

Creating a Rubric for a Given Task

Introduction

One of the critical parts of a WebQuest that often gets left until last is the development of a rubric. Is there something hard about it? Not really.

Here are the three steps to putting your rubric together.

1. Generate a number of potential dimensions to use
2. Select a reasonable number of the most important dimensions
3. Identify benchmarks for each level of each dimension

Step 1. Generate Potential Dimensions

Category	Beginning	Developing	Accomplished
	1	2	3

This first step is the most important. It's what distinguishes a rubric from a traditional letter grade. Traditionally, we give students a single numeric score or letter grade as evaluation of their work, which is equivalent to the "Hmmm. Not bad." evaluation of wine by a novice. By carefully choosing a number of dimensions to evaluate, we make our expectations clearer and our feedback is much more helpful.

To start the process, take out a sheet of paper and look at the task you've chosen as the culminating activity for your WebQuest. Work your way through the table below and jot down the names of dimensions that might make sense as part of your rubric.

If the Task has these elements...	then consider these as possible dimensions:
Oral Presentation	Voice projection Body language Grammar and pronunciation Organization
PowerPoint Presentation	Technical quality Aesthetics Grammar and spelling
Written products	Grammar and spelling Organization Formatting
Creative products	Surprisingness, novelty Technical quality Adherence to conventions of the genre

If the Task has these elements...	then consider these as possible dimensions:
Collaboration	Cooperation Taking responsibility Conflict resolution
Design	Solution effectiveness Solution creativity Justification of solution
Persuasion	Quality of argument Match of appeal to audience Organization & sequence
Analysis (Scientific or otherwise)	Data gathering and analysis Inferences made
Judgment	Adequacy of elements considered Articulation of ranking criteria
Compilation	Selection criteria Organization
Journalism	Accuracy Organization Completeness

Step 2: Select a Reasonable Number of Dimensions

In Step 1, you probably listed more dimensions than you really need, so now it's time to weed it down. How many is enough? Some recommend that your rubric should fit on one printed page. Others say that 4 to 8 dimensions is about right. There's no one correct answer, but it might help if you consider your purpose for this measurement. If it's diagnostic and formative, err on the side of more dimensions rather than fewer. If you just want to be able to give a summative evaluation of your students' performance for this particular lesson, fewer dimensions are OK.

If you need more than the five dimensions that are included in the rubric template, click in one of the rows of the table and look for a command to "Add Row" somewhere in your web editor.

Ask yourself what the most important aspects of this task are and rank your dimensions from most important to least.

Eliminate those dimensions that are at the bottom of your list until you've determined the most important 4 to 8 dimensions.

Write those remaining dimensions in the leftmost column of the rubric.

Step 3: Write Benchmark Descriptions

Now think about each dimension. What would a superb example of each dimension look like? Describe in succinctly and clearly and write each description in the rightmost column of the rubric.

Category	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Accomplished 3

What would a slightly less example look like? Fill out the next column, and so on until you've got each cell of the matrix filled.

Rubric Template

(Describe here the task or performance that this rubric is designed to evaluate.)

	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Accomplished 3	Exemplary 4	Score
Stated Objective or Performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting a beginning level of performance.	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting development and movement toward mastery of performance.	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting mastery of performance.	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting the highest level of performance.	
Stated Objective or Performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting a beginning level of performance.	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting development and movement toward mastery of performance.	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting mastery of performance.	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting the highest level of performance.	
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