**Designing High Quality Classroom Assessments**

**Rubrics**

**Key question**:

Are scoring rubrics of high quality?

**Overview**

Rubrics are multidimensional sets of scoring guidelines that can be used to provide consistency in evaluating student work. They spell out scoring criteria so that multiple teachers, using the same rubric for a student's essay, for example, would arrive at the same score or grade.

Rubrics are used from the initiation to the completion of a student project. They provide a measurement system for specific tasks and are tailored to each project. As the projects become more complex, so do the rubrics.

Rubrics are great for students: they let students know what is expected of them and demystify grades by clearly stating, in age-appropriate vocabulary, the expectations for a project. They also help students see that learning is about gaining specific skills (both in academic subjects and in problem-solving and life skills), and they give students the opportunity to do self-assessment to reflect on the learning process.

Rubrics also help teachers authentically monitor a student's learning process and develop and revise a lesson plan. They provide a way for a student and a teacher to measure the quality of a body of work. When a student's assessment of his or her work and a teacher's assessment don't agree, they can schedule a conference to let the student explain his or her understanding of the content and justify the method of presentation.

**Types of Scoring Rubrics**

Several different types of scoring rubrics are available. Which variation of the scoring rubric should be used in a given evaluation is dependent on the purpose of the evaluation.

*Analytic Rubrics -* An analytic scoring rubric, much like the checklist, allows for the separate evaluation of each criterion. Each criterion is scored on a different descriptive scale; therefore, each criterion on the list receives a separate score. The benefit of using an analytic scoring rubric is that it provides a description of what is expected at each score level. Students may use this information to improve their future performance.

*Holistic Rubrics**-* When it is not possible to separate an evaluation into independent criteria, a holistic scoring rubric may be preferable to an analytic scoring rubric. In a holistic scoring rubric, the criteria are clustered in performance categories that represent one single descriptive scale. Holistic scoring rubrics support broader judgments concerning the quality of a students’ performance.

**To Learn More**

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| To learn more about rubrics, you might want to explore the following websites:   * Chapter 1 in Susan Brookhart’s book, *How to Create and Use Rubrics.*   <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/112001/chapters/What-Are-Rubrics-and-Why-Are-They-Important¢.aspx>   * *Rubrics to the Rescue* (web resources provided by Teachers First).   <http://www.teachersfirst.com/lessons/rubrics/characteristics.cfm>   * *4 Easy Tips and Tricks for Creating Visually Engaging Rubrics,* an Edutopia article written by Cait Camarata (includes on-line tools for creating rubrics to assess student products)   <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/tips-for-creating-visually-engaging-rubrics-cait-camarata> |

**Sources**

Chappuis, J., Stiggins, R., Chappuis, S., & Arter, J. (2012). *Classroom assessment for student learning* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Chappuis, J. (2009). *Seven strategies of assessment for learning.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.