JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE RUBRICS

Definition

A rubric is an evaluation tool that describes the criteria for performance at various levels using demonstrative verbs. It is a performance-based assessment process that accurately reflects content skills, process skills, work habits, and learning results.

Types of Rubrics

There are generally two types of rubrics: holistic and analytic. It is important to analyze the task, activity or project being assessed and determine which type of rubric is most appropriate to apply.

Holistic Rubric

A holistic rubric describes a student's work as a single score – the overall report or project is assigned a score. Therefore, holistic rubrics are best suited to tasks that are not outcome-based and can be performed or evaluated as one overall score.

Analytic Rubric

Analytic rubrics specify criteria to be assessed at each performance level, provide a separate score for each criterion or outcome, and may include a composite score for overall performance. The composite score may be weighted based on the importance of each dimension.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages

Analytic Rubrics	Holistic Rubrics
• offer more detailed feedback on areas of strength and weaknesses • reflect a more consistent scoring across students' work • offer more guidance for instructional planning	• offer quick scoring • provide an overview of student achievement • save time by reducing the number of decisions raters make

Disadvantages

Analytic Rubrics	Holistic Rubrics
• are time consuming to create and score • need to be detailed - unless each point for each criterion is well-defined raters may not arrive at the same score	• do not provide detailed feedback for improvement • criteria cannot be weighted

Why Use Rubrics

Using rubrics focuses both students and teachers on two essential questions.

- What do we want students to know and do?
- What would an exemplary demonstration of this learning be like?

Rubrics serve several purposes in the assessment process by:

- Creating a common framework for evaluation.
- Providing students with clear expectations about what will be assessed.
- Increasing the consistency and objectivity of evaluating performances, knowledge, and understanding.
- Providing students with information about learning expectations and attainment.
- Giving students feedback and guidance on how to improve their work.

Developing Rubrics

Developing rubrics is challenging. The instructor needs to translate the performance of various assignments to the rubric fairly and reliably.

Rubrics can be developed using the following 8-step process:

Step 1: Determine learning objectives to be measured.
Step 2: Create an assessment/assignment that will accurately measure the stated learning objectives.
Step 3: Define each dimension/criterion to be measured.
Step 4: Adopt a scale for describing the range of performances.
Step 5: Write a description for each dimension for each point on the scale.
Step 6: Pilot the rubric with one program or course.
Step 7: Revise the rubric as needed.
Step 8: Share the assignment and rubric with students.

See attached appendices for

1. Verbs to Use for Descriptive Rubrics (Appendix A)
2. Templates for developing Rubrics (Separate Handout)
3. Phrases for Designing Rubrics (Separate Handout)

APPENDIX A

VERBS FOR RUBRIC DESIGN

Instruction Verbs for Five Levels of Thinking				
KNOWLEDGE/ COMPREHENSION	APPLICATION	ANALYSIS	SYNTHESIS	EVALUATION
list	use	inspect	plan	rate
repeat	show	inventory	create	score
record	apply	examine	design	choose
relate	employ	diagram	program	value
locate	interpret	analyze	manage	select
review	operate	compare	arrange	assess
restate	sketch	contrast	compose	estimate
describe	schedule	relate	propose	appraise
discuss	illustrate	question	set up	evaluate
explain	translate	test	collect	revise
recognize	demonstrate	measure	assemble	judge
identify	dramatize	differentiate	prepare	debate
define		distinguish	construct	oppose
report		calculate	formulate	defend
name		experiment	organize	criticize
recall				
tell				