

# Rubrics

How often have you attempted to grade your students' work only to find that the assessment criteria were vague and the performance behavior was overly subjective? Would you be able to justify the assessment or grade if you had to defend it? The **Rubric** is an authentic assessment tool which is particularly useful in assessing criteria which are complex and subjective.

The **advantages** of using rubrics in assessment are that they:

- allow assessment to be more objective and consistent
- focus the teacher to clarify his/her criteria in specific terms
- clearly show the student how their work will be evaluated and what is expected
- promote student awareness of about the criteria to use in assessing peer performance
- provide useful feedback regarding the effectiveness of the instruction
- provide benchmarks against which to measure and document progress

Rubrics can be created in a variety of forms and levels of complexity, however, they all contain common **features** which:

- focus on measuring a stated **objective** (performance, behavior, or quality)
- use a **range** to rate performance
- contain specific performance characteristics arranged in levels indicating the **degree** to which a standard has been met

## Steps in Rubric Development

1. Determine learning outcomes
2. Keep it short and simple (Include 4 - 15 items; use brief statements or phrases)
3. Each rubric item should focus on a different skill
4. Identify what constitutes the highest and lowest level of performance first, then fill in the categories between
5. Focus on how students develop and express their learning
6. Evaluate only measureable criteria
7. Ideally, the entire rubric should fit on one sheet of paper
8. Reevaluate the rubric (Did it work? Was it sufficiently detailed?)

(Explore <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php> to access a rubric generator and to view/use hundreds of rubrics.)

## Terms to use in measuring range/scoring levels

Needs Improvement...Satisfactory...Good...Exemplary

Beginning...Developing...Accomplished...Exemplary

Needs work...Good...Excellent

Novice...Apprentice...Proficient...Distinguished

Numeric scale ranging from 1 to 5, for example

After you write your first paragraph of the highest level, circle the words in that paragraph that **can vary**. These words will be the ones that you will change as you write the less than top level performances.

### **Concept words that convey various degrees of performance**

Depth...Breadth...Quality...Scope...Extent...Complexity...Degrees...Accuracy

Presence to absence

Complete to incomplete

Many to some to none

Major to minor

Consistent to inconsistent

Frequency: always to generally to sometimes to rarely