BUILDING LIFE SKILL
Portfolios



LYNN HENDERSON • PATRICIA WINRAM

IEP RESOURCES

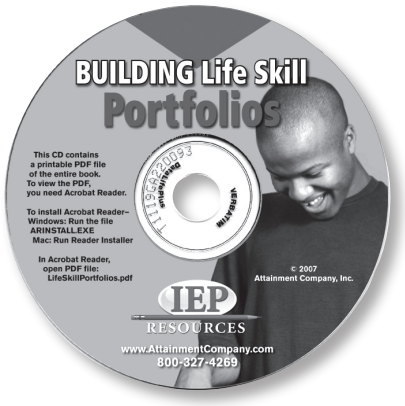
Win/Mac CD

This CD contains a printable PDF of the entire book.
You can review and print pages from your computer.
The PDF (portable document format) file requires
Acrobat Reader software.

If you have Acrobat Reader already on your computer,
open the file LifeSkillPortfolios.pdf from the CD.

To install Acrobat Reader:
Windows: Run ARINSTALL.EXE on the CD.
Mac: Run Reader Installer on the CD.

After installation, run Acrobat Reader and
open the file LifeSkillPortfolios.pdf from the CD.



Building Life Skill Portfolios

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Introduction

This book offers a structured, comprehensive curriculum that allows students with special needs in grades K to 12 to work toward independence by learning functional life skills and academic skills. It also provides an easy-to-teach format for helping students build their own life skill portfolios, which they can then pass down through the grades and take with them after graduation. The portfolios are designed to include vital information that documents student life skill learning experiences, which in turn help them find jobs, use public transportation and enjoy successful and independent post–high school lives.

Students with special needs in inclusion classrooms, especially those with cognitive disabilities, continue to depend on a structured and consistent approach to education. The program presented in this book provides a framework for developing lifelong learning experiences and for documenting them as students progress through the grades.

The book is divided into five sections:

1. Functional Academics
2. Home
3. Outdoors
4. Recreation and Health
5. Community, Country and World

Each section contains approximately 25–40 skill areas, and each skill area offers 1–5 levels. The PDF files on the CD that accompanies this book contain corresponding Portfolio Title Pages, Life Skill Cards and a Daily Portfolio Log. The book's flexible framework allows students to work in one or more areas of interest, developing new skills as they work at their own pace through a

Tips for Building Student Portfolios

- Visual supports are important for students working on life skills. "Talk less and show more." In the portfolio provide documentation of work accomplished or work in progress.
- Use photos to show the student participating in an activity. Include peers, buddies and student mentors.
- Use drawings by the student or information written by a student buddy or teacher about how the student participated in an activity.
- Use the template provided or make your own template to collect ongoing data about the amount of time each student participates in an activity.
- Students may use a date or name stamp on their work for the portfolio.
- Take pictures of the environment from the student's perspective. For example, photograph key signs, words and names of stores in the community. Draw a map to show community places that are "near" or "far."
- Take photos of key people and include throughout the portfolio. Label the photos and indicate the relationship of the person to the student.
- Include concrete samples of items used in the activity, for example, a sales receipt, grocery store bag and package label.
- Increase active student participation. Focus on the student's strengths and explore creative ways to involve the student in a meaningful and functional activity. Break the activity down into small chunks and highlight student participation.

series of activities. Students may work simultaneously in more than one area. The activities may or may not be done sequentially; however, in areas that include more than one level, students need to complete Level 1 before moving to Level 2, and so forth.

The skill areas and activities are determined by the student's support team, preferably at an IEP meeting. In each skill area the student must complete 7 of the 10 activities. Space is provided for two additional activities to ensure flexibility and enable the team to develop activities tailored to the individual student. Building Life Skill Portfolios may be used as the basis of the student's curriculum or it may enhance the curriculum already in place. Working with a coach, the student is encouraged to participate as independently as possible. The program

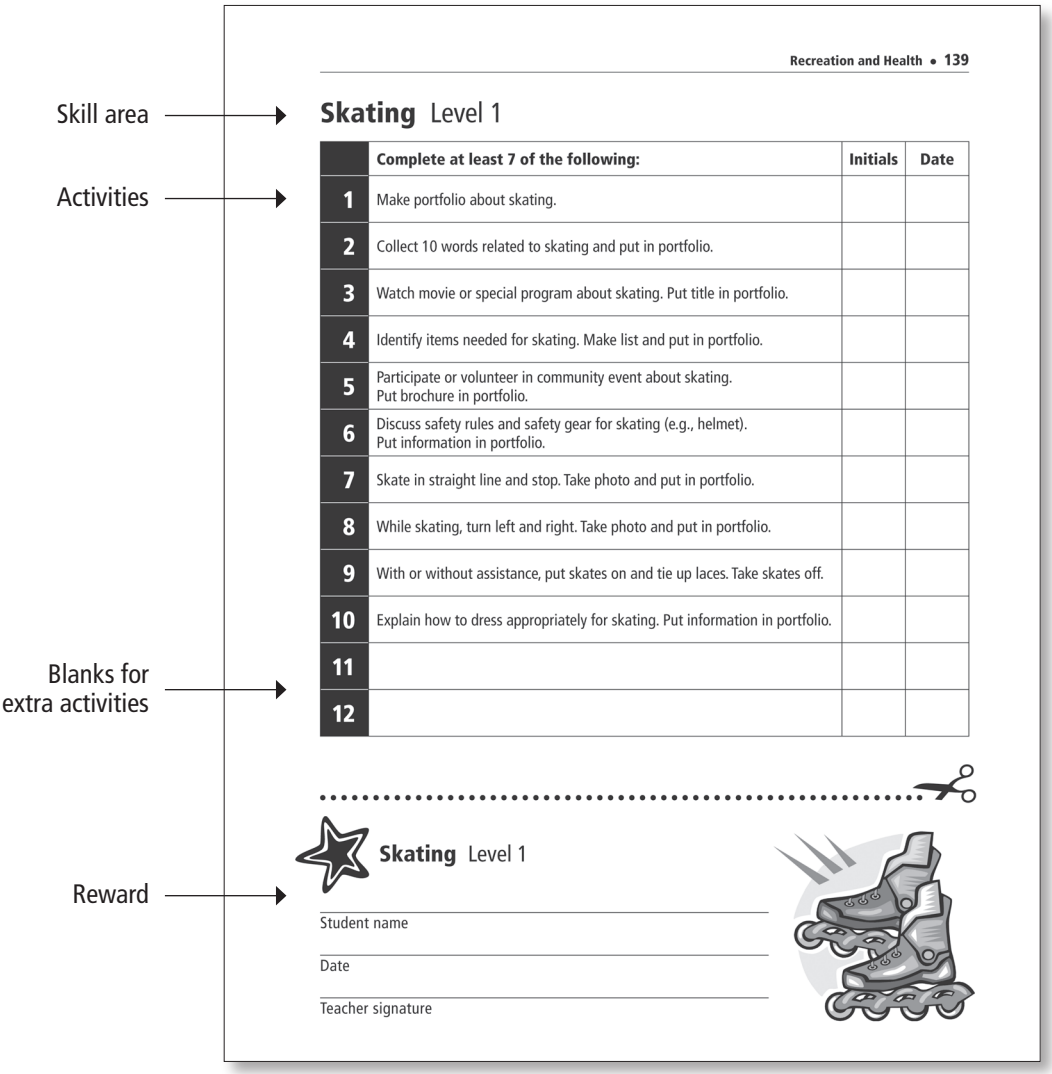


Daily Portfolio Log

Date	Skill area	Level	Activity number	Time worked	Initials

200

Daily Portfolio Log



Recreation and Health • 139

Skill area → **Skating** Level 1

	Complete at least 7 of the following:	Initials	Date
1	Make portfolio about skating.		
2	Collect 10 words related to skating and put in portfolio.		
3	Watch movie or special program about skating. Put title in portfolio.		
4	Identify items needed for skating. Make list and put in portfolio.		
5	Participate or volunteer in community event about skating. Put brochure in portfolio.		
6	Discuss safety rules and safety gear for skating (e.g., helmet). Put information in portfolio.		
7	Skate in straight line and stop. Take photo and put in portfolio.		
8	While skating, turn left and right. Take photo and put in portfolio.		
9	With or without assistance, put skates on and tie up laces. Take skates off.		
10	Explain how to dress appropriately for skating. Put information in portfolio.		
11			
12			

Activities →

Blanks for extra activities →

Reward →

Skating Level 1

Student name

Date

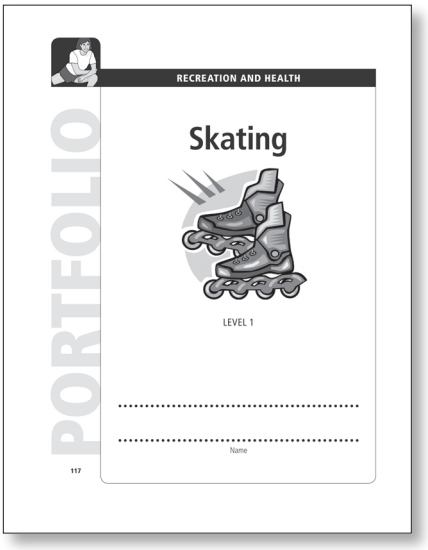
Teacher signature

Sample Skill Area Page

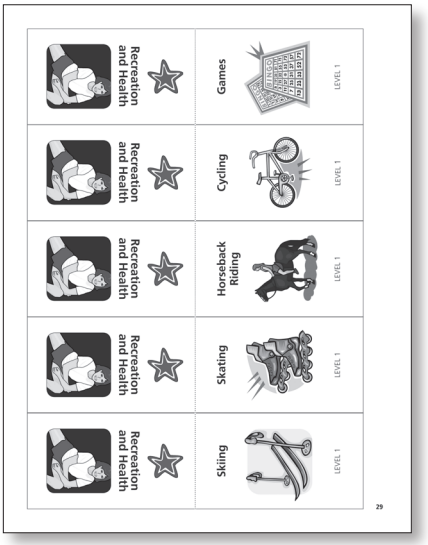
provides an ongoing record of student achievement and staff accountability.

Students can work on activities in large groups, small groups or one-to-one settings in the classroom or in the community. Some students and their parents may choose to work at home, using the Daily Portfolio Log to track progress.

Students either receive their own manual or have access to this manual, which contains over 200 skill areas. Nonreaders will need assistance choosing activities. At the beginning of the school year, each student would choose, for example, 10 skill areas from the five sections of this manual. If students do not have a manual, photocopies or printouts should be made of the 10 skill area pages so they can check off activities as they are completed. Students would construct a portfolio for each of the 10 skill areas, using the pre-made title pages on the CD. For students who want to work more independently, a title page template is provided. Some students may want to design their own portfolio title page without using the template. As students build their portfolios, in a binder, for example, they would add materials after the title page



Sample Title Page



Sample Life Skill Cards

Students may decide to combine some portfolios together. The portfolio can also contain student work from other aspects of the curriculum and samples of work from home or the community. The portfolio is an ideal way to show others what the student is working on.

Students work in an activity area at a certain level with a coach as needed. Depending on the area, the coach may be a teacher, teaching assistant, peer, or parent or guardian. The coach guides the student through the activities in a specific area using additional resources as needed and keeping track of the activities completed. All data should be entered on the Daily Portfolio Log.

When a student has completed at least seven activities in a particular skill area, the teacher signs the tear-off sheet at the bottom of the page and the student receives the Life Skill Card for that skill area. The tear-off sheet, which serves as a record for the student, staff and parents, may be included in the student portfolio. The student may also want to use a binder with plastic sleeves for the card collection.

Teachers, teaching assistants and parents, along with the student, can make up their own adapted activities in each skill area, which count toward the card.

In each skill area two blanks are provided for creating new activities. Each of the five sections of the manual also contains a blank skill area page. For students who want to focus on a specific skill area, additional levels can be created by photocopying the blank skill area page. Blank cards are also provided in the PDF.

Be selective when helping students choose which of their achievements to highlight in each portfolio. While it's their choice, help guide them in directions you think are most realistic and in which they have the best chance of success. Selection criteria should include activities that best showcase students' strengths and that focus on their preferred areas of interest. For instance, for students who are strong in math, feature their most impressive achievements in that area. Create additional activities to build and augment skills that help students find work, for example, in their preferred areas of interest.

How to Use the PDFs

The CD that accompanies this book contains a printable PDF of the entire book. In addition, it includes PDF files of the following:

- Portfolio Title Pages
- Life Skill Cards
- Daily Portfolio Log

You can either print the entire PDF files and photocopy individual pages as needed, or print individual pages as needed from the PDF files. In either case a table of contents will help you locate the pages you need.

To assemble the Life Skill Cards, score the cards along the center dotted vertical line. Then cut the cards apart on the solid horizontal and outside lines. Finally, fold each card along the dotted, scored line and use double-stick tape to affix the front to the back of each card.

The Portfolio Title Pages and Life Skill Cards appear in color in the PDF files. They can be printed on either an inkjet or laser printer in color or black and white. If possible, use heavy paper for the cards.

At the end of each section of Portfolio Title Pages is a template that can be used by students who wish to create their own title pages. Likewise, at the end of each section of Life Skill Cards a template is included for students to make their own cards.