.6.

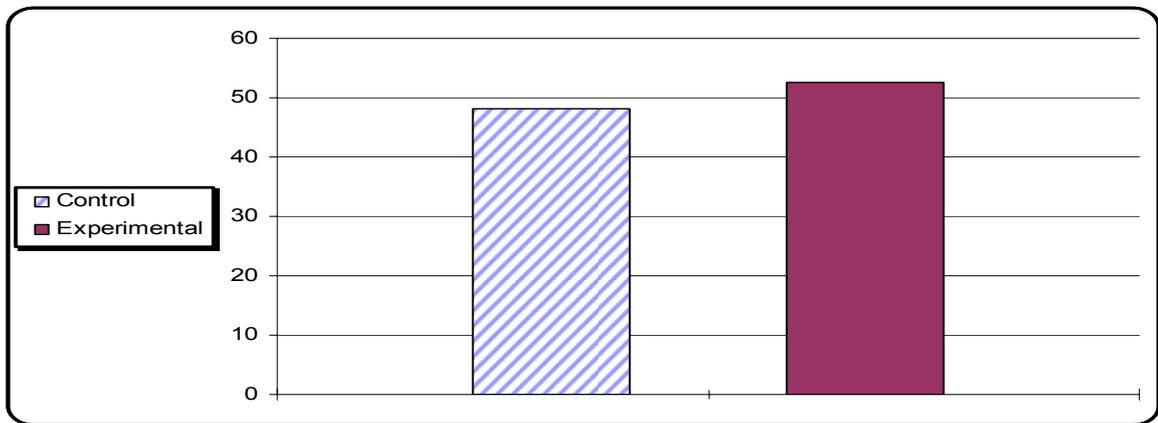


Figure 4.4 Comparison between scores of both groups in the writing product skills (post-administration)

4.1.2.3 Results concerning each of the writing product skills of both groups in the pre-administration (EWAT).

Table 4.7 below presents the means of scores, standard deviations, t-value, and t significance of each of the writing product skills for the experimental and control groups, prior to the treatment.

Table 4.7 t-Value for Each of the Writing Product Skills in the Pre-administration (EWAT) of both Groups

Skills	Groups	M	SD	t-value	Sig.(2-tailed)
Purpose	Experimental	0.92	0.88	0.142	0.887
	Control	0.89	0.94		
Content	Experimental	0.89	1.28	0.065	0.948
	Control	0.87	1.54		
Organization	Experimental	0.73	1.56	0.106	0.916
	Control	0.69	1.66		
Vocabulary	Experimental	0.57	1.06	0.064	0.949
	Control	0.55	1.20		
Sentence structure	Experimental	0.50	0.95	0.142	0.888
	Control	0.47	0.91		
Mechanics	Experimental	1.30	1.97	0.328	0.744
	Control	1.13	1.95		

Results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences at $p < .05$ between the two groups in each of the six writing product skills. Figure 4.5 illustrates the result of table 4.7.

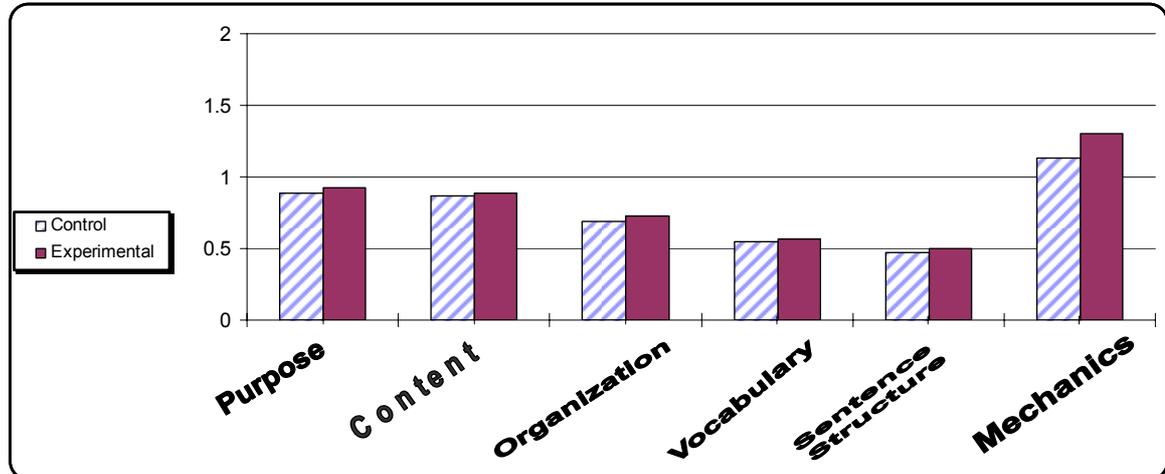


Figure 4.5. Comparison between scores of both groups on each of the writing product skills (pre-administration)

4.1.2.4 Results concerning each of the writing product skills for both groups in the post-administration (EWAT).

Table 4.8 presents data collected to determine if there were significant differences between the means of scores of the experimental and control groups on each of the writing product skills after the treatment. Independent samples t-test was applied. The mean of scores, standard deviation, t value, and t significance of each writing product skill of the two groups are reported in the table below.

Table 4.8 t-Value for each of the Writing Product Skills in the Post-administration (EWAT) of both Groups

Skills	Groups	M	SD	t-value	Sig.(2-tailed)
Purpose	Experimental	2.94	1.59	2.383	0.021*
	Control	2.15	1.00		
Content	Experimental	6.24	4.67	2.246	0.029*
	Control	4.10	2.74		
Organization	Experimental	5.58	4.77	2.466	0.017*
	Control	3.13	2.99		
Vocabulary	Experimental	4.40	3.42	2.299	0.026*
	Control	2.86	1.71		
Sentence structure	Experimental	3.55	3.14	2.281	0.027*
	Control	2.10	1.75		
Mechanics	Experimental	9.06	6.54	2.269	0.027*
	Control	6.00	3.96		

* $p < .05$.

The t- values revealed that there were statistically significant differences between the two groups in each of the six writing product skills at $p < .05$ for the sake of the experimental group. The data in table 4.8 indicated that the experimental group showed improvement in each writing product skill: purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics. The subjects obtained the maximum score in mechanics (9.06) whereas they gained the minimum score in purpose (2.94). Regarding organization, content, vocabulary, and sentence structure, they got 5.58, 6.24, 4.40, and 3.55, respectively. On the other hand, the control group scores for mechanics, content,

organization, vocabulary, purpose, and sentence structure were 6.00, 4.10, 3.13, 2.86, 2.15, and 2.10, respectively. Figure 4.6 illustrates the results of table 4.8.

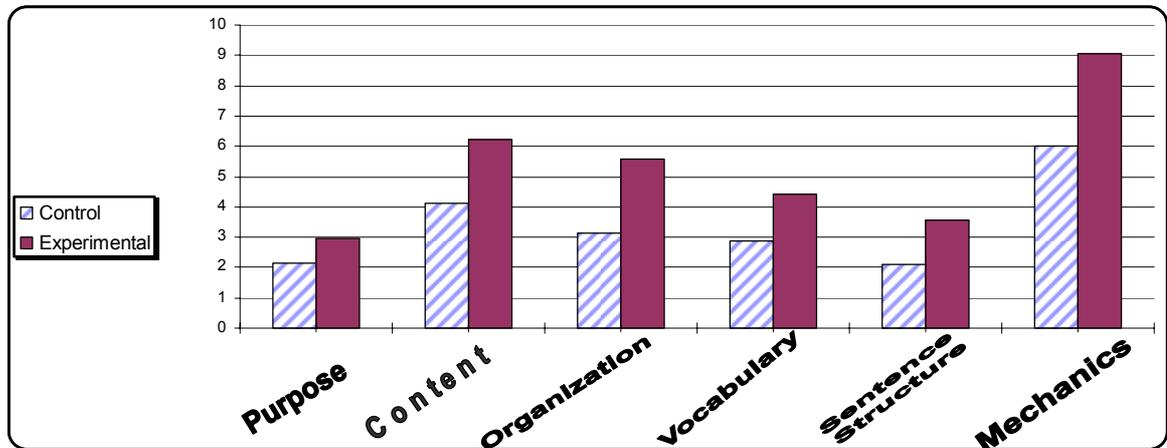


Figure 4.6. Comparison between scores of both groups on each of the writing product skills (Post-administration)

4.1.3 Results concerning the writing processes

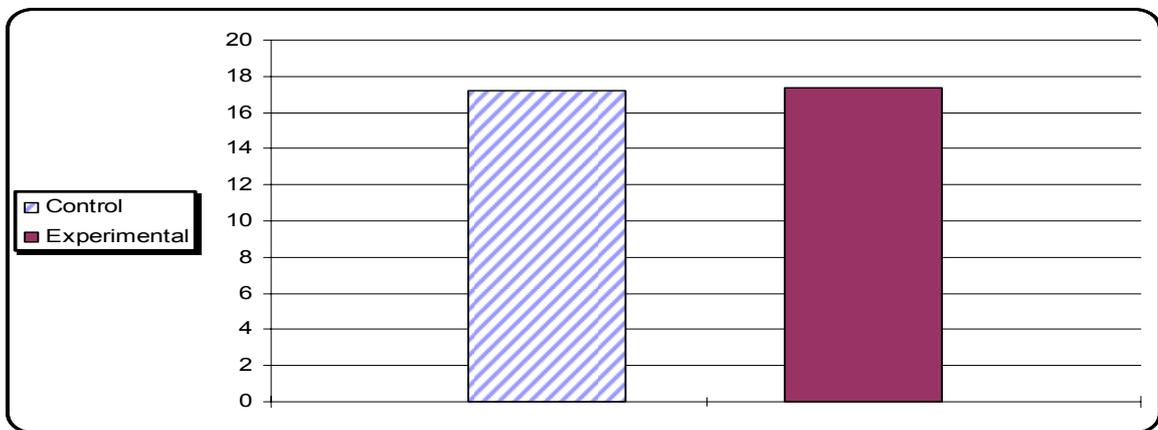
4.1.3.1 Results concerning the writing processes of both groups in the pre-administration (SRQ).

The pre-administration scores were analyzed using independent samples t-test. The means of scores, standard deviations, t value, and t significance of the writing processes for both the experimental and control groups in the pre-administration of the SRQ are shown in table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9 t -Value for the Writing Processes in the Pre-administration (SRQ) of both Groups

Groups	M	SD	t-value	Sig.(2-tailed)
Experimental	17.36	5.78	0.083	0.934
Control	17.23	6.71		

Data collected revealed that there were no statistically significant differences at $p < .05$ between the experimental and control groups in the pre-administration of the SRQ in terms of utilizing the writing processes. Figure 4.7 illustrates the result of table 4.9.

**Figure 4.7 Comparison between scores of both groups in the use of writing processes (pre-administration)**

4.1.3.2 Results concerning the writing processes of both groups in the post-administration (SRQ).

Independent samples t-test was used to compare the gain scores of the experimental group and those of the control group. The means of scores, standard deviations, t value, and t significance of the writing processes for both groups in the post-administration of the SRQ are shown in table 4.10.

Table 4.10 t -Value for the Writing Processes in the Post-administration (SRQ) of both Groups

Groups	M	SD	t-value	Sig.(2-tailed)
Experimental	27.88	18.80	2.253	0.030*
Control	19.97	6.98		

* $p < .05$

Statistical findings indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups at $p < 0.05$, in favor of the experimental group. The experimental group achieved a noticeable improvement in the use of the writing processes. Figure 4.8 illustrates the result of table 4.10.

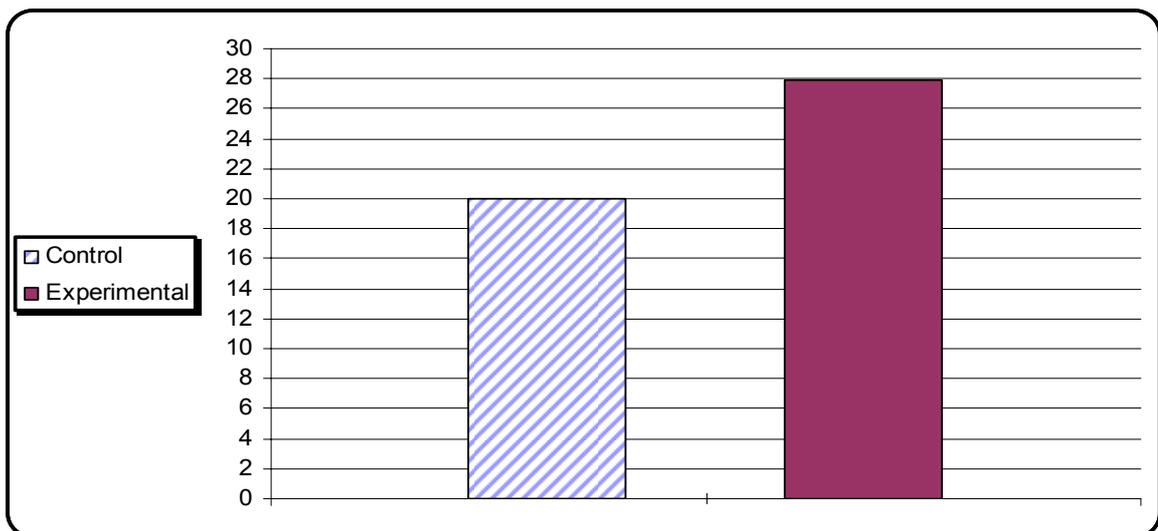


Figure 4.8 Comparison between scores of both groups in the use of writing processes (post-administration)

4.1.3.3 Results concerning each of the writing processes for both groups in the pre-administration (SRQ).

The means of scores, standard deviations, t-value, and t significance of both groups on each of the writing processes are reported in table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11 t-Value for Each of the Writing Processes in the Pre-administration (SRQ) of both Groups.

Writing processes	Groups	M	SD	t-value	Sig.(2-tailed)
Planning	Experimental	4.03	1.21	0.174	0.862
	Control	3.97	1.67		
Drafting	Experimental	4.27	1.66	0.262	0.794
	Control	4.13	2.45		
Revising	Experimental	3.70	1.67	0.133	0.895
	Control	3.63	2.13		
Editing	Experimental	5.36	2.25	0.047	0.963
	Control	5.33	2.84		

Results of the t- test indicated that there were no statistically significant differences at $p < .05$ between the two groups in the pre-administration of the SRQ on each of the four writing processes. Figure 4.9 illustrates the result of table 4.11.

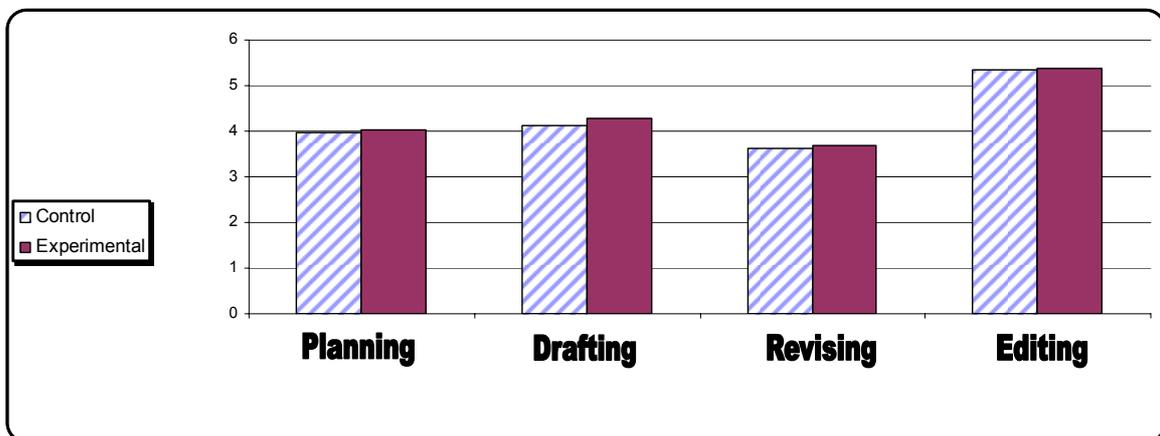


Figure 4.9 Comparison between scores of both groups on each of the writing processes (pre-administration)

4.1.3.4 Results concerning each of the writing processes for both groups in the post-administration (SRQ).

Table 4.12 below shows the means of scores, standard deviations, t value, and t significance of the control and experimental groups on each writing process.

Table 4.12 t-Value for Each of the Writing Processes in the Post-administration (SRQ) of both Groups.

Writing processes	Groups	M	SD	t-value	Sig.(2-tailed)
Planning	Experimental	7.21	4.90	2.492	0.016*
	Control	4.83	2.35		
Drafting	Experimental	6.64	4.51	2.578	0.014*
	Control	4.47	1.66		
Revising	Experimental	6.67	3.86	2.242	0.029*
	Control	4.87	2.40		
Editing	Experimental	7.91	5.41	2.297	0.026*
	Control	5.50	2.53		

* $p < .05$

The t-values indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the two groups at $p < .05$ on each of the writing processes, favoring the experimental group. Data showed an increase in the subjects' (experimental group) use of the writing processes. The most significant score for the writing processes was that gained by the subjects for editing process (7.91). On the other hand, the lowest score obtained was for drafting process (6.64). They scored 7.21 for planning and 6.67 for revising. Concerning the control group, the subjects scored 5.50, 4.87, 4.83, and 4.47 for editing, revising, planning, and drafting, respectively. Figure 4.10 illustrates the result of table 4.12.

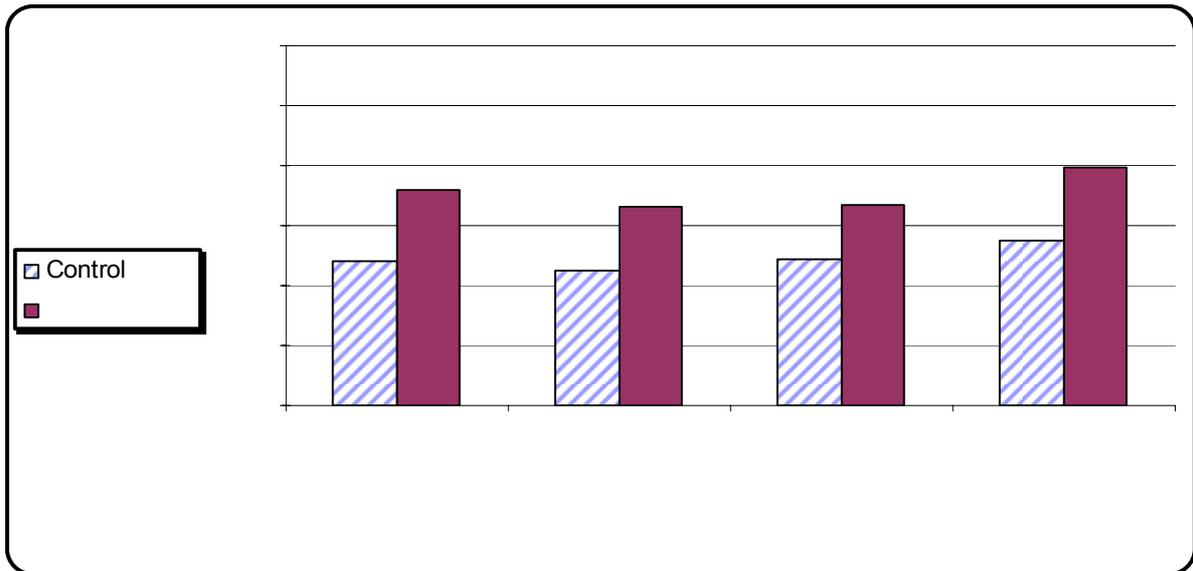


Table 4.13 Means & Standard Deviations of the Two Variables: Portfolio and English Writing Assessment Test

Variables	Mean	SD
Portfolio	50.12	8.53
English Writing Assessment Test	52.52	3.15

Table 4.14 shows the correlation between the subjects' means of scores in the portfolio and those in the EWAT.

Table 4.14. The Coefficient of Correlation between the Subjects' Scores in the Portfolio and those in the English Writing Assessment Test

Variables	Pearson's Correlation 'r'
Portfolio	0.86*
English Writing Assessment Test	

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation between the two variables is 0.86. This level of Pearson correlation indicates that the correlation is positive.

4.2 Results Concerning the Hypotheses of the Study

This part presents a discussion of the hypotheses and questions of the study in light of data analysis and interpretation of the results.

4.2.1 *The first hypothesis:*

There are statistically significant differences at 0.05 level in writing performance gains between the experimental (portfolio) and control (non-portfolio) groups, in favor of the experimental group.

Results reported in table 4.4 revealed that the mean of gain scores for the experimental group was 79.89 and that of the control group was 68.14. Data reflected that the experimental group was much better than the control group in the writing performance on the post-administration of both the English Writing Assessment Test and the Self-reporting Questionnaire. In light of this result, the first hypothesis was accepted. These findings provided an answer for the main question of the study: What effect does the use of portfolio assessment strategy have on the writing performance of EFL third year secondary school students in Saudi Arabia?

To answer the first question of the study, the mean scores of possible writing performance on both the English Writing Assessment Test and the Self-reporting Questionnaire and that of the subjects' (experimental and control groups) were calculated as shown in table 4.2 and 4.3, respectively.

The mean scores of writing performance of the subjects was 22.77, while the mean scores of possible writing performance was 55. Based on this result, the subjects' writing performance was poor. This is an answer for the first question of the study: What is the actual level of the students' English writing performance?

Note that 98.4% of the subjects (N=63) involved in the study scored below the expected level. Only one student scored 56.75 which was above the mean of the possible

writing performance. 82.5 % of the subjects were in the lower quartile; they scored below 27.5. 15.9 % were in the second quartile and below the mean. Only 1.6% scored above the mean.

4.2.2 The second hypothesis :

There are statistically significant differences at 0.05 level between the mean scores of the portfolio and non-portfolio groups on writing product skills i.e., purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics, favoring the portfolio group.

Data displayed in table 4.6 showed that the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on writing product skills were 52.52 and 48.17, respectively. This would appear to indicate that the subjects in the experimental group were much more successful writers than those who were in the control group. Moreover, the experimental group outperformed the control group on each of the six writing product skills (i.e., purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics). As shown in table 4.7, the experimental group got the highest score (9.06) for mechanics while those in the control group got 6.00. Regarding organization, the experimental group and the control group obtained 5.58 and 3.13, respectively. Further, the experimental group gained 6.24 for content as compared with 4.10 of the control group. Concerning vocabulary, the experimental group and the control group scored 4.40 and 2.86, respectively. As for sentence structure, the experimental group achieved 3.55 whereas the control group achieved 2.10. Finally, for purpose the experimental group and the control group had 2.94 and 2.15, respectively. Thus, the second hypothesis of the study was confirmed. Findings were the answer for the second question of the study: How effective is the use of portfolio assessment strategy on developing the students' English writing product skills?

4.2.3 The third hypothesis :

There are statistically significant differences at 0.05 level between the mean scores of the portfolio and non-portfolio groups in the post self- reporting questionnaire on writing processes i.e., planning, drafting, revising, and editing, in favor of the former group

As shown in table 4.10 the means of scores of the experimental and control groups on writing processes were 27.88 and 19.97, respectively. The differences between the two groups in the use of writing processes were statistically significant at $p < .05$. Data collected indicated that the experimental group showed significant increase with reference to the use of writing processes in general and on each writing process in particular as compared to the control group on the post-administration of the self-reporting questionnaire. Table 4.12 also revealed that the experimental group got the maximum score (7.91) for editing as compared with 5.50 got by the control group. Regarding planning, the experimental group and the control group obtained 7.21 and 4.83, respectively. Concerning drafting, the experimental group scored 6.64 as compared with 4.47 of the control group. Finally, as for revising the experimental and the control group achieved 6.67 and 4.87, respectively. Thus, the third hypothesis was accepted. These results provided an answer for the third question of the study: What are the effects of portfolio assessment strategy on enriching the students' use of writing processes?

4.2.4 The fourth hypothesis :

There is a statistically significant correlation at 0.05 level between the subjects' (experimental group) means of scores in the portfolio and their means of scores in the English Writing Assessment Test.

The correlation between the subjects' means of scores in the portfolio and their means of scores in the EWAT as shown in table 4.14 was 0.86. This level of Pearson product -

moment correlation indicated that the correlation was significant at $p < .05$. Subjects' scores in both the portfolio and the EWAT were positively correlated. This means that there was a correlation between the two variables. Based on this result, the fourth hypothesis of the study was supported.

4.3 Discussion and Interpretation of the Results

The following discussion can be stated in light of the present study results, review of literature, and the previous related studies. The discussion and interpretation deal with writing performance, writing product skills, writing processes, and correlation between portfolio and EWAT.

4.3.1 Writing performance

As indicated by the results, the experimental group made improvements in the writing performance. One possible explanation for this result is that the combination of the portfolio scores and the EWAT scores reflected that using more than one instrument to assess the variety of skills and processes that form the subjects' writing performance and growth is useful. This procedure is consistent with what Moya and O'Malley (1994) have suggested that "a single measure is incapable of estimating the diversity of skills, knowledge, processes, and strategies that combine to determine student progress" (p.15).

Indeed, using the portfolio assessment strategy allowed the subjects to put aside the paralyzing effect of grades and concentrate instead on improving their writing. Weiser (1992) noted that students were comfortable with the portfolio assessment procedures because they received constant feedback and could consider the comments carefully as they would provide them with suggestions for improvement. In a study by Song and August (2002) it was shown that students were much less motivated to write for exams than for writing done in class for inclusion in the portfolio since exams took ownership and assessment away from students and gave it to the teacher.

Involvement in the assessment process through the different portfolio assessment procedures seemed to have contributed to improvement of the subjects' writing performance. The subjects were grown as writers could be as a result of their participation in the assessment process monitoring and evaluating their own work. Moreover, they learned to recognize their own strengths and needs. As they were part of the process, they took the responsibility for refining and improving their work. In a similar experiment, Arter (1995) found that portfolios increase achievement levels and have students take control of their own learning through the systematic reflection on work. In addition, Brown (1997) reported that using portfolio affords students the opportunity to manage and monitor their learning, document their growth and achievements over time, articulate their achievement level, and moreover experience success.

Again, this result is consistent with some studies reported by Weiser (1992), Baak (1997), Neiman (1999), Song and August (2002), Eissa (2003), Koelper and Messerge (2003), and Coombe and Barlow (2004), who proved the effect of portfolio assessment procedures in EFL writing teaching, learning and assessing.

4.3.2 Writing Product Skills

It is clear from the results that the experimental group achieved better than the control group in writing product skills. The subjects (experimental group) showed a satisfactory improvement with reference to each writing product skill i.e., purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics. The high gains obtained by the experimental group on the post administration of the English Writing Assessment Test could be due to the nature of the portfolio assessment model. It was noticed that the portfolios were effective in enhancing EFL students' writing product skills. This finding goes in line with what was concluded by Aly (2000) that many of the students involved in

his experiment could identify their weak areas (skills) in writing and develop as writers. In addition, Khalil (2002, pp.667-668) found that portfolio development increased students' ability to achieve and acquire writing skills.

Results also indicated that providing the subjects with chance and time to practice writing improved their writing product skills. Furthermore, the implemented portfolio assessment model provided the students with ample opportunity to deal with a variety of pieces of writing, thereby develop each writing product skill. This result goes with those studies reported by Weiser (1992) and Kowalewski et al. (2002) who believed that developing writing skills requires time and practicing.

Results of the present study are consistent with some studies such as Krigere and Sardiko's (2002) which showed portfolios as an efficient means of developing language skills in general and writing skills in particular. Also, Baak (1997) concluded that portfolio construction encouraged students to learn to develop the necessary writing skills to perform a writing assignment.

During the experiment of the current study, the subjects (experimental group) were involved in the processes of creating the portfolio i.e., collecting, selecting, reflecting, and conferencing. It is worth mentioning that reflection was an essential part of the portfolio development process. The reflection sheets offered the teacher with information about the students' perceptions of their own work, perceptions that the teacher took into account in responding to each student's piece of writing, thus directed the students through constant feedback to develop their writing skills. This result is in harmony with Camp (1992) who believed that reflection is an integral part of becoming accomplished writers. Conferencing was an effective strategy to encourage the subjects to share their writing, provide feedback, and develop their writing skills. Generally, developing or exploring such processes through

portfolio improved the subjects' writing product skills and created an active atmosphere in class.

These results are in agreement with those reported in some other related studies (Anwar, 2002; Kowalewski et al., 2002; Krigere & Sardiko, 2002; Anderson et al., 2003). These studies demonstrated that students' involvement in the processes of creating a portfolio improve their writing skills.

4.3.3 Writing processes

Results of the Self-reporting Questionnaire showed an increase in the writing processes (i.e., planning, drafting, revising, and editing) utilized by the experimental group in performing the writing tasks. Besides, portfolio contents revealed that using the portfolio assessment model empowered the subjects to be engaged in different writing processes to present writing products. Involvement in writing processes was a necessary step in reaching the final writing product. This result was supported by Clemmons et al. (1993) who reported that portfolios exhibit the processes of producing a piece of writing. Mueller (2006), too, pointed out that creating portfolio gives sufficient attention to the learning processes required to create the products or outcomes. As a result, the products or outcomes are as good as teacher or students would like.

Based on the present results, improvement of the subjects' writing performance could be attributed to the Portfolio Assessment Model in which planning, drafting, revising, and editing processes are essential principles. Participants were given ample opportunity to develop ideas, write drafts, revise, and even edit their writing. Evidence in support of this finding could be found in Farr and Tone (1998) who noted that the portfolio assessment development process promotes writing as it allows students to practice different writing processes. Kowalewski et al.'s (2002) results were also consistent with those of the present

study where improvement in writing performance was as a result of including writing processes in writing instruction. Weiser (1992) added that portfolio assessment supports the notion that writing is a process involving planning, drafting, revising, and editing.

Results of the present study are also consistent with those reported in other studies. Coombe and Barlow (2004) pointed out that writing teachers should teach using approach in which students spend time selecting the topics they will write about, drafting, and revising before submitting a finished assignment. They, also, found that involvement in such processes improved EFL students' writing ability. Likewise, Baak (1997) and Puhl (1997) argued that portfolios helped students experience the different writing processes as a chance of providing their best.

4.3.4 Correlation between portfolio and English Writing Assessment Test

Pearson product - moment correlation revealed that there was a statistically significant correlation at $p < .05$ between the subjects' (experimental group) means of scores in the portfolios and their means of scores in the English Writing Assessment Test. Thus, there is a relationship between the subjects' test scores and their portfolio grading. This means that using portfolio along with the English Writing Assessment Test increased the subjects' chance of success as they were motivated and encouraged to perform well in the EWAT. This result is in harmony with what portfolio proponents (Camp, 1992; Weiser, 1992; Kowalewski et al., 2002) suggested that such strategy of assessment motivates EFL students to learn and improve their performance.

Throughout the present experiment, the subjects have been told what they have done right and directed in the way they should go by turning weaknesses into goals to achieve, thereby motivated and encouraged to do well in the EWAT. Thus, the portfolio and the EWAT, as two forms of writing assessment, were used to complement each other. This

result is in agreement with that of Song and August (2002) who, in a similar experiment, found that students, who were assessed using portfolios as well as the writing assessment test, performed well on the writing assessment test as compared with those who were assessed using the writing assessment test only.

In contrast, Crosby (1997) pointed out that portfolios are often criticized because they only highlight students' accomplishments and ignore students' weaknesses. Actually, students' weaknesses are not ignored in the portfolio assessment strategy; that is they are, as Aly (2000) demonstrated, identified and addressed as goals student must work to improve.

Though it was found in some studies that the experience of portfolio construction is enjoyable, effective, and motivated for students concerning improving writing ability (Johns, 1995; Aly, 2000; Krigere& Sardiko, 2002), Apple and Shimo (2004) noted that some EFL learners found portfolio construction much more difficult than exams. Using such approach made some learners frustrated as they had to set their own learning goals, choose their own work for portfolio inclusion, and reflect on their work or that of their peers.

4.4 Summary of the Results

The following is a summary of the results:

4.4.1 English writing performance of third year secondary students (N=63) was poor and inadequate. Their mean scores in the writing performance was low (22.77) as compared with 55 the possible writing performance.

4.4.2 The portfolio group students were much better in the writing performance (t-value is 2.167) when compared with the non-portfolio group.

- 4.4.3 Statistically significant differences in writing product skills (t-value is 2.350) were found on behalf of the experimental group. Also, the portfolio group obtained higher scores than the non-portfolio group on each of the six writing product skills i.e., purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics (t-values are 2.383, 2.246, 2.466, 2.299, 2.281, and 2.269, respectively).
- 4.4.4A significant increase in the use of writing processes (t-value 2.253) was noted with regard to the experimental group. Likewise, statistically significant differences were found in favor of the portfolio group on each of the four writing processes i.e., planning, drafting, revising, and editing (t-values are 2.492, 2.578, 2.242, and 2.297, respectively).
- 4.4.5A statistically significant correlation (0.86) was found between the subjects' (experimental group) scores in the portfolios and their English Writing Assessment Test scores.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of the Study

5.1.1 Statement of the Problem

5.1.2 Purposes of the Study

5.1.3 Hypotheses of the Study

5.1.4 Methodology of the Study

5.1.5 Findings of the Study

5.2 Conclusions

5.3 Recommendations

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

This chapter provides a summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary of the Study

5.1.1 Statement of the problem

This current study tried to investigate this problem: English writing performance of a large number of Saudi secondary school students is below the expected level: The majority of EFL secondary students are unable to produce a comprehensive, acceptable written English text. Based on this problem statement, the research attempted to answer the following main question:

5.1.1.1 What effect does the use of portfolio assessment strategy have on the writing performance of EFL third year secondary school students in Saudi Arabia?

This question branched into the following questions:

5.1.1.1.1 What is the actual level of the students' English writing ability?

5.1.1.1.2 How effective is the use of portfolio assessment strategy on developing the students' English writing product skills?

5.1.1.1.3 What are the effects of portfolio assessment strategy on enriching the students' use of writing processes?

5.1.2 Purposes of the study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the effect of using the portfolio assessment procedures on improving the writing performance of third year secondary students and to explore if it is feasible to apply it in the teaching of writing in EFL educational setting in Saudi Arabia.

5.1.3 Hypotheses of the study

- 5.1.3.1 There are statistically significant differences at 0.05 level in writing performance gains between the experimental (portfolio) and control (non-portfolio) groups, in favor of the experimental group.
- 5.1.3.2 There are statistically significant differences at 0.05 level between the mean scores of the portfolio and non-portfolio groups on the writing product skills i.e., purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics, favoring the portfolio group.
- 5.1.3.3 There are statistically significant differences at 0.05 level between the mean scores of the portfolio and non-portfolio groups in the post self-reporting questionnaire on writing processes i.e., planning, drafting, revising, and editing, in favor of the former group.
- 5.1.3.4 There is a statistically significant correlation at 0.05 level between the subjects' (experimental group) means of scores in the portfolio and their means of scores in the English Writing Assessment Test.

5.1.4 Methodology of the study

The sample of the study consisted of 63 female students (33 in the experimental group and 30 in the control group) enrolled in the third year at The 3rd Secondary School for Girls in AL-Jouf region, Skaka. The following five data collection instruments were developed in order to carry out the experiment of the current study:

- An English Writing Assessment Test (EWAT) to assess the students' writing performance in English.
- An Analytic Scoring Rubric (ASR) for secondary students' English writing.
- A Self-reporting Questionnaire (SRQ) to identify the writing processes students use while performing writing tasks.
- A Portfolio Assessment Model (PAM) for EFL writing instruction
- A Portfolio Holistic Scoring Rubric (PHSR) to determine a grade for the portfolio as a whole.

A pilot study was conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the research instruments. The validity and reliability of the EWAT were 0.92 and 0.86, respectively. The reliability of the ASR was 0.93. The validity and reliability of the SRQ were 0.97 and 0.95, respectively. The reliability of the PHSR was 0.98. The collected data were statistically analyzed using the computer package SPSS (version 10.0).

5.1.5 Findings of the study.

The following results were derived from the analysis of data:

- 5.1.5.1 English writing performance of third year secondary students (N=63) was poor and inadequate. Their mean scores in the writing performance was low (22.77) as compared with 55 the possible writing performance.

- 5.1.5.2 The portfolio group students were much better in the writing performance (t-value is 2.167) when compared with the non-portfolio group. Thus, the first hypothesis is confirmed.
- 5.1.5.3 Statistically significant differences in writing product skills (t-value is 2.350) were found on behalf of the experimental group. Also, the portfolio group obtained higher scores than the non-portfolio group on each of the six writing product skills i.e., purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics (t-values are 2.383, 2.246, 2.466, 2.299, 2.281, and 2.269, respectively). So, the second hypothesis is accepted.
- 5.1.5.4 A significant increase in the use of writing processes (t-value 2.253) was noted with regard to the experimental group. Likewise, statistically significant differences were found, in favor of the portfolio group on each of the four writing processes i.e., planning, drafting, revising, and editing (t-values are 2.492, 2.578, 2.242, and 2.297, respectively). Thus, the third hypothesis is supported.
- 5.1.5.5 A statistically significant correlation (0.86) was found between the subjects' (experimental group) scores in the the portfolios and their English Writing Assessment Test scores. Based on this result, the fourth hypothesis is accepted.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the present study, the following conclusions could be drawn:

- 5.2.1 Portfolio assessment strategy affect students' English writing performance by focusing efforts on writing products/outcomes as well as writing processes.
- 5.2.2 The portfolio assessment model is found to be an effective instructional strategy as well as an evaluation tool.
- 5.2.3 Using portfolio is quite acceptable for EFL third year secondary Saudi students and its introduction is beneficial for writing instruction.

- 5.2.4 Using portfolio assessment strategy has the potential to integrate assessment with every day teaching practices.
- 5.2.5 A positive correlation appears in the portfolio in relation to the English Writing Assessment Test.
- 5.2.6 Using portfolio assessment strategy allows students to create a bridge between their teacher and themselves.
- 5.2.7 The teacher uses portfolios to analyze student growth and use the information for decision making regarding future instruction.
- 5.2.8 Involvement in reflection practices is an important strategy to help students improve their writing product skills.
- 5.2.9 Conferencing provides teacher with valuable information about students' performance and give students meaningful feedback.

5.2 Recommendations

Several recommendations are emerged:

- 5.3.1 Assessment should be a formative ongoing process providing feedback to students as they progress toward a goal.
- 5.3.2 Using portfolio as both teaching and assessment strategy in EFL writing classes.
- 5.3.3 It is recommended to offer training for EFL teachers in planning, implementing, and interpreting portfolios.
- 5.3.4 Portfolio assessment should be used as a complementary to traditional tests.
- 5.3.5 Opportunities should be provided for students to practice reflection during class time.
- 5.3.6 Teachers are recommended to encourage students to take part in the assessment process especially self and peer assessment.

- 5.3.7 Students' needs and interests should be taken into consideration in any suggested portfolio assessment program.
- 5.3.8 Emphasis should be given to processes as well as writing products in teaching and assessing writing.
- 5.3.9 Pair work and group work should be encouraged in EFL writing classes.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

- 5.4.1 Conducting studies to use the portfolio assessment strategy with EFL students at various educational levels.
- 5.4.2 Replication of this study in different regions of Saudi Arabia.
- 5.4.3 Investigating the influence of electronic teaching portfolios on EFL teachers' performance.
- 5.4.4 More research is required to study the effect of portfolios on promoting Saudi EFL students' self-esteem.
- 5.4.5 A further study is needed to investigate the challenges and obstacles of portfolio assessment implementation in Saudi classroom.
- 5.4.6 More research is needed to examine students' attitudes to portfolio creation in an EFL setting.
- 5.4.7 A study examining the effect of parents' involvement in portfolio assessment programs on EFL students' performance.
- 5.4.8 More research is needed to study the effect of using portfolios on developing EFL students' motivation towards language learning.
- 5.4.9 Investigating the effect of e-portfolios in assessing EFL students' performance in writing.
- 5.4.10 Examining the effect of using portfolios on developing students' reflection skills.

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APPENDICES

Appendix (A)
Interview Guide

(English Version)

Interview Questions

1. Do you have difficulty in EFL writing?
2. Do you find writing assignments difficult to perform?
3. Do you receive constant valuable feedback from teacher?
4. Do you have time in class to write drafts, revise your writings, and rewrite again?
5. Do you receive enough support/help and guidance from teacher?

(Arabic Version)

أسئلة المقابلة

١. هل تجدين صعوبة في تعلم الكتابة باللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية؟
٢. هل من الصعب انجاز التعيينات الكتابية التي تكلفين بها؟
٣. هل تحصلين على تغذية راجعة ذات فائدة من المعلمة بشكل مستمر؟
٤. هل لديك الوقت الكافي داخل الفصل لكتابة المسودات ،مراجعة كتاباتك، وإعادة الكتابة مرة أخرى؟
٥. هل تحصلين على المساعدة الكافية والتوجيه من المعلمة؟

Appendix (B)
English Writing Assessment Test
(EWAT)

English Writing Assessment Test***Instructions***

This is a writing test. It is to assess your English writing performance. It includes two parts: Part one in which you have to write a descriptive paragraph and part two where you have to write a narrative one. For taking the test, the following points are to be considered:

- Read the instructions given at the beginning of each part carefully; then proceed to write your own paragraph.
- Write in blue or black ink on the lined pages provided.
- Write in clear and legible handwriting.
- Write as accurately as possible.
- Write as neatly as you can.
- You must stop writing at the end of the allocated time.
- Scoring will be based on certain criteria including purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics. Total possible score is sixty.

Thanks for your participation.

The researcher

Part two (30 minutes)

Write a paragraph about your grandmother's youth. Use the notes below:

... Grandmother's Youth

lived village
spent her timeher mother
went away..... home
lived in house
her family's house mud, wood and chopped straw.
fetched water

Cooking open fire.
.....oil lamps to see at night.
..... formal schooling.
learned observing and copying

When someone was sick, her mother make remedies.....
Evening entertainment storiesolder members.

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End of the Test

Appendix (C)
Analytic Scoring Rubric
(ASR)

Instructions to the Rater

This scoring rubric is composed of six well-stated criteria by which student work is to be judged on a writing task at five quality levels of performance for each criterion. Remember, student writing performance is rated separately for each criterion. Note that fifteen indicators of the criteria being met are provided to help you better know the quality of the performance.

It is noteworthy that for each level of performance within each criterion, descriptors are supplied to further explain what performance at that level looks like and enable more reliable and unbiased scoring. Be sure that students are given scores of 4 (accomplished writing) to 0 (NA) for each indicator. For example, placement in the score point 3 for one indicator of vocabulary would earn the student three points for that criterion. But placement in the score point 4 for the two indicators of the same criterion would earn the student eight points for that criterion. Notice, too, that since this rubric is a five level scale which comprises six criteria and fifteen indicators, total possible points to be assigned are sixty.

Thank you very much for your effort and cooperation.

The researcher

Analytic Scoring Rubric

Standard 1.6: Student written paragraph demonstrates command of appropriate English writing domains: purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics.

Criterion/ Standard	Indicator	Score point 4 Accomplished writing	Score point3 proficient writing	Score point 2 Basic writing	Score point 1 Limited writing	Score point 0 N/A
purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State the purpose clearly and appropriately 	Fully clear and appropriate purpose.	Well clear and appropriate purpose.	Quite clear purpose.	Unclear purpose	Not applicable to this criterion
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides relevant background information Supplies considerable information Presents the main idea with supporting details 	<p>More relevant information</p> <p>Well considered ideas</p> <p>Very thorough developments of supporting details</p>	<p>Enough relevant information</p> <p>Thoughtful and clear ideas</p> <p>Sufficient details to support the main idea</p>	<p>Limited relevant information</p> <p>Straightforward and simple ideas</p> <p>Acceptable but fewer details</p>	<p>Little or no relevant information</p> <p>Limited and confusing ideas</p> <p>Random and irrelevant details</p>	
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops and organizes the paragraph well Maintains logical sequencing Shows unity and overall coherence 	<p>Very well developed and organized</p> <p>Perfect logical sequencing</p> <p>Clearly evident unity</p>	<p>Adequately organized</p> <p>Moderately logical sequencing</p> <p>Minor lapses in unity</p>	<p>Inadequately organized</p> <p>Logical but incomplete sequencing</p> <p>Some unity</p>	<p>Loose organization</p> <p>Poor logical sequencing</p> <p>Poor unity / coherence</p>	
Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizes varied vocabulary Uses appropriate vocabulary for topic 	<p>Highly varied and non-repetitive vocabulary</p> <p>Very effective use of words / ideally suited / no errors of word choice</p>	<p>Varied and occasionally repetitive vocabulary</p> <p>Good use of words / suitable for the topic / occasional errors of word choice/ meaning seldom confused.</p>	<p>Little variety and basic memorized repetitive vocabulary</p> <p>Acceptable use of appropriate words / frequent errors of word choice/ sometimes interfere with meaning</p>	<p>No variety and highly repetitive vocabulary</p> <p>Little knowledge of vocabulary suited to the topic / errors of word choice often interfere with meaning</p>	

Criterion/ Standard	Indicator	Score point 4 Accomplished writing	Score point 3 proficient writing	Score point 2 Basic writing	Score point 1 Limited writing	Score point 0 N/A
Sentence Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses appropriate sentence structure, and / or variety. ▪ Shows correct sentence structure 	<p>Effective use of simple, compound, and complex sentence structure</p> <p>Over-corrected sentences</p>	<p>Appropriate use of simple, compound, and complex sentence structure</p> <p>Correct sentences with some minor errors</p>	<p>Basic sentence structures (common and simple sentences)</p> <p>Lot of errors in sentence structure</p>	<p>Confusing sentence structure</p> <p>Serious and frequent errors in sentence structure</p>	Not applicable to this criterion
Mechanics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrates mastery of spelling ▪ Demonstrates mastery of capitalization ▪ Demonstrates mastery of punctuation ▪ Demonstrates mastery of handwriting 	<p>Full control of spelling</p> <p>Full control of capitalization</p> <p>Full control of punctuation</p> <p>Full control of handwriting</p>	<p>Good control of spelling / occasional errors</p> <p>Good control of capitalization / occasional errors</p> <p>Good control of punctuation / occasional errors</p> <p>Good control of handwriting / occasional errors</p>	<p>Acceptable control of spelling / fair number of errors</p> <p>Acceptable control of capitalization / fair number of errors</p> <p>Acceptable control of punctuation / fair number of errors</p> <p>Acceptable control of handwriting / fair number of errors</p>	<p>Minimal control of spelling / frequent errors</p> <p>Minimal control of capitalization / frequent errors</p> <p>Minimal control of punctuation / frequent errors</p> <p>Minimal control of handwriting / frequent errors</p>	

Appendix (D)
Self-reporting Questionnaire
(SRQ)

(English Version)

Self-reporting Questionnaire

Instructions

This is a self-reporting questionnaire to elicit information about the writing processes you use while performing a writing task and to determine whether you have these processes or not. The questionnaire consists of four sections: planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Each section includes a number of statements. Each statement is followed by three choices (always, sometimes, or never). Please read each statement carefully and kindly indicate your response to each item by putting a tick (✓) in the box corresponding to only one of the three choices, as shown in the sample item below. Remember that your given answers will honestly express what processes you actually employ when you write in English.

Sample Item

Item No.	process	Statement	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	Editing	I write more than one draft and then write a final version.		✓	

Thank you so much for your participation and cooperation

The researcher

Self-reporting Questionnaire

Name of Student Class

School.....

Please, put a tick (✓) in the box that indicates your opinion.

Item No.	Process	Statement	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	Planning	I identify what I write.			
2		I consider whom I am writing for.			
3		I prepare an outline before I write.			
4		I generate Why-questions about the topic.			
5		I make a list of ideas on the topic.			
6		I freely write down words and phrases about the topic.			
7		I collect information about the topic selected before writing.			
8	Drafting	I write a draft after planning.			
9		I write the first draft, leave it for a while, and then write a series of drafts.			
10		While writing drafts, I focus on the development of meaning and ideas.			
11		I do not worry about grammar mistakes while writing drafts.			
12		I do not focus on mechanics (punctuation, capitalization, and spelling) when I write drafts.			
13		I emphasize on content when making a draft.			

Item No.	Process	Statement	Always	Sometimes	Never
14	Revising	I reread the draft to see if it makes sense.			
15		I revise the content of the draft.			
16		I revise the organization of ideas in the draft.			
17		I exchange the drafts with peers for suggestions and improvements.			
18		I review the draft based on the teacher's feedback.			
19	Editing	I do self-editing.			
20		I exchange papers with peers for editing.			
21		I proofread the draft for grammar.			
22		I proofread the draft for spelling.			
23		I edit for capitalization.			
24		I edit for punctuation.			
25		I rewrite the draft after its revision.			

(Arabic Version)

استبانته تقرير ذاتي

: _____

لقد أعدت استبانته التقرير الذاتي هذه للحصول على معلومات حول عمليات الكتابة التي تستخدم أثناء أداء مهمة كتابية ، ولتحديد ما إذا كنت تستخدمها أم لا . وتتألف الاستبانة من أربعة أقسام : التخطيط ، وكتابة المسودات ، والمراجعة ، والتنقيح . كما يحوي كل قسم عدداً من العبارات ، وكل عبارة مصحوبة بثلاثة اختيارات (دائماً ، أحياناً ، أبداً) . من فضلك اقرئي بتأن كل عبارة وأشيري إلى إجابتك لكل عبارة بوضع علامة (✓) في المكان المخصص لواحدة فقط من الاختيارات الثلاثة ، كما هو موضح في المثال أسفل . تذكرني أن إجاباتك المعطاة ستعكس وبصدق العمليات التي تستخدمها حقيقة أثناء الكتابة.

مثال

الرقم	العملية	العبارة	دائماً	أحياناً	أبداً
١	المراجعة	اكتب أكثر من مسودة ثم أكتب نسخة نهائية.		✓	

شكراً لمشاركتك وتعاونك

الباحثة

استبانة تقرير ذاتي

اسم الطالبة الصف

المدرسة

فضلاً ضعي علامة (✓) في المكان الذي يدل على إجابتك .

الرقم	العملية	العبارة	دائماً	أحياناً	أبداً
	التخطيط				
١		احدد ماذا أكتب .			
٢		أضع في اعتباري لمن أكتب .			
٣		أعد مخطط تمهيدي قبل أن أكتب .			
٤		أضع أسئلة استفهامية مبدوءة بـ Wh عن الموضوع .			
٥		أقوم بإعداد قائمة بأفكار تدور حول الموضوع .			
٦		أدون كلمات وعبارات عن الموضوع بحرية .			
٧		اجمع معلومات عن الموضوع قبل الكتابة .			
	كتابة المسودات				
٨		بعد الانتهاء من التخطيط أقوم بإعداد مسودة .			
٩		أكتب المسودة الأولى ، وأتركها لفترة ثم أكتب عدة مسودات .			
١٠		عند كتابة المسودات ، أركز على إظهار المعنى والأفكار .			
١١		لا أهتم بالأخطاء النحوية أثناء كتابة المسودات .			
١٢		لا أركز على أليات الكتابة (علامات الترقيم، استخدام الأشكال الكبيرة للحروف ، الهجاء) عندما أكتب المسودات .			
١٣		أؤكد على المحتوى عند إعداد المسودة .			
	المراجعة				
١٤		أقرأ المسودة للمرة الثانية للتأكد ما إذا كانت واضحة و مفهومة .			
١٥		أراجع محتوى المسودة .			

			أقوم بمراجعة المسودة لترتيب الأفكار.		١٦
			أُتبادل المسودات مع الزميلات من أجل المقترحات والتعديلات.		١٧
			أراجع المسودة بناءً على تعليقات وملاحظات المعلمة.		١٨
				التنقيح	
			أنقح كتابتي بنفسي .		١٩
			أُتبادل الأوراق مع الزميلات لتنقيحها.		٢٠
			أصحح المسودة فيما يخص القواعد النحوية .		٢١
			أنقح المسودة فيما يخص الهجاء		٢٢
			أصحح استخدام الحروف الكبيرة في المسودة.		٢٣
			أصحح علامات الترقيم في المسودة.		٢٤
			أعيد كتابة المسودة بعد مراجعتها.		٢٥

Appendix (E)
Portfolio Assessment Model
(PAM)

The Portfolio Committee

Portfolio Committee

The students, the class teacher, and the researcher are the audiences to follow the development of the students' writing performance. Under the teacher's guidance, the students are given the responsibility of managing their portfolios in the classroom. Classmates also have access to portfolios on a regular schedule.

Model Manual

Introducing the EFL Teacher to the Portfolio Assessment Model

Dear teacher

This model will be used to improve the writing performance of a sample of EFL third year secondary students. Actually, portfolio assessment is a purposeful collection of student work that tells the story of student achievement or growth in writing. The students will be asked to collect the writing assignments that are developed in class work throughout the term in a folder (collection portfolio). Every student has to select her best and preferred seven writing assignments and put them in a showcase portfolio. Reflection sheets will be used by students to reflect on their own work. During the implementation of the model, two separate conferences of 15 minutes will be held. Several contents will be included into the portfolio: writing logs, peer editing forms, evaluation forms, recording sheets, and records of student-teacher conferences. Two types of assessment will be used: continuous assessment and final assessment

The following are some guidelines for implementing the portfolio assessment model:

- Introduce and explain the portfolio concept to students. They should know that portfolios are not folders of all the work students do. Instead, they are thoughtful selections of evidence of progress toward goals.
- Identify purpose and focus of the portfolio.
- Students will periodically review their writing portfolios to select what they think is a representative work and to add or delete within the contents of the portfolios.
- Give students an active role in self-reflection and goal setting and let them see actually progress from one period to the next. They have to reflect on their own work by filling

in reflection sheets. It is optional to fill in their reflection sheets in the native language (Arabic).

- Let students examine and respond to each other's collections using peer-editing forms.
- Respond to finished drafts of writing assignments not to provide a grade but to provide suggestions for revision as well as some general commentary about the students' development as writers. The scores will be recorded secretly and compared after all with the portfolios have been evaluated using holistic scoring rubrics.
- Write notes regarding students' weaknesses and strengths using recording sheets.
- Conferencing will take the form of one-to-one interview. You will meet a student during the class time while other students work on their own.
- Have students organize their portfolios.
- Inform students that you will be pleased to advise them whenever they ask for it.

Portfolio Guidelines for Students

What is a portfolio?

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of students work over time that demonstrates to students and others their efforts, progress, and achievements in writing.

What is it for?

The portfolio will be a good chance for you to show what you really know, what you can do, what you have learnt, and consequently improve your writing in addition to a formal test.

How will you go with this portfolio?

- Throughout the term, collect the writing assignments that are developed in class work and put in a folder. It is your collection portfolio.
- You need to include other items:
 - Reflection sheets in which you reflect on your own work.
 - Peer editing forms in which you respond to your classmates work.
 - Writing logs in which you think about your writing.
- At the end of the term, you have to choose your best and preferred seven writing assignments.
- Include both core and optional items in your portfolio.
- Keep all the core entries (things you must include) in your portfolio (showcase portfolio).

The core entries are:

One descriptive paragraph

One narrative paragraph

Five language exercises on writing

- Select three of the optional entries (things you will choose to include) to be included in the portfolio.

The optional entries are:

Drafts of writing tasks selected to show effort and achievement.

List of future goals regarding your writing ability

Commentary on your strengths and weaknesses as a writer

List of topics you like to write about

Records of student-teacher conferences

- Each entry that goes into the portfolio has to be dated clearly.
- Include early drafts and revised versions on which teacher evaluative feedback and comments are written as well as the final polished draft of each core writing piece.
- Include peers' comments in your portfolios.
- Fill in a reflection sheet to be accompanied with each final entry.
- Design a title page for your portfolio that shows your name, grade, school, teacher name, and the word portfolio (in big letters).
- Include a list of portfolio contents in a table.
- Submit your showcase portfolio for final assessment.

Note!

The teacher will be pleased to help you when you ask for it. However, your portfolio remains your own responsibility

Guidelines for Conducting Student-Teacher Conferences

The following are general guidelines for conducting conferences with individual students:

- Explain to your students that you will be meeting each student twice throughout the term to look at her portfolio.
- You will want to be organized and systematic about establishing conference times.
- Conduct conferences with each student on a regular basis throughout the term not for grading purposes but to monitor progress and difficulties that might be impeding writing progress. A conference form will be used.
- Conduct portfolio conferences during class time where students come to meet you while other students are engaged in writing activities such as revising or editing.
- Begin by taking a few minutes to review the portfolio so that you can open the conference with positive comments and prepare questions for the face –to- face conversation with each student.
- Try to engage the students in conversations about their work by commenting about it in such a way that your observation will encourage them to comment on an effort to confirm your observation, enlarge upon it, correct it, clarify the work you are commenting on, and so forth.
- Allow time for the student to fill in the conference sheet.
- Add your notes to the sheet.
- Bring the portfolio conference to a close by asking the student to state overall writing goals for herself. Some students may need guidance to set realistic and specific goals.
- Encourage the student to record her own goals on the conference sheet and place it in the portfolio.

Instructional Materials

Student-Teacher Writing Conference Form

Student Name.....

Date

I do these things well in my writing

.....
.....
.....

Things I want to improve in my writing

.....
.....
.....

Future goals are

.....
.....
.....

Teacher Comments

.....
.....
.....

Reflection Sheet

Student Name.....

Assignment Number.....

1. What was the purpose of this assignment?

.....
.....

2. Is this work important to you? Why?

.....
.....

3. Is this assignment your best one? Explain what makes it your best?

.....
.....

4. Looking at an earlier piece of similar work, how does this new piece of work compare?
How is it better/worse? Where can you see progress or improvement?

.....
.....
.....

5. What do you like or not like about this piece of work?

.....
.....

6. What do you want to improve in this work?

.....
.....

7. What did you learn from reviewing this piece of work?

.....
.....

8. Does this work show your growth as a writer? Explain.

.....
.....
.....

Portfolio Evaluation Form

Student Name.....

For the portfolio collected between.....and.....

Amount of Writing	Extensive	Moderate	Limited

Attitudes toward Writing	Positive	Undecided	Negative

Progress as a Writer	Impressive	Noticeable	Too limited

Comments

.....

.....

.....

.....

Peer Editing Form

The piece I read was

by.....

It made me feel

The best thing about this piece is

.....

Next time the writer might want to work on

.....

.....

.....

Peer Editor's Signature

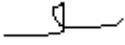
.....

Date

Proofreading Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
Ab	A faulty abbreviation
Awk	Awkward expression or construction
Cap	Faulty capitalization
-ed	Problem with final -ed
-s	Problem with final -s
Pron	Problem with pronoun
Rep	Unnecessary repetition
R-O	Run-on sentence
Sp	Spelling error
S/V	Subject/verb agreement
T	Verb tense problem
WW	Wrong word

Proofreading Symbols

Symbol	Meaning
	Add comma
	Add period
	Add apostrophe
	Insert something
	Capitalize
	Delete
	Change to lowercase
	Begin/Indent paragraph
NO ¶	No paragraph
	Transpose elements
	Close up this space
	A space is needed here

Appendix (F)

Sample of Writing Assignments

Writing Assignment 4B: Descriptive paragraph**Objectives**

- *Writing a short paragraph describing a process*
- *Proofreading/Editing a paragraph*

Materials

Worksheet, pens, or pencils

Time

30 minutes

Method /Instructional Techniques

Discussion, controlled practice, and individual work

Procedure

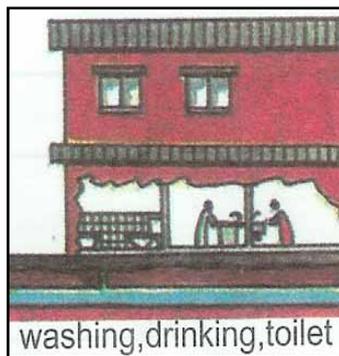
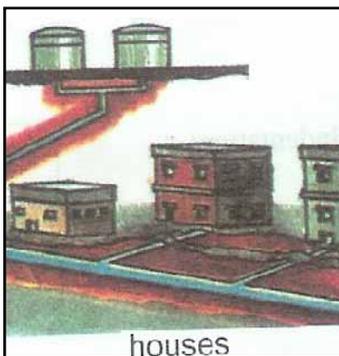
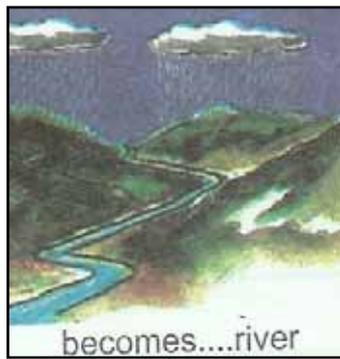
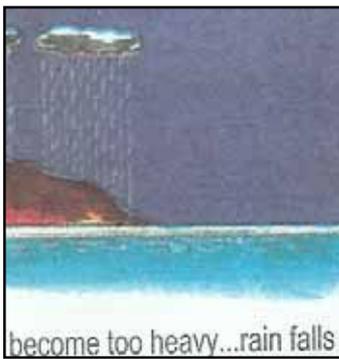
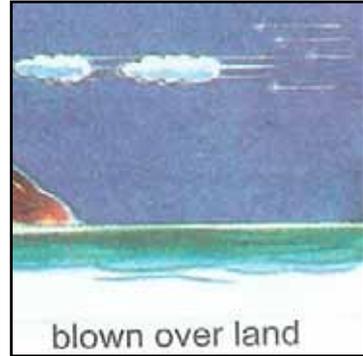
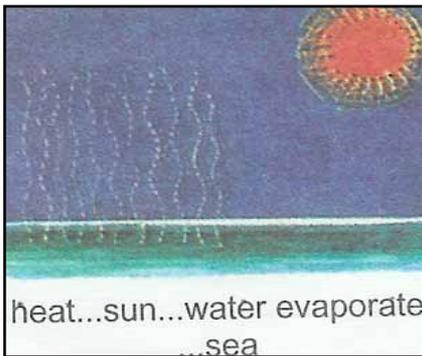
1. Each student receives a copy of the worksheet.
2. Read aloud the instructions and make sure the students understand the word caption (words under a picture).
3. Ask the students to look at the pictures in the sheets.
4. Have different individuals read aloud the captions to get ideas about the topic.
5. Make sure everyone understands that these captions will help them to write a paragraph about the water cycle.
6. Explain that they must remember four things when they write the paragraph:
 - Write a title and underline it;
 - Use indentation in the first line of the paragraph;
 - Write capital letters in the correct places;
 - Put full stops at the end of each sentence.
7. Elicit sentences and write some model ones to encourage students to start writing.
8. Explain that they have to write the paragraph and when they have finished they must look at their paragraphs to check that they have done each of the four things.
9. Have the students begin writing the paragraph in the class.
10. Walk around and check that they are all writing.
11. Let the students proofread/edit their own paragraphs.
12. Once the students have finished, ask them to include the sheet in their collection portfolio.

Worksheet

Student Name.....

Date.....

Look at the pictures below then write a paragraph about *The Water Cycle*. Use the captions below the pictures.



Writing Assignment 12: Narrative paragraph

Objective

Narrating events through writing a paragraph

Materials

Worksheet, pens, or pencils

Time

30 minutes

Method /Instructional Techniques

Discussion, controlled practice, and individual work

Procedure

1. Give each student a copy of the worksheet.
2. Have the students look at the notes in the sheet.
3. Explain that the worksheet includes notes about a night in Ramadan in Egypt.
4. Give the students time to read the notes to gather ideas about the topic.
5. Make sure all the students understand them.
6. Introduce the new vocabulary.
7. Individually, have the students write a paragraph about a night in Ramadan in Egypt using the given notes.
8. Remind the students that they have to pay attention to the rules of constructing a paragraph when they write.
9. Once the students have finished writing the paragraph, remind them that each one has to put the worksheet in her own collection portfolio.

Worksheet

Student Name.....

Date.....

Write a paragraph about A Night in Ramadan in Egypt. Use the notes below.

Night.....Ramadan.....Egypt

break.....fast.....dates.....pray.

go to.....mosques.....public places.

Children.....colored lanterns.

Knock at doors.....houses.....ask sweets.

stay up late.....most.....some sleep.

Just before dawn movement.....heard in houses.

People.....getting up.....eat.

Writing Assignment 15: More punctuation and spelling

Objectives

- *Spelling correctly*
- *Punctuating appropriately*
- *Proofreading/Editing classmates worksheets*

Materials

2 worksheets, pens, or pencils

Time

10 minutes

Method /Instructional Techniques

Discussion, controlled practice, individual work, and pair work

Procedure

1. Give out the worksheet and make sure that the instructions are clear for the students.
2. Ask them to rewrite the given sentences individually practicing punctuation and spelling.
3. Once the students have completed the worksheets, put them into pairs.
4. Ask each pair to exchange worksheets for proofreading/editing. Make sure each student write her own name on her classmate worksheets.
5. Encourage the students to use proofreading symbols and abbreviations.
6. Walk around and provide help if necessary.
7. When the students have finished proofreading/editing each other worksheets ask each one to include her worksheets into the collection portfolio.

Worksheet 1

Student Name.....

Date.....

Rewrite the sentences below adding apostrophes where necessary:

1. Mars has an atmosphere, but its gases are not the same as Earth.

.....

2. Marss temperature is not the same as Venuss, is it? No, its-30 C.

.....

3. Our sun has nine planets. These planets orbits are all different.

.....

Worksheet 2

Student Name.....

Date.....

Write the plurals of these nouns:

1. life

2. watch

3. potato

4. pen

5. apple

6. family

Appendix (G)

Portfolio Holistic Scoring Rubric

(PHSR)

Instructions to the Rater

This scoring rubric will be used for grading the students' portfolios. It has ten criteria and six quality levels of performance. Thus, when assessing portfolios, you have to consider all the criteria together or holistically. Note that each level of performance reflects student performance across all the criteria. Within each level of the rubric, descriptors are included to be considered during the grading process. Remember that these descriptors can make each score level distinct from the others. The total possible score is sixty. Some guidelines are provided for reviewing the portfolios.

Thank you so much for your effort and cooperation.

The researcher

Portfolio Holistic Scoring Rubric

Score level	Criteria
<p>60-51 Excellent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The portfolio is quite complete (all required items are included). • The portfolio exhibits a wide variety of writing pieces. • The contents of the portfolio have a very clear focus. • The writing assignments show the student strong sense of audience and purpose. • The portfolio contents perfectly reflect use of the different stages of the writing process. • Reflective forms effectively show clear evidence of personal reflection and awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses. • Drafts display significant change and development in the student use of the writing processes. • Final writing products are virtually free of errors and well edited. • The contents of the portfolio are well organized and well presented. • The portfolio highly shows improvement in writing.
<p>50- 41 Very good</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The portfolio is almost complete (nearly all required items are included). • The portfolio exhibits a variety of writing pieces. • The contents of the portfolio have a clear focus. • The writing assignments show the student sense of audience and purpose. • The portfolio contents adequately reflect use of the different stages of the writing process. • Reflective forms show evidence of personal reflection and awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses. • Drafts show acceptable degree of change and development in the student use of the writing processes. • Final writing products effectively communicate to the reader but contain few writing errors. • The contents are generally well presented with only occasional lapses and are organized in appropriate format. • The portfolio moderately shows improvement in writing.
<p>40-31 Good</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The portfolio is somewhat complete (one or two missing items). • The portfolio exhibits a collection of writing pieces. • The contents of the portfolio have a focus. • The writing assignments show the student satisfactory sense of audience and purpose. • The portfolio contents somewhat reflect use of the different stages of the writing process. • Reflective forms fairly show evidence of personal reflection and awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses. • Drafts display some change and development in the student use of the writing processes. • Final writing products contain occasional writing errors but do not necessarily distract the reader. • The components of the portfolio are organized in a satisfactory format but suffer from some lapses in presentation. • The portfolio adequately shows some improvement in writing.
<p>30-21 Average</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The portfolio is generally complete (three or more missing items). • The portfolio exhibits a limited collection of writing pieces. • The contents of the portfolio have a confused focus. • The writing assignments show the student confused sense of audience and purpose. • The portfolio contents poorly reflect use of the different stages of the writing process. • Reflective forms are insufficient to show evidence of personal reflection and awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses. • Drafts are insufficient to display change and development in the student use of the writing processes. • Final writing products contain some writing errors that interfere with understanding.

Score level	Criteria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The components of the portfolio are, to some extent, organized and suffer from problems in presentation. • The portfolio shows less improvement in writing.
<p>20 – 11</p> <p>Fair</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the required items are presented. • The portfolio exhibits a random collection of writing pieces. • The contents of the portfolio have an unclear focus. • The writing assignments show the student unsatisfactory sense of audience and purpose. • The portfolio contents are insufficient to reflect use of the different stages of the writing process. • Reflective forms are incomplete. • Drafts are random and do not display change and development in the student use of the writing processes. • Final writing products contain many writing errors that inhibit effective communication. • Contents of the portfolio are poorly organized and presented. • The portfolio hardly shows improvement in writing.
<p>10 – 0</p> <p>Poor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The portfolio is totally incomplete. • The portfolio exhibits unrelated writing pieces. • The contents of the portfolio have no focus. • The student has no sense of audience and purpose as the writing assignments show. • The portfolio contents do not reflect use of the different stages of the writing process. • Reflective forms are missing. • Drafts are not present. • Final writing products contain numerous errors in writing that impede comprehension. • No organization or presentation of the contents of the portfolio. • The portfolio shows no improvement in writing.

Guidelines for Reviewing Portfolios

Dos

- Look for signs of growth and improvement in writing.
- Listen carefully as students talk about their writing to learn a great deal about their progress and problems in writing and offer reasonable suggestions.
- Respond to students' writing and provide feedback on the portfolios including strengths and weaknesses as well as achievement effort and goals.
- Reinforce students' use of the different stages of the writing process.
- Include students as co-evaluators in the review of writing products.
- Encourage students to review and share their portfolios with other students.
- Use positive comments.
- Make notes while reviewing the portfolios.

Don'ts

- Encourage students to put extra items into portfolios – it is quality that counts, not quantity.
- Focus on what students have done / mastered.
- Stress on weaknesses in students' work.
- Make too many suggestions.
- Be judgmental about students' work.

Appendix (H)

Letters

Letter to the Jury Concerning the EWAT

Dear professor,

The researcher is conducting an M.A. thesis entitled: “The Effect of Portfolio Assessment on the Writing Performance of EFL Secondary School Students in Saudi Arabia”. This test is a part of the research procedures. It is a criterion-referenced test which is developed to assess the writing performance of third year secondary students according to some specific criteria including purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics. Test materials are based on carefully prescribed topics. The test consists of two parts: Part one in which students are requested to write a descriptive paragraph and part two where a narrative paragraph is requested. Students should complete each part of the test within thirty minutes.

Based on your experience in the research field, the researcher would appreciate if you could review the preliminary version of this instrument and give your opinion regarding the following:

- Clarity of the test items
- Relevance of the test items to the writing product skills (criteria) which are intended to be assessed
- Difficulty level of the test items
- Adequacy of the test items

The researcher would be very thankful if you kindly give any suggestions or comments that you suppose are necessary to develop the instrument.

Your cooperation and contribution will be highly appreciated.

The researcher

English Writing Assessment Test

Would you please, put a tick (✓) in the box that indicates your opinion.

Part	Clear	Unclear	Relevant	Irrelevant	Appropriate level of difficulty	Inappropriate level of difficulty	Adequate	Inadequate
One								
Two								

Suggestions and Comments

.....

.....

.....

.....

Letter to the Jury Concerning the ASR

Dear professor,

The researcher is conducting an M.A. thesis titled “The Effect of Portfolio Assessment on the Writing Performance of EFL Secondary School Students in Saudi Arabia”. This scoring rubric is developed for grading English writing test papers of the students. It comprises six criteria by which students’ written work to be judged namely, purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics. A number of statements of expected performance (*indicators*) is derived from each criterion. Five varying levels of performance are defined: score point 4 for *accomplished writing* (distinguished), score point 3 for *proficient writing* (good), score point 2 for *basic writing*(fair/ developing), score point 1 for *limited writing* (unsatisfactory/ novice), and score point 0 for *N/A* (not achieved) . Total possible score is sixty.

You are kindly requested to give your opinion concerning:

- Adequacy, appropriateness, and variety of performance levels
- Clarity of each indicator, its relevance to the criterion, and its consistency with other indicators

Finally, the researcher would be grateful if you give any suggestions, modifications, additions or deletions as necessary.

Thanks for your help and contribution.

The researcher

Please, put a tick (✓) in the box that indicates your opinion.

Indicators					
Clear	Unclear	Relevant	Irrelevant	Consistent	Inconsistent

Levels of Performance					
Adequate	Inadequate	Appropriate	Inappropriate	Varied	Not varied

Remarks and Suggestions

.....

.....

.....

.....

Letter to the Jury Concerning the SRQ

Dear professor,

The researcher is conducting an M.A. thesis entitled: “The Effect of Portfolio Assessment on the Writing Performance of EFL Secondary School Students in Saudi Arabia”. This self-reporting questionnaire is a part of the research procedures. It is designed to determine the writing processes used by third year secondary students while carrying out writing tasks and to find out whether they have these processes or not. It is composed of four sections representing different writing processes, namely planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Each section consists of a number of statements. This instrument is based on a 3-point scale ranging from zero (*never*) to 1(*sometimes*) and 2 (*always*).

Due to your rich academic and research experience, the researcher is hopeful you could look at the preliminary version of this questionnaire and provide your input and comments concerning the following:

- Clarity of the statements
- Relevance of the statements to the writing processes they are included in

The researcher would be extremely grateful if you kindly give any suggestions, modifications, additions or deletions to the statements you see necessary to enrich this instrument.

Thanks for your help and contribution.

The researcher

Letter to the Jury Concerning the PAM

Dear Professor,

The researcher is conducting an M.A. thesis entitled: “The Effect of Portfolio Assessment on the Writing Performance of EFL Secondary School Students in Saudi Arabia”. This model is a part of the research procedures. It is developed to improve the writing performance of a sample of EFL third year secondary students. The students collect writing work samples, make selection, and engage in reflection and conferencing throughout the process of portfolio development. Each student has to compile two portfolios: the collection portfolio and the showcase portfolio.

Due to your academic and research experience, the researcher is hopeful you could look at the framework of this model and provide your input and comments regarding the following aspects:

- Goals and learning objectives
- Portfolio content/writing assignments
- Instructional materials
- Portfolio committee
- Standards and criteria for evaluation

The researcher would be extremely grateful if you kindly give any suggestions, modifications, additions, or deletions.

Thanks for your help and contribution.

The researcher

Please, give your own comments on the following points:

Goals and Learning Objectives

.....
.....
.....

Portfolio Content/Writing Assignments

.....
.....
.....

Instructional Materials

.....
.....
.....

Portfolio Committee

.....
.....
.....

Standards and Criteria for Evaluation

.....
.....
.....

Remarks and Suggestions

.....
.....
.....

Letter to the Jury Concerning the PHSR

Dear professor,

The researcher is conducting an M.A. thesis titled "The Effect of Portfolio Assessment on the Writing Performance of EFL Secondary School Students in Saudi Arabia". This scoring rubric is prepared to grade the students' portfolios. It has ten criteria: portfolio completeness, variety of entries, focus, sense of audience and purpose, use of the different stages of the writing process, reflection, quality of drafting, quality of writing, organization and presentation, and overall improvement. All the criteria will be considered together when evaluating students' portfolios. The rubric consists of six levels of performance. Each level reflects student performance across all the criteria. Within each level of the rubric, descriptors that distinguish it from the score level above and the one below are included. The total possible score is sixty. In addition, some guidelines are provided for reviewing the portfolios.

You are kindly requested to give your opinion concerning:

- Adequacy, appropriateness, and variety of performance levels
- Clarity of each descriptor, its relevance to the scoring criterion, and its consistency with other descriptors

Finally, the researcher would be grateful if you give any suggestions, modifications, additions, or deletions as necessary to enrich the instrument.

Thanks for your help and contribution.

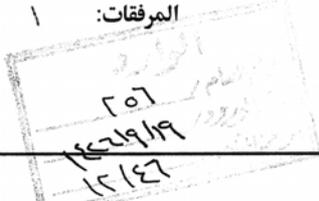
The researcher

Letter to Principal of School



المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة المعارف - شؤون تعليم البنات
الإدارة العامة لتعليم البنات بالجوف
إدارة الإشراف التربوي بالجوف

الرقم: ٢٨٨
التاريخ: ١٦/٧/١٤٣٩
المرفقات: ١



المحترمة

المكرمة / مديرة الثانوية الثالثة

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

بناء على شرح مساعد المدير العام للتربية والتعليم على خطاب المعيدة / وفاء فاهد السرحاني بشأن تطبيق بحث رسالة الماجستير بخصوص أثر السجل التقييمي على الأداء الكتابي لطالبات اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية بالمرحلة الثانوية في السعودية واتجاهاتهن نحو استخدامه ..

، والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته ،،

مديرة ادارة الاشراف التربوي بالجوف

نجوى بنت عبدالله الخوصان

٩١١٩
١٤٣٩
لص
بهاوي
استاذة
مستاذة
مديرة

"" / المنديل ""

Appendix (I)

Sample of Students' Portfolios

Final Draft

The Planet Mars

Nine planets orbit the sun. Mars is the fourth of the inner ones. It is about 228 million kilometres from the sun. Its diameter is around 6,790 kilometres. There are 687 days in a year on Mars. A day lasts twenty-four hours and thirty-seven minutes. Mars's axis is not vertical. It is tilted at an angle of about 24°.

Mars's average temperature is -30°C. Its atmosphere consists of nearly 100% carbon dioxide. Mars has water vapour and ice. Its surface doesn't move. There is no life on Mars.

Appendix C
Reflection Sheet

Student Name: Abdul Hafiz Ali Assignment Number: work sheet 22

1. What was the purpose of this assignment?
It was about making two sentences into one question.
2. Is this work important to you? Why?
Yes, it is. Because I feel that it is very important.
3. Is this assignment your best one? Explain what makes it your best?
It is one of my best works. Because I can short my question by this way.
4. Looking at an earlier piece of similar work, how does this new piece of work compare? How is it better or worse? Where can you see progress or improvement?
It is good. I learned something like this work in the 2nd last year when I learn it again I feel that I know more about it.
5. What do you like or not like about this piece of work?
I like every thing in this work.
6. What do you want to improve in this work?
Nothing.
7. What did you learn from reviewing this piece of work?
I have remember the information.
8. Does this work show your growth as a writer? Explain.
No, it does not. Because we ask a lot in talking not in writing.

Final Draft

Worksheet 22

Student Name: Ali Date: 28/11

At each number below, combine the two sentences.

1. Does life exist on other planets? Do you think?
Do you think if life exists on other planets?
2. What is the date? Do you know?
Do you know what the date is?
3. What is the difference between Hijrah and Gregorian dates? Can you explain?
.....
4. What does junk food mean? Can you tell me?
Can you tell me what junk food means?
5. What are modern houses made of? Tell me.
Tell me what modern houses are made of.
6. Are dates grown here? I cannot remember.
I cannot remember if dates are grown here.

Final Draft

Worksheet 24

Student Name: Ali Date: 28/11

Write the plurals of these nouns:

1. life <u>lives</u>	2. watch <u>watches</u>
3. potato <u>potatoes</u>	4. pen <u>pens</u>
5. apple <u>apples</u>	6. family <u>families</u>

Final Draft

Worksheet 20

Student Name Ali Date 15/11

Make these sentences passive.

- Planets reflect light.
Light is reflected by planets.
- Satellites orbit planets.
Planets are orbited by satellites.
- Stars don't reflect light.
Light is not reflected by stars.
- Scientists study the universe.
The universe is studied by scientists.
- Do stars radiate light?
Is light radiated by stars?

Final Draft

Worksheet 23

Student Name Ali Date 16/11

Rewrite the sentences below adding apostrophes where necessary:

- Mars has an atmosphere, but its gases are not the same as Earth's.
Mars has an atmosphere, but its gases are not the same as Earth's.
- Mars's temperature is not the same as Venus's, is it? No, it's -30 C.
Mars's temperature is not the same as Venus's, is it? No, it's -30 C.
- Our sun has nine planets. These planets orbits are all different.
Our sun has nine planets. These planets' orbits are all different.

A list of things I like to write about

I like to write about:

- 1- Islam and its beginning.
- 2- Arab countries.
- 3- # I like to write a story.

Appendix C

Reflection Sheet

Student Name Ali Assignment Number work sheet 20

1. What was the purpose of this assignment?
It was about using apostrophes.
2. Is this work important to you? Why?
Yes, it is, because it is to make the sentence in writing clearly.
3. Is this assignment your best one? Explain what makes it your best?
It is good but not the best one. Because it is important in writing.
4. Looking at an earlier piece of similar work, how does this new piece of work compare? How is it better worse? Where can you see progress or improvement?
It is good. I learn this work for the first time so I learn more about English.
5. What do you like or not like about this piece of work?
I like everything about this work.
6. What do you want to improve in this work?
Nothing.
7. What did you learn from reviewing this piece of work?
I remember my information.
8. Does this work show your growth as a writer? Explain.
Yes, it does, because this work is important in making the sentence clear and correct.

Appendix B

Student-Teacher Writing Conference Form

Student Name Abbas Al-Hajji Ali Date 28/11

I do these things well in my writing

1. I use the punctuation very well.

2. I learned & how to write paragraphs.

These are the things I want to improve in my writing

Connect between ideas.

Future goals are

I want to write a story and write letters to my friends in English language.

Teacher Comments

you really can decide what you need / you show great noticeable improvement / go on

Final draft

Worksheet : 21

Student Name Ali Date 15/11

Make these sentences into questions. Expect the answer in brackets.

1. Stars reflect light. (No)
Stars do not reflect light, do they? ✓

2. Stars radiate light. (Yes)
Stars radiate light, don't they? ✓

3. Planets radiate light. (No)
Planets do not radiate light, do they? ✓

4. There is only one star in the Solar System. (Yes)
There is only one star in the Solar System, is it there? ✓

5. There are people on Venus. (No)
There are not any people on Venus, are there? ✓

Excellent

Appendix (J)

List of the Jury Members

List of the Jury Members

Name	Academic Degree
Prof. Ali H.Abu-Ghararah	Professor of TEFL -Taibah University
Prof. Asghar A.Shaikh	Emeritus Professor of TEFL
Prof. Sameer M. Mahmoud	Professor of Linguistics -King Saud University
Dr. Mohammed K. Rashed	Associate Prof.of TEFL -Taibah University
Dr.Ahmad A. Al-Sagaf	Associate Prof.of TEFL -Umm Al-Qura University
Dr.Sameer A.Ibraheem	Associate Prof. of Teaching Social Studies-Taibah university
Dr.Sultan O.Al-Jehani	Assistant Prof. of TEFL - Taibah University
Dr.Mosa M.Al-Habeeb	Associate Prof. of TEFL -Umm Al-Qura University
Dr.Fareed H.Hakeem	Assistant Prof. of TEFL -Umm Al-Qura University
Dr.Essam A. El-Akwah	Assistant Prof. of TEFL - Al.Jouf Teachers' College
Dr.Atef Abu-Almaati	Assistant Prof. of Linguistics - Al.Jouf Teachers' College
Dr.Feras Zawahrah	Assistant Prof. of TEFL -Al.Jouf Teachers' College
Dr.Ibraheem Abu-Shehab	Assistant Prof. of Linguistics -Al.Jouf Teachers' College
Mr.Awni Al.Oqaili	Lecturer of English Language -Al.Jouf Teachers' College
Mr..Salah Aldeen Mahjoup	Lecturer of English Language -Al.Jouf Teachers' College

أثر السجل التقييمي على الأداء الكتابي في اللغة الانجليزية لطالبات المرحلة الثانوية بالمملكة العربية السعودية

إعداد

وفاء فاهد السرحاني

إشراف

الدكتورة/ عواطف حنفي محمود الشعار

مستخلص الدراسة

تناولت الدراسة الحالية أثر استخدام السجل التقييمي في تدريس وتقييم الأداء الكتابي في اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى طالبات الصف الثالث بالمدرسة الثانوية الثالثة للبنات بمنطقة الجوف (سكاكا)؛ وقد هدفت الى بحث فاعلية نموذج السجل التقييمي في تحسين الاداء الكتابي في اللغة الانجليزية لدى الطالبات بشكل عام وفي تنمية مهارات الانتاج الكتابي وزيادة العمليات الكتابية بشكل خاص. وتكونت عينة البحث من ٦٣ طالبة؛ حيث تم اختيار فصلين عشوائيا ليمثل أحدهما المجموعة الضابطة (٣٠ طالبة)، والتي درست بالطريقة التقليدية، والأخر ليمثل المجموعة التجريبية (٣٣ طالبة)، والتي درست باستخدام السجل التقييمي. ولقد تم جمع بيانات الدراسة من خلال: اختبار تقييم الكتابة في اللغة الانجليزية، قائمة تقدير الدرجات التحليلية، استبانة تقرير ذاتي للعمليات الكتابية، قائمة تقدير السجل (البورتفوليو) الشمولية، ونموذج السجل التقييمي. ولقد استخدم اختبارت للعينات المستقلة ومعامل الارتباط لسبيرمان لتحليل البيانات. وقد دلت نتائج التطبيق القبلي على مدى تجانس المجموعتين إضافة إلى أن الأداء الكتابي لعينة الدراسة منخفض.

أظهرت نتائج التطبيق البعدي تحسنا ملحوظا في الأداء الكتابي للمجموعة التجريبية بصفة عامة وفي مهارات الإنتاج الكتابي بصفة خاصة مقارنة بالمجموعة الضابطة. كما أشارت النتائج أيضا إلى زيادة دالة إحصائيا في استخدام العمليات الكتابية لصالح طالبات المجموعة التجريبية نتيجة لإدماجهم في إجراءات إعداد السجل التقييمي. كما وقد دلت نتائج الدراسة على وجود علاقة موجبة طردية بين درجات الطالبات (المجموعة التجريبية) في السجل (البورتفوليو) ودرجاتهم في اختبار تقييم الكتابة. انتهت الدراسة إلى أن نموذج السجل التقييمي يعتبر إستراتيجية تدريس فعالة، بالإضافة إلى كونه أداة تقييم، في تحسين الأداء الكتابي للطالبات حيث انه يؤكد على المنتج الكتابي والعمليات الكتابية على حد سواء عند أداء أي مهمة كتابية. وفي ضوء النتائج التي تم التوصل إليها، جاءت بعض التوصيات ومنها: استخدام السجل (البورتفوليو) في تعليم الكتابة في مادة اللغة الانجليزية كإستراتيجية تدريسية وتقييمية مكملة للاختبارات التقليدية وليست بديلة عنها، فضلا عن ضرورة أن تكون عملية التقييم جزءا من الممارسات التدريسية اليومية تشارك فيها الطالبات. كما قد أوصت الدراسة بتدريب معلمات اللغة الانجليزية على إعداد وتوظيف السجلات (البورتفوليو) في فصول تعليم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية في المملكة العربية السعودية.



المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم العالي
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كلية التربية للبنات بالمدينة المنورة
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