The course “Patterns, Relations and Algebra for Middle School Teachers” covers a variety of algebraic topics and techniques, but it also focuses on developing important skills that are difficult to assess through routine exercises and traditional grading. Students are expected to strategize through unfamiliar problems, make conjectures, analyze solutions, use multiple approaches to problems, and communicate their ideas articulately to others. To foster and assess the acquisition of these skills, I use a twofold approach. Students complete frequent short assignments for which I provide individual typed feedback, making no markings on their actual submissions. Subsequently, students create portfolios in which they revisit their original problem sets, reflect on progress, and improve on solutions in response to the earlier feedback. (Received August 28, 2013)