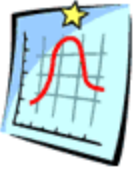


# Student-Generated Rubrics

## Part five in a five-part series



### **Why should students create their own rubrics?**

Reading or listening to a teacher's expectations is very different for a student than creating and accomplishing his or her own goals. The purpose of inviting students to develop their own evaluation structure is to improve their motivation, interest, and performance in the project. As students' overall participation in learning increases, they are likely to excel in it.

### **How can students create their own rubrics?**

Students are motivated intrinsically to design their own assessment tool after experiencing project-based learning. Once students have invested a significant amount of time, effort, and energy into a project, they naturally want to participate in deciding how it will be evaluated. The knowledge gained through experience in a particular field of study provides the foundation for creating a useful rubric.

### **Background**

One instructor decided to try out the possibility of student-created rubrics for a project on bridges. The purpose of the project was for students to:

- learn basic physics concepts.
- apply fundamental mathematics principles.
- develop technical reading and writing skills.

The class began the Bridge Project by poring through books, handouts, magazine articles, Internet sites, and pictures of bridges. The class was divided into four work groups of five students each. Each group decided on their own "Company Name" as well as who would fill the following department head positions: project director, architect, carpenter, transportation chief, and accountant. All students were required to help out in every department. Each group received \$1.5 million (hypothetically) to purchase land and supplies.

### **Rubric development**

Instructors can create the preliminary outline by listing the learning outcomes that were to be emphasized in the project. The outcomes were then divided into suitable categories, and sample products were displayed and discussed.

Instructor then introduces the idea of the rubric to the students, who then generated many ideas for the rubric criteria. Students were asked to think about what parts of the design, construction, budget, and building journal were the most significant to the overall bridge quality. In this case, together, the class came up with four different rubrics.

The budget rubric is provided as an example:

<b>Budget Criteria</b>	<b>4 Excellent</b>	<b>3 Good</b>	<b>2 Fair</b>	<b>1 Unacceptable</b>
<b>Legibility</b>	Completely legible.	The budget shows two or three marks or stains, but is legible.	The budget is barely legible, with numerous marks or stains.	The budget is messy and illegible.
<b>Supplies &amp; Materials Accountability</b>	Completely accounted for.	Five-sixths of the materials and labor are accounted for.	Two-thirds of the materials and labor are accounted for.	Materials and labor are not accounted for.
<b>Ledger Activity</b>	All daily activities are recorded.	Five-sixths of the daily balance of funds is indicated.	Two-thirds of the daily balance of funds is indicated.	The daily balance of funds is nonexistent.
<b>Ledger Balance</b>	Balance is completely accurate.	The daily balance has two or three inaccuracies.	The daily fund record has more than three inaccuracies.	The daily fund balance is inaccurate.

### Summary

The experience students gain through an authentic project enables them to understand the various aspects necessary for creating a valuable piece of work. Knowledge that has deep meaning provides the basis for students to judge objectively their own work as well as that of others. Developing a rubric is a reflective process that extends the experience and the knowledge gained beyond simply turning in a project for a teacher-initiated grade.