

Presence in the Sampler does not imply endorsement. We have included rubrics at all levels of quality to illustrate points made in the text.

Rubric Sampler Table of Contents

Criteria for a Research Report, Grade 5	2
Math Rubric, Grade 3+.	3
Rubric for Small-Group Discussion, Grade 3+	4
Essay Scoring Criteria, Secondary Social Studies	5
Central Kitsap Mathematical Problem Solving Three-Trait Scoring Guide—Summary	7
Central Kitsap Mathematical Problem Solving Three-Trait Scoring Guide—Adult Version	8
Central Kitsap Student-Friendly Guide to Mathematics Problem Solving at a Glance	11
Six-Trait Model, Overview	17
Six-Trait Model, Student-Friendly Version.	18
Six-Trait Model, Adult Version	24
Everett Rubric for Instructing and Assessing Self-Directed Learner	34
Self-Reflection Rubric	36
Group Discussion Rubric, Adult Version.	37
Student-Friendly Guide to Group Discussions.	42
General Conceptual Understanding Rubric	46
Criteria for Judging the Whole Portfolio.	48

Criteria for a Research Report, Grade 5

Consider a task in which students write a research report on the 13 colonies. The students are to answer a series of questions, such as: Where were the colonies located? Who settled each region of colonization? Why did people come to each region? How did people live in each region? Here are the teacher's criteria for quality of the research paper:

- The student has answered each question.
- The student has used a five-paragraph theme format for each question (introduction, three paragraphs for the body, and a conclusion).
- The student has written the report in readable cursive handwriting.

No samples of student work or technical information on quality are available.

Math Rubric, Grade 3+

	Frequently	Occasionally	Sometimes	Never
Conceptual Understanding	4	3	2	1
Computation Accuracy	4	3	2	1
Problem Solving	4	3	2	1
Communication	4	3	2	1

No research information on technical quality. Samples of student work illustrating levels of student work are available.

Rubric for Small-Group Discussion, Grade 3+

Rate each of the following with a ✓⁺, a ✓, or a ✓⁻:

- Speaks loudly and clearly enough to be heard easily
- Introduces new ideas.
- Uses reasoning and evidence to support new ideas.
- Asks questions to get information.
- Summarizes when needed.
- Tries to include others in the discussion.
- Disagrees tactfully.
- Listens to and follows the flow of conversation.

No research information on technical quality or samples of student work illustrating levels of quality are available.

Essay Scoring Criteria, Secondary Social Studies

1. General Impression of Content Quality

How well does the student know and understand this historical content? (0–5 point global rating: 0 = no response; 5 = highest level of understanding)

2. Prior Knowledge: Facts and Events

- 0 No response
- 1 No facts/events mentioned that are not found in the text of the debates
- 2 One to two pieces of information that are not found in the text of the debates
- 3 Three to four pieces of information that are not found in the text of the debates
- 4 Five to six pieces of information that are not found in the text of the debates
- 5 Seven or more pieces of information that are not found in the text of the debates

3. Number of Principles or Concepts

- 0 No response
- 1 No principles/concepts
- 2 One principle/concept
- 3 Two principles/concepts
- 4 Three principles/concepts
- 5 Four or more principles/concepts

4. Argumentation

How well does the student organize historical knowledge to make a convincing argument? (0–5 point global rating: 0 = no response; 5 = highest level of coherent and cohesive argumentation)

5. Proportion of Text Detail

- 0 No response
- 1 No information from text
- 2 Material from the text accounts for about $\frac{1}{4}$ __% of the essay
- 3 Material from the text accounts for about $\frac{1}{4}$ __% of the essay
- 4 Material from the text accounts for about $\frac{1}{4}$ __% of the essay
- 5 The essay uses or is based on material from the text only

Essay Scoring Criteria, Secondary Social Studies (Continued)

6. General Impression of Content Quality

- 0 No response
- 1 One or more serious misconceptions central to the essay
- 2 At least one serious misconception
- 3 Several minor errors and/or a moderate misconception
- 4 Very minor misconception
- 5 No misconceptions

Samples of student work are available and there is research evidence on the degree of agreement between raters.

Source: From "Essay Scoring Criteria, Secondary Social Studies" (n.p.), Los Angeles: University of California at Los Angeles/CRESST, 1992. Used with permission from the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST). Copyright © 1992 by the Regents of the University of California and supported under the Institute for Education Science (IES), U.S. Department of Education.

Central Kitsap Mathematical Problem Solving Three-Trait Scoring Guide—Summary

Mathematical Knowledge—Concepts and Procedures

- Understands the mathematical ideas and operations selected
- Performs appropriate computations
- Chooses the right operations and does them correctly

Mathematical Problem Solving

- Translates the problem into mathematical terms
- Chooses or creates a strategy
- Uses a strategy to solve the problem
- Checks solution for reasonableness

Mathematical Communication

- Explains the strategy and processes used
- Explains why what was done was done
- Explains why answer works

Central Kitsap Mathematical Problem Solving Three-Trait Scoring Guide—Adult Version

Mathematical Concepts and Procedures

Definition: A student demonstrates a grasp of the mathematical concepts, chooses and performs the appropriate mathematical operations, and performs computations correctly.

Problem Solving

Definition: A student demonstrates problem solving skills by showing that he/she understands what the problem asks by framing the problem so that appropriate mathematical process(es) can be selected and used, by developing or selecting and implementing a strategy to find a solution, and by checking the solution for reasonableness.

Mathematical Communication

Definition: A student demonstrates communication skills in mathematics by explaining the steps and reasoning used in a solution process with words, numbers, and diagrams.

Mathematical Concepts and Procedures

- 5 A strong performance occurs when the student demonstrates extensive understanding of the mathematical concepts and related procedures and uses them correctly. The student:
- Understands mathematical concepts and related procedures.
 - Uses all necessary information from the problem.
 - Performs computation(s) accurately or with only minor errors.
- 3 A developing performance occurs when the student demonstrates general understanding of the mathematical concepts and related procedures, but there may be some gaps or mis-application. The student:
- Partially understands mathematical concepts and related procedures.
 - Uses some necessary information from the problem.
 - May make some computational errors.
- 1 A weak performance occurs when the student demonstrates little or no understanding of mathematical concepts and related procedures. Application, if attempted, is incorrect. The student:
- Does not appear to understand mathematical concepts and related procedures.
 - Does not use information from the problem or uses irrelevant information.
 - Does no computation; or does computation that is unrelated to the problem.

Problem Solving

- 5 A strong performance occurs when the student selects or devises and uses an efficient, elegant, or sophisticated strategy to solve the problem.
- The student translates the problem into a useful mathematical form.
 - The student applies the selected plan(s) or strategy(ies) through to completion; no pieces are missing.
 - The plan or strategy may incorporate multiple approaches.
 - Pictures, models, diagrams and symbols (if used) enhance the strategy.
 - The solution is reasonable and consistent with the context of the problem.
- 3 A developing performance occurs when the student selects or devises a plan or strategy, but it is partially unworkable.
- The student leaves gaps in framing or carrying out the strategy.
 - The strategy may work in some parts of the problem, but not in others.
 - The strategy is appropriate but incomplete in development or application.
 - Results of computation, even if correct, may not fit the context of the problem.
- 1 A weak performance occurs when the student shows no evidence of a strategy or has attempted to use a completely inappropriate strategy.
- The student shows no attempt to frame the problem or translate the problem into an unrelated mathematical form.
 - The strategy is inappropriate, misapplied, or disconnected.
 - Pictures, models, diagrams, and symbols, if used, may bear some relationship to the problem.
 - The solution is not reasonable and/or does not fit the context of the problem.

Mathematical Communication

- 5 A strong performance occurs when a student clearly explains in words, numbers, and diagrams the strategy used to solve the problem and the solution itself.
- The problem could be solved following the explanation. It is clearly explained and organized.
 - The explanation is coherent and complete. There are no gaps in reasoning. Nothing is left out.
 - The student presents logical arguments to justify strategy or solution.
 - The explanations may include examples and/or counterexamples.
 - Charts, pictures, symbols, and diagrams, when used, enhance the reader's understanding of what was done and why it was done.
 - Few inferences are required to figure out what the student did and why.
 - Correct mathematical language is used.
- 3 A developing performance occurs when the student's problem-solving process is partially explained, but requires some inferences in order to figure it out completely.
- The student attempts to use mathematical language, but may not have used all terms correctly.
 - Some key elements are included in the explanation.
 - The student explains the answer, but not the reasoning or explains the process, but not the solution.
 - Charts, pictures, symbols, and diagrams, if used, provide some explanation of the major elements of the solution process.
- 1 A weak performance occurs when the student's explanation does not describe the process used or the solution to the problem.
- Charts, pictures, symbols, and diagrams, when used, interfere with the reader's understanding of what was done and why it was done.
 - The explanation appears to be unrelated to the problem.
 - The reader cannot follow the student's explanation.
 - Little or no explanation of the thinking/reasoning is shown.
 - The explanation only restates the problem.
 - Many inferences are required to follow the student's work.
 - Incorrect or misapplied mathematical language interferes with the reader's ability to understand the explanation.

Source: *Mathematical Problem Solving: A Three-Trait Model*, 2001, Central Kitsap School District, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, P.O. Box 8, Silverdale, WA 98383. 360-692-3101. Reprinted by permission.

Central Kitsap Student-Friendly Guide to Mathematics Problem Solving at a Glance

Mathematical Concepts and Procedures

- I understand which math operations are needed.
- I have used all of the important information.
- I did all of my calculations correctly.

Problem Solving

- I knew what to do to set up and solve this problem.
- I followed through with my strategy from beginning to end.
- The way I worked the problem makes sense and is easy to follow.
- I may have shown more than one way to solve the problem.
- I checked to make sure my solution makes sense in the original problem.

Communication

- I used mathematical terms correctly.
- My work shows what I did and what I was thinking while I worked the problem.
- I've explained why my answer makes sense.
- I used pictures, symbols, and/or diagrams when they made my explanation clearer.
- My explanation was clear and organized.
- My explanation includes just the right amount of detail not too much or too little.

Mathematical Concepts and Procedures

The student understands mathematical concepts and performs related operations, chooses the appropriate math operations, and performs computations correctly.

- Understands the mathematical ideas and operations selected
 - Performs appropriate computations
 - Chooses the right operations and does them correctly
- 5 I completely understand the appropriate mathematical operation and use it correctly.
- I understand which math operations are needed.
 - I have used all of the important information.
 - I did all of my calculations correctly.
- 3 I think I understand most of the mathematical operations and how to use them.
- I know which operations to use for some of the problem, but not for all of it.
 - I have an idea about where to start.
 - I know what operations I need to use, but I'm not sure where the numbers go.
 - I picked out some of the important information, but I might have missed some.
 - I did the simple calculations right, but I had trouble with the tougher ones.
- 1 I wasn't sure which mathematical operation(s) to use or how to use the ones I picked.
- I don't know where to start.
 - I'm not sure which information to use.
 - I don't know which operations would help me solve the problem.
 - I don't think my calculations are correct.

Problem Solving

The student selects and carries out a strategy to find a solution, and checks results for reasonableness.

- Translates the problem into mathematical terms
- Chooses or creates a strategy
- Uses a strategy to solve the problem
- Checks solution to make sure it makes sense in the problem

Some Strategies for Problem Solving

Draw a picture or diagram.

Look for patterns.

Use trial and error.

Make a table.

Work with special cases, then generalize.

Try simpler numbers.

Work backwards from the solution.

Problem Solving (Continued)

- 5 I came up with and used a strategy that really fits and makes it easy to solve this problem.
- I knew what to do to set up and solve this problem.
 - I knew what math operations to use.
 - I followed through with my strategy from beginning to end.
 - The way I worked the problem makes sense and is easy to follow.
 - I may have shown more than one way to solve the problem.
 - I checked to make sure my solution makes sense in the original problem.
- 3 I came up with and used a strategy, but it doesn't seem to fit the problem as well as it should.
- I think I know what the problem is about, but I might have a hard time explaining it.
 - I arrived at a solution even though I had problems with my strategy at some point.
 - My strategy seemed to work at the beginning, but did not work well for the whole problem.
 - I checked my solution and it seems to fit the problem.
- 1 I didn't have a plan that worked.
- I tried several things, but didn't get anywhere.
 - I didn't know which strategy to use.
 - I didn't know how to begin.
 - I didn't check to see if my solution makes sense.
 - I'm not sure what the problem asks me to do.
 - I'm not sure I have enough information to solve the problem.

Communication

The student explains the process, reasoning, and strategy used in solving the problem.

- Explains the strategy and processes used
- Explains why what was done was done
- Explains why answer works

First I did . . .

because . . .

Next I did . . .

I did this because . . .

Finally, I did . . .

I did this because . . .

Communication (Continued)

- 5 I clearly explained the process I used and my solution to the problem using numbers, words, pictures, or diagrams.
- My explanation makes sense.
 - I used mathematical terms correctly.
 - My work shows what I did and what I was thinking while I worked the problem.
 - I've explained why my answer makes sense.
 - I used pictures, symbols, and/or diagrams when they made my explanation clearer.
 - My explanation was clear and organized.
 - My explanation includes just the right amount of detail, not too much or too little.
- 3 I explained part of the process I used, or I only explained my answer.
- I explained some of my steps in solving the problem.
 - Someone might have to add some information for my explanation to be easy to follow.
 - Some of the mathematical terms I use make sense and help in my explanation.
 - I explained my answer, but not my thinking.
 - My explanation started out well, but bogged down in the middle.
 - When I used pictures, symbols, and/or diagrams, they were incomplete or only helped my explanation a little bit.
- 1 I did not explain my thinking or my answer, or I am confused about how my explanation relates to the problem.
- I'm not sure how much detail I need in order to help someone understand what I did.
 - I don't know what to write.
 - I can't figure out how to get my ideas in order.
 - I'm not sure I used math terms correctly.
 - My explanation is mostly copying the original problem.
 - The pictures, symbols, and/or diagrams I used would not help someone understand what I did.

Source: *Mathematical Problem Solving: A Three-Trait Model*, 2001, Central Kitsap School District, 2000, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, P.O. Box 8, Silverdale, WA 98383. 360-692-3101. Reprinted by permission.

Six-Trait Model, Overview

Six-Trait Model Student-Friendly Version: What Teachers Look for in Writing	
<p>Sound Ideas</p> <p>It all makes sense.</p> <p>I know this topic well.</p> <p>I have included the most interesting details.</p> <p>My paper has a purpose.</p> <p>Once you start reading, you will not want to stop.</p>	<p>Powerful Words</p> <p>This is the best way to say this.</p> <p>My words create mind pictures!</p> <p>I've tried new ways to say everyday things.</p> <p>Listen to the power in my verbs.</p> <p>Some of my words and phrases linger in my mind.</p>
<p>Good Organization</p> <p>My beginning will interest the reader.</p> <p>Everything ties together.</p> <p>It builds to the good parts.</p> <p>You can follow it easily.</p> <p>At the end it feels finished and makes you think.</p>	<p>Smooth Fluency</p> <p>My sentences begin in different ways.</p> <p>Some sentences are short and some are long.</p> <p>It just sounds good as I read it aloud—it flows.</p> <p>My sentences have power and punch.</p> <p>I have “sentence sense.”</p>
<p>Individual Voice</p> <p>This really sounds like me!</p> <p>I've been honest and written what I think and feel.</p> <p>Can you feel my commitment to this topic?</p> <p>I want you to experience my writing with me.</p> <p>I know why I'm writing and who my audience is.</p> <p>I bet you'll want to read this to someone else.</p>	<p>Correct Conventions</p> <p>I don't have mistakes in my paper.</p> <p>I have used capitals correctly.</p> <p>Periods, commas, exclamation marks, and quotation marks are in the right places.</p> <p>Every word is spelled correctly.</p> <p>I remembered to indent each paragraph.</p> <p>This paper is ready to publish.</p>

Source: Six-Trait Analytical Writing Scoring Guide Student-Friendly Version—Younger Students, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (1994), 101 SW Main St., Portland, Oregon, 97204. Reprinted by permission.

Six Trait Model, Student-Friendly Version

Ideas

My Message

5 READY TO SHARE!

- It all makes sense. It's really clear.
- My reader will learn a lot.
- This is just what I wanted to say.
- Good, juicy details!

4 Some of 5, some of 3

3 HALFWAY HOME!

- My reader will get the general idea.
- You might have some questions.
- It TELLS, but doesn't SHOW.
- I need to add some details.
- I'm working on it!

2 Some of 3, some of 1

1 JUST BEGINNING

- I'm afraid my reader won't follow this.
- It's hard to get started.
- I'm not sure what my topic is . . . OR . . .
- maybe my topic is TOO BIG.
- The picture is not very clear.
- I need more time to think.

Organization

From Beginning to End

5 READY TO SHARE!

- I know where I'm going.
- My opening will hook you!
- The ending really works!
- Follow me!
- I see just how all the parts fit together.

4 Some of 5, some of 3

3 HALFWAY HOME!

- Some pieces of my paper fit better than others.
- My paper is PRETTY easy to follow.
- My beginning is okay.
- Maybe I need to move some things around.
- The ending doesn't grab me yet.

2 some of 3, some of 1

1 JUST BEGINNING

- How do I begin? This is confusing!
- What should I tell first?
- What comes next?
- Help! Which pieces go together?
- I don't know where I'm headed.
- How do I end this?

Voice

Putting MYSELF in my Writing

5 READY TO SHARE!

- It's ME!!! This is what I think.
- I'm speaking right to the reader.
- Hear me ROAR!
- It might make you laugh or cry.
- I love this topic.
- I want my reader to feel what I feel.

4 Some of 5, some of 3

3 HALFWAY HOME!

- I hear a little of me in the writing.
- This topic is OK.
- Sometimes I'm speaking to the reader.
- I'm hiding my feelings and ideas a little, but I'm starting to have fun.

2 some of 3, some of 1

1 JUST BEGINNING

- I'm not speaking to the reader—yet.
- I don't hear myself in this paper.
- This topic is boring.
- SNORE!
- I wish I didn't have to do this.

Word Choice

Playing with Language

5 READY TO SHARE!

- My words paint a picture.
- My words make the message CLEAR.
- I love the way my words sound and feel.
- I think this is the BEST way to say it!

4 Some of 5, some of 3

3 HALFWAY HOME!

- I need more IMAGINATION here!
- These are the first words I thought of.
- Some of the words and phrases are great. Some aren't.
- There is probably a BETTER way to say it.

2 some of 3, some of 1

1 JUST BEGINNING

- Some words are really vague.
- These words are NOT my favorites.
- The words I've used don't paint a picture in your mind.
- Some of my words don't make sense to me when I read them over.

Sentence Fluency

Listening to the Sound

5 READY TO SHARE!

- My paper is EASY to read out loud.
- Some sentences are LONG and STRETCHY—some are SHORT and SNAPPY.
- I love the sound of this paper—it's got rhythm!
- My sentences begin in several different ways.

4 Some of 5, some of 3

3 HALFWAY HOME!

- A lot of my sentences begin the same way.
- I wish my paper sounded a little smoother in places.
- My sentences are all about the same length.
- It's PRETTY easy to read out loud if you take your time.

2 some of 3, some of 1

1 JUST BEGINNING

- Help! Some of these sentences don't make sense.
- My paper is HARD to read out loud—even for me!
- Sometimes, I can't tell where to begin a new sentence.
- Everything is strung together in one endless sentence, or there are lots of choppy little sentences, one after another.

Conventions

Editing

5 READY TO SHARE!

- You have to look hard to find mistakes in my paper!
- I used capitals to begin sentences and to indicate names.
- My work has been edited and proofread; it's ready to share outside the classroom.
- I checked my spelling.
- I used periods, exclamation points, and question marks in the right spots.

4 Some of 5, some of 3

3 HALFWAY HOME!

- I'm not sure I spelled all the words right.
- My paper has some mistakes, but you can still read it.
- I might have left out some punctuation.
- I have more editing to do—it's not ready to publish yet.

2 some of 3, some of 1

1 JUST BEGINNING

- There are lots of mistakes.
- I have not edited my work.
- It's hard to understand what I'm saying because of spelling or punctuation errors.
- Some things need correcting before I share this.

Source: *Six-Trait Analytical Writing Scoring Guide Student-Friendly Version—Younger Students*, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (1994), 101 SW Main St., Portland, Oregon, 97204. Reprinted by permission.

Six-Trait Model, Adult Version

6+1 Trait™ Writing

6+ 1 Trait™ Writing Assessment Scoring Guide



Wow!

Exceeds expectations

5 Strong

Shows control and skill in this trait;
many strengths present

4 Effective

On balance, the strengths outweigh
the weaknesses; a small amount of
revision is needed

3 Developing

Strengths and need for revision are
about equal; about half-way home

2 Emerging

Need for revision outweighs strengths;
isolated moments hint at what the
writer has in mind

1 Not Yet

A bare beginning; writer not yet
showing any control

*Ideas and Content (Development)***5 This paper is clear and focused. It holds the reader's attention. Relevant anecdotes and details enrich the central theme.**

- A. The topic is narrow and manageable.
- B. Relevant, telling, quality details give the reader important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable.
- C. Reasonably accurate details are present to support the main ideas.
- D. The writer seems to be writing from knowledge or experience; the ideas are fresh and original.
- E. The reader's questions are anticipated and answered.
- F. Insight—an understanding of life and a knack for picking out what is significant—is an indicator of high level performance, though not required.

3 The writer is beginning to define the topic, even though development is still basic or general.

- A. The topic is fairly broad; however, you can see where the writer is headed.
- B. Support is attempted, but doesn't go far enough yet in fleshing out the key issues or story line.
- C. Ideas are reasonably clear, though they may not be detailed, personalized, accurate, or expanded enough to show in-depth understanding or a strong sense of purpose.
- D. The writer seems to be drawing on knowledge or experience, but has difficulty going from general observations to specifics.
- E. The reader is left with questions. More information is needed to “fill in the blanks.”
- F. The writer generally stays on the topic but does not develop a clear theme. The writer has not yet focused the topic past the obvious.

1 As yet, the paper has no clear sense of purpose or central theme. To extract meaning from the text, the reader must make inferences based on sketchy or missing details. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:

- A. The writer is still in search of a topic, brainstorming, or has not yet decided what the main idea of the piece will be.
- B. Information is limited or unclear or the length is not adequate for development.
- C. The idea is a simple restatement of the topic or an answer to the question with little or no attention to detail.
- D. The writer has not begun to define the topic in a meaningful, personal way.
- E. Everything seems as important as everything else; the reader has a hard time sifting out what is important.
- F. The text may be repetitious, or may read like a collection of disconnected, random thoughts with no discernable point.

Organization

5 The organization enhances and showcases the central idea or theme. The order, structure, or presentation of information is compelling and moves the reader through the text.

- A. An inviting introduction draws the reader in; a satisfying conclusion leaves the reader with a sense of closure and resolution.
- B. Thoughtful transitions clearly show how ideas connect.
- C. Details seem to fit where they're placed; sequencing is logical and effective.
- D. Pacing is well controlled; the writer knows when to slow down and elaborate, and when to pick up the pace and move on.
- E. The title, if desired, is original and captures the central theme of the piece.
- F. Organization flows so smoothly the reader hardly thinks about it; the choice of structure matches the purpose and audience.

3 The organizational structure is strong enough to move the reader through the text without too much confusion.

- A. The paper has a recognizable introduction and conclusion. The introduction may not create a strong sense of anticipation; the conclusion may not tie-up all loose ends.
- B. Transitions often work well; at other times, connections between ideas are fuzzy.
- C. Sequencing shows some logic, but not under control enough that it consistently supports the ideas. In fact, sometimes it is so predictable and rehearsed that the structure takes attention away from the content.
- D. Pacing is fairly well controlled, though the writer sometimes lunges ahead too quickly or spends too much time on details that do not matter.
- E. A title (if desired) is present, although it may be uninspired or an obvious restatement of the prompt or topic.
- F. The organization sometimes supports the main point or storyline; at other times, the reader feels an urge to slip in a transition or move things around.

1 The writing lacks a clear sense of direction. Ideas, details, or events seem strung together in a loose or random fashion; there is no identifiable internal structure. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:

- A. There is no real lead to set-up what follows, no real conclusion to wrap things up.
- B. Connections between ideas are confusing or not even present.
- C. Sequencing needs lots and lots of work.
- D. Pacing feels awkward; the writer slows to a crawl when the reader wants to get on with it, and vice versa.
- E. No title is present (if requested) or, if present, does not match well with the content.
- F. Problems with organization make it hard for the reader to get a grip on the main point or story line.

Voice

- 5 The writer speaks directly to the reader in a way that is individual, compelling and engaging. The writer crafts the writing with an awareness and respect for the audience and the purpose for writing.**
- A. The tone of the writing adds interest to the message and is appropriate for the purpose and audience.
 - B. The reader feels a strong interaction with the writer, sensing the person behind the words.
 - C. The writer takes a risk by revealing who he or she is consistently throughout the piece.
 - D. Expository or persuasive writing reflects a strong commitment to the topic by showing why the reader needs to know this and why he or she should care.
 - E. Narrative writing is honest, personal, and engaging and makes you think about, and react to, the author's ideas and point of view.
- 3 The writer seems sincere but not fully engaged or involved. The result is pleasant or even personable, but not compelling.**
- A. The writer seems aware of an audience but discards personal insights in favor of obvious generalities.
 - B. The writing communicates in an earnest, pleasing, yet safe manner.
 - C. Only one or two moments here or there intrigue, delight, or move the reader. These places may emerge strongly for a line or two, but quickly fade away.
 - D. Expository or persuasive writing lacks consistent engagement with the topic to build credibility.
 - E. Narrative writing is reasonably sincere, but doesn't reflect unique or individual perspective on the topic.
- 1 The writer seems indifferent, uninvolved, or distanced from the topic and/or the audience. As a result, the paper reflects more than one of the following problems:**
- A. The writer is not concerned with the audience. The writer's style is a complete mismatch for the intended reader or the writing is so short that little is accomplished beyond introducing the topic.
 - B. The writer speaks in a kind of monotone that flattens all potential highs or lows of the message.
 - C. The writing is humdrum and "risk-free."
 - D. The writing is lifeless or mechanical; depending on the topic, it may be overly technical or jargonistic.
 - E. The development of the topic is so limited that no point of view is present—zip, zero, zilch, nada.

Word Choice

5 Words convey the intended message in a precise, interesting, and natural way. The words are powerful and engaging.

- A. Words are specific and accurate. It is easy to understand just what the writer means.
- B. Striking words and phrases often catch the reader's eye and linger in the reader's mind.
- C. Language and phrasing is natural, effective, and appropriate for the audience.
- D. Lively verbs add energy while specific nouns and modifiers add depth.
- E. Choices in language enhance the meaning and clarify understanding.
- F. Precision is obvious. The writer has taken care to put just the right word or phrase in just the right spot.

3 The language is functional, even if it lacks much energy. It is easy to figure out the writer's meaning on a general level.

- A. Words are adequate and correct in a general sense, and they support the meaning by not getting in the way.
- B. Familiar words and phrases communicate but rarely capture the reader's imagination.
- C. Attempts at colorful language show a willingness to stretch and grow but sometimes reach beyond the audience (thesaurus overload!).
- D. Despite a few successes, the writing is marked by passive verbs, everyday nouns, and mundane modifiers.
- E. The words and phrases are functional with only one or two fine moments.
- F. The words may be refined in a couple of places, but the language looks more like the first thing that popped into the writer's mind.

1 The writer demonstrates a limited vocabulary or has not searched for words to convey specific meaning.

- A. Words are so nonspecific and distracting that only a very limited meaning comes through.
- B. Problems with language leave the reader wondering. Many of the words just don't work in this piece.
- C. Audience has not been considered. Language is used incorrectly making the message secondary to the misfires with the words.
- D. Limited vocabulary and/or misused parts of speech seriously impair understanding.
- E. Words and phrases are so unimaginative and lifeless that they detract from the meaning.
- F. Jargon or clichés distract or mislead. Redundancy may distract the reader.

Sentence Fluency

5 The writing has an easy flow, rhythm, and cadence. Sentences are well built, with strong and varied structure that invites expressive oral reading.

- A. Sentences are constructed in a way that underscores and enhances the meaning.
- B. Sentences vary in length as well as structure. Fragments, if used, add style. Dialogue, if present, sounds natural.
- C. Purposeful and varied sentence beginnings add variety and energy.
- D. The use of creative and appropriate connectives between sentences and thoughts shows how each relates to, and builds upon, the one before it.
- E. The writing has cadence; the writer has thought about the sound of the words as well as the meaning. The first time you read it aloud is a breeze.

3 The text hums along with a steady beat, but tends to be more pleasant or businesslike than musical, more mechanical than fluid.

- A. Although sentences may not seem artfully crafted or musical, they get the job done in a routine fashion.
- B. Sentences are usually constructed correctly; they hang together; they are sound.
- C. Sentence beginnings are not ALL alike; some variety is attempted.
- D. The reader sometimes has to hunt for clues (e.g., connecting words and phrases like however, therefore, naturally, after a while, on the other hand, to be specific, for example, next, first of all, later, but as it turned out, although, etc.) that show how sentences interrelate.
- E. Parts of the text invite expressive oral reading; others may be stiff, awkward, choppy, or gangly.

1 The reader has to practice quite a bit in order to give this paper a fair interpretive reading. The writing reflects more than one of the following problems:

- A. Sentences are choppy, incomplete, rambling or awkward; they need work. Phrasing does not sound natural. The patterns may create a sing-song rhythm, or a chop-chop cadence that lulls the reader to sleep.
- B. There is little to no “sentence sense” present. Even if this piece was flawlessly edited, the sentences would not hang together.
- C. Many sentences begin the same way—and may follow the same patterns (e.g., subject-verb-object) in a monotonous pattern.
- D. Endless connectives (and, and so, but then, because, and then, etc.) or a complete lack of connectives create a massive jumble of language.
- E. The text does not invite expressive oral reading.

Conventions

5 The writer demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, usage, paragraphing) and uses conventions effectively to enhance readability. Errors tend to be so few that just minor touch-ups would get this piece ready to publish.

- A. Spelling is generally correct, even on more difficult words.
- B. The punctuation is accurate, even creative, and guides the reader through the text.
- C. A thorough understanding and consistent application of capitalization skills are present.
- D. Grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style.
- E. Paragraphing tends to be sound and reinforces the organizational structure.
- F. The writer may manipulate conventions for stylistic effect—and it works! The piece is very close to being ready to publish.

Grades 7 and Up Only: The writing is sufficiently complex to allow the writer to show skill in using a wide range of conventions. For writers at younger ages, the writing shows control over those conventions that are grade/age appropriate.

3 The writer shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. Conventions are sometimes handled well and enhance readability; at other times, errors are distracting and impair readability.

- A. Spelling is usually correct or reasonably phonetic on common words, but more difficult words are problematic.
- B. End punctuation is usually correct; internal punctuation (commas, apostrophes, semicolons, dashes, colons, parentheses) is sometimes missing/wrong.
- C. Most words are capitalized correctly; control over more sophisticated capitalization skills may be spotty.
- D. Problems with grammar or usage are not serious enough to distort meaning but may not be correct or accurately applied all of the time.
- E. Paragraphing is attempted but may run together or begin in the wrong places.
- F. Moderate editing (a little of this, a little of that) would be required to polish the text for publication.

Conventions (Continued)

1 Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, usage, and grammar and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:

- A. Spelling errors are frequent, even on common words.
- B. Punctuation (including terminal punctuation) is often missing or incorrect.
- C. Capitalization is random and only the easiest rules show awareness of correct use.
- D. Errors in grammar or usage are very noticeable, frequent, and affect meaning.
- E. Paragraphing is missing, irregular, or so frequent (every sentence) that it has no relationship to the organizational structure of the text.
- F. The reader must read once to decode, then again for meaning. Extensive editing (virtually every line) would be required to polish the text for publication.

Presentation—Optional

5 The form and presentation of the text enhances the ability for the reader to understand and connect with the message. It is pleasing to the eye.

- A. If handwritten (either cursive or printed), the slant is consistent, letters are clearly formed, spacing is uniform between words, and the text is easy to read.
- B. If word-processed, there is appropriate use of fonts and font sizes which invites the reader into the text.
- C. The use of white space on the page (spacing, margins, etc.) allows the intended audience to easily focus on the text and message without distractions. There is just the right amount of balance of white space and text on the page. The formatting suits the purpose for writing.
- D. The use of a title, side heads, page numbering, bullets, and evidence of correct use of a style sheet (when appropriate) makes it easy for the reader to access the desired information and text. These markers allow the hierarchy of information to be clear to the reader.
- E. When appropriate to the purpose and audience, there is effective integration of text and illustrations, charts, graphs, maps, tables, etc. There is clear alignment between the text and visuals. The visuals support and clarify important information or key points made in the text.

3 The writer's message is understandable in this format.

- A. Handwriting is readable, although there may be discrepancies in letter shape and form, slant, and spacing that may make some words or passages easier to read than others.
- B. Experimentation with fonts and font sizes is successful in some places, but begins to get fussy and cluttered in others. The effect is not consistent throughout the text.
- C. While margins may be present, some text may crowd the edges. Consistent spacing is applied, although a different choice may make text more accessible (e.g., single, double, or triple spacing).
- D. Although some markers are present (titles, numbering, bullets, side heads, etc.), they are not used to their fullest potential as a guide for the reader to access the greatest meaning from the text.
- E. An attempt is made to integrate visuals and the text although the connections may be limited.

*Presentation—Optional (Continued)***1 The reader receives a garbled message due to problems relating to the presentation of the text.**

- A. Because the letters are irregularly slanted, formed inconsistently, or incorrectly, and the spacing is unbalanced or not even present, it is very difficult to read and understand the text.
- B. The writer has gone wild with multiple fonts and font sizes. It is a major distraction to the reader.
- C. The spacing is random and confusing to the reader. There may be little or no white space on the page.
- D. Lack of markers (title, page numbering, bullets, side heads, etc.) leave the reader wondering how one section connects to another and why the text is organized in this manner on the page.
- E. The visuals do not support or further illustrate key ideas presented in the text. They may be misleading, indecipherable, or too complex to be understood.

Source: Reprinted from *6+1 Trait™ Writing Assessment Scoring Guide*, 1994, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 101 SW Main St., Portland, Oregon, 97204. Reprinted by permission.

Everett Rubric for Instructing and Assessing Self-Directed Learner

Criterion	4: Accomplished	3: Competent	2: Needs Improvement	1: Limited
<p>Conscientious</p> <p>Striving for Excellence</p> <p>Self-Evaluation</p> <p>Taking Initiative</p> <p>Persevering</p>	<p>Takes pride in own work: constantly strives for excellence, works hard, aims to exceed standards, and fulfills all commitments in a timely manner.</p> <p>Is skilled in valuating own work to determine whether it meets standards, expectations, or job requirements.</p> <p>Takes the initiative in accomplishing tasks and solving problems: looks for opportunities to improve work, acts without prompting, makes appropriate decisions as needed.</p> <p>Perseveres to accomplish even the most difficult tasks, being willing to make numerous attempts, trying different approaches as necessary until a good workable solution is discovered.</p>	<p>Assumes responsibility for own work and works hard to produce quality work which meets standards; meets almost all commitment.</p> <p>Has some skill in evaluating own work, but on particularly complex assignments, or in difficult situations, needs to check with a teacher or supervisor.</p> <p>Often takes the initiative, acting without prompting or being asked to solve problems/ accomplish tasks; makes some decisions.</p> <p>Generally perseveres to complete/accomplish tasks, except perhaps in especially difficult or complex tasks; tries different approaches, but tends to stop searching when any workable solution is discovered.</p>	<p>Does not assume ownership of work and strives to get by more than to excel; misses many commitments.</p> <p>Has limited skill/ confidence in evaluating own work, and often has to check progress or decisions with a teacher or supervisor.</p> <p>Sometimes takes the initiative, but usually requires prompting or assistance to solve problems or accomplish tasks/generally avoids responsibility, offering excuses; makes few decisions.</p> <p>Has difficulty persevering to complete/ accomplish tasks; completes simple and familiar tasks, but with complicated tasks, tends to fix on one approach or solution, struggling to force that approach to work in the situation.</p>	<p>Displays no pride in own work; shows no concern for standards of excellence; often fails to meet commitments.</p> <p>Has no skill or does not attempt to evaluate own work; checks all progress and/or decisions with a teacher or supervisor.</p> <p>Almost never displays initiative; most often requires prompting to accomplish tasks; relies on others to make decisions.</p> <p>Rarely perseveres to complete/accomplish tasks that have any degree of difficulty; tends to give up if the first attempt does not yield a solution.</p>

Everett Rubric for Instructing and Assessing Self-Directed Learner (Continued)

Criterion	4: Accomplished	3: Competent	2: Needs Improvement	1: Limited
<p>Self-Disciplined</p> <p>Respects Property</p> <p>Respects Others' Rights/Feelings</p> <p>Resolves Conflicts</p>	<p>Is respectful of school property and that of others; never disturbs or damages others' property.</p> <p>Respects the rights and feelings of others; does not harm or bother others at any time.</p> <p>Knows conflict resolution techniques and uses them to solve problems which emerge in interacting with others.</p>	<p>Respects the property of others, including school property; does not intentionally disturb or damage property; may occasionally disturb or damage some property inadvertently, primarily due to carelessness.</p> <p>Generally respects the rights and feelings of others; may occasionally be involved in disturbances when provoked or pressured by peers.</p> <p>Knows conflict resolution techniques and is most often successful in using them to solve problems; occasionally needs the intervention of others.</p>	<p>Is not as mindful of school and others' property as he/she should be; is sometimes careless or takes risks with others' property; occasionally has trouble controlling impulses.</p> <p>Does not respect the rights and feelings of others as much as is expected to him/herself; is sometimes responsible for disputes/conflicts, both with peers and authorities.</p> <p>Has some understanding of conflict resolution techniques and can use them to solve some problems; often needs the intervention of others.</p>	<p>Has problems controlling behavior with school and others' property; is often careless, takes risks, and does not control impulses.</p> <p>Has a serious problem interacting with others in polite and respectful ways; frequently causes disputes or conflicts with others.</p> <p>Is mostly unaware or unskilled in using conflict resolution techniques, most often requires the intervention of others to resolve problems.</p>

Source: Everett School District, 2000, Comprehensive Assessment Program, Curriculum and Assessment Dept., PO Box 2098, 4730 Colby Ave., Everett, Washington 98203. Copyright © 2000 Everett School District. Used with permission.

Self-Reflection Rubric

Trait	Sophisticated	Developing	Beginning
Skill Analysis	Detailed, many things covered, insightful, examples provided, good reasons and explanations, considers content as well as process, accurate, discussion refers to criteria, looks at both strengths and weaknesses, specific, thorough, synthesis across work.	Describes performance, but leaves things out, considers content or process but not both, sometimes accurate and sometimes not, some insights, descriptions of individual pieces of work but little synthesis across work.	Vague, simple restatements, focuses mainly on surface features, obvious, same old same old, “I like it/I don’t like it”; no examples, not accurate, little reference to criteria, few insights.
Sincerity	Honest, there is ownership, there is a personal reaction, revealing, takes a risk.	Beginning to take ownership, not completely accurate, shows then hides.	Mechanical, superficial, takes no risks, doesn’t seem honest, little ownership
Goal Setting	Looks ahead, accurately infers next steps from analysis of work, specific.	Some attempt at goal setting, somewhat accurate based on current status, some specific and some broad or vague.	No goal setting, little inference on next steps, next steps broad, vague, or unrelated to status.
Presentation	Consider one or more of the following traits from the 6+ 1 Trait Writing Rubric: organization, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions.		

Source: Educational Testing Service. Based on examination of many student self-reflections.

Group Discussion Rubric, Adult Version

This is a composite rubric synthesized from several sources. It is not meant to be a checklist—the descriptors under each level of performance are indicators of the quality of performance rather than an exhaustive listing; not everything must be “checked off” to receive a score of a particular level. (Note: The article by David Harris cited in the source note provides sample dialogues that illustrate many of the indicators in the rubric.)

Trait 1: Content Understanding—Comprehension of the Content Under Discussion

High

- The student understands significant ideas relevant to the issue under discussion. This is indicated by correct use of terminology, precise selection of the pieces of information required to make a point, correct and appropriate use of examples and counterexamples, demonstration of which distinctions are important to make, and explanations that are concise and to the point.
- Information and knowledge are accurate.
- The student elaborates statements with accurate explanations, reasons, or evidence.

Medium

- Ideas are reasonably clear, but the listener needs to make some guesses as to what the student meant.
- Some vocabulary is used correctly and some is not.
- Ideas are correct but not concise.
- Contributions to the group are generally supported by some facts, examples, analogies, statistics, etc., but there’s a sense that more is needed.

Low

- The student uses basic knowledge incorrectly.
- The student struggles to provide ideas or support for ideas.
- Ideas are extremely limited or hard to understand.
- The student has difficulty understanding themes and distinguishing main ideas and supporting details.
- Terminology is used incorrectly.

Trait 2: Reasoning—Ability to Use The Content to Explore an Issue, Reach Agreement, Make a Decision, or Discuss a Point

High

- The student actively participates in the development of the group mission.
- The student takes a position or makes a claim and defends it with explanations, reasons, or evidence.
- The student argues by analogy.
- The student recognizes the accuracy, logic, relevance, or clarity of statements. The student recognizes contradictions and irrelevant comments.
- The student has a clear idea of the shape of the task and sustains inquiry until the task is completed. The student knows when the task is completed satisfactorily.
- The student asks clarifying questions and knows when clarifying questions need to be asked.
- The student distinguishes fact from opinion.
- The student summarizes points of agreement and disagreement to set the stage for further movement; the student knows when such summaries are useful.

Medium

- The student relies on the momentum of the group to motivate inquiry.
- The student generally distinguishes fact from opinions.
- The student may be repetitive with comments.

Low

- The student accepts ideas of others without much thought.
- The student jumps randomly from one aspect of an issue to another.
- The student provides little relevant information or contributes little to the discussion.
- Opinions may be stated as facts.
- The student shows little evidence of understanding the task and how to sustain the inquiry to adequately fulfill it.
- There is little sense of which information is of most importance.
- The student frequently asks for repetition of ideas, but shows little evidence of understanding.

Trait 3: Interaction With Others

High

- The student initiates development of the group process, including identifying roles and accepting responsibility for fulfilling assigned roles within the group.
- Interaction reflects group norms—the student is appropriate for the group and setting.
- The student acknowledges the statements of others in a way that builds a consecutive interchange between participants. Replies to others are responsive to the statement and indicate that the student understood it and thought about it.
- When disagreeing, the student does it respectfully. The nature of the disagreement is stated and an invitation to respond extended.
- The student makes sure that all relevant points of view are heard.
- The student is courteous and attentive.
- Nonverbal behavior is consistent with verbal behavior; both are positive. Positive nonverbal behavior includes nodding, leaning forward, and maintaining eye contact.
- When conflicts arise, the student attempts to resolve them.
- Talking is task oriented and group oriented—“we.”

Medium

- The student participates in development of the group process, including identifying roles and accepting responsibility for fulfilling assigned roles within the group.
- The student attends to the discussion, but doesn't participate very much.
- The student's contributions do not detract from the group's purpose or goals.
- The student participates in the group with prompting.
- The student responds to solicitation of opinions or ideas, but doesn't volunteer them.

*Trait 3: Interaction With Others (Continued)***Low**

- The student does not fulfill assigned roles.
- Interaction does not reflect group norms.
- The student makes irrelevant or distracting statements.
- Interruptions, when they occur, are unconstructive and discourteous.
- The student monopolizes the conversation—a pattern of domination with the effect of preventing others from contributing.
- The student makes a personal attack; language might suggest bias toward a group member or others.
- The student is uninvolved in the discussion, even when directly asked for an opinion.
- Nonverbal behavior is inconsistent with verbal behavior—usually the nonverbal behavior is very negative while the verbal behavior might be positive. Nonverbal behavior may alienate the student from other group members.
- Talk is self-oriented—“I.”

Trait 4: Language

High

- The student uses precise vocabulary and economical syntax. Words and syntax are purposefully chosen to make a point.
- The student uses language that others in the group will understand.
- The student defines or clearly explains language or concepts that might be unfamiliar to others; the student knows when such explanations might be necessary.

Medium

- The student uses general vocabulary and tends to express ideas wordily.
- Although correct, language might not be equally understandable to all members of the group.

Low

- The student uses language that others in the group are unlikely to understand.
- Ideas appear disproportionately lengthy and are difficult to follow.
- Language choices are vague, abstract, or trite. Jargon may be used when more precise language is needed.

Source: Synthesized from (1) David Harris, *Assessing Discussion of Public Issues: A Scoring Guide*, in Ronald Evans and David Warren Saxe (Eds.), *Handbook on Teaching Social Issues*, NCSS Bulletin 93, 1996; (2) Alberta Education, *Oral Communication Evaluation: English 30/33 Activities and Scoring Guides*, Edmonton, Alberta: Learning Resources Distributing Center, 1992; (3) John Zola, "Scored Discussions," *Social Education*, Feb. 1992, pp. 121–125; (4) California Learning Assessment System, *History-Social Science, Grade 11*, Sacramento: California Department of Education, n.d.; (5) Paula Usrey, *Group Discussion Member Rubric*, Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1998; (6) Kansas State Department of Education, *State Assessment—Social Studies*, Topeka, KS: Author, 1995; (7) Oregon Department of Education, *Collaborate Scoring Guide*, Portland, OR: Author, 1994.

Student-Friendly Guide to Group Discussions

Trait 1: My Understanding of the Topic

I Do This Well—I completely understand the information we’re discussing.

- I understand what everyone else is talking about.
- I understand the meaning of the “technical” words being used.
- I know exactly which pieces of information I need to make a point.
- I can give good examples of what I mean.
- I can give evidence to support what I say.

I’m On My Way—I think I understand most of the information we’re discussing.

- I understand some of the ideas, but not all of them.
- I understand many of the “technical” words, but not all of them.
- I can sometimes give examples of what I mean.
- I picked out some of the important information, but I might have missed some.

I’m Just Starting—I’m not sure I understand the information we’re discussing.

- I’m not sure I understand what everyone else is talking about.
- I don’t understand many of the “technical” words being used.
- I’m unsure which examples or information to use to make a point.
- I’m not sure that the information I use is correct.

Trait 2: My Understanding of What Group Work Is About

I Do This Well—I understand the reasons for working in a group and how to get group work done.

- I try to make sure I understand the reasons for the group work—what the group is supposed to accomplish.
- I help make sure that the discussion stays on the topic.
- I understand various ways to get group work done efficiently. For example, I know when it is useful to summarize the discussion, when the group needs additional information or help, when the group needs a leader, when the group needs to make sure all ideas are expressed, and when ideas need to be clearer.
- I know just what information is needed to contribute to the discussion.
- I know when the job of the group is done.
- I try to help make sure the group gets its work done.

I'm On My Way—I'm learning the reasons for working in a group and how to get group work done.

- I sometimes understand the goals of group work and sometimes I don't.
- I participate in the group when asked to by others, but I usually don't without being asked.

I'm Just Starting—I'm not sure I understand the reasons for working in a group, or how to get group work done.

- I don't think I understand why we sometimes work in groups. I don't understand what working in a group is supposed to accomplish.
- I don't understand how to get group work done in an efficient manner.
- I usually don't follow what is going on.
- I get distracted and don't pay attention.
- I let others take responsibility for making sure the work gets done.

Trait 3: How I Interact With Others

I Do This Well—I know how to get along with others when working in a group.

- I listen to what others have to say. I don't interrupt.
- When I disagree with someone, I know how to do it so that I don't hurt anyone's feelings.
- I make sure that everyone who wants to has a chance to talk.
- I'm polite.

On The Way—I sometimes get along well with others when working in a group.

- I generally listen to others, but sometimes I get distracted.
- I sometimes interrupt.
- I try not to hurt others' feelings, but I think I sometimes do anyway.
- I understand how to be polite, but sometimes I'm not.

I'm Just Starting—I'm not sure how to get along with the others in a group.

- I think I hurt people's feelings when I disagree with them, but I'm not sure.
- I try to do all the talking.
- I try to never do any talking.
- I don't listen to what others have to say.
- I don't understand what to do to be polite to others.
- I don't understand why everyone needs a chance to talk.

Trait 4: The Language I Use During the Discussion

I Do This Well—I know just how to say things so that others will understand.

- I say things in a way that others in the group will understand.
- I don't use more words than I need to. I know just how much to say to be clear.
- I try to use words that others will understand. I know when I need to use different words to be clear.

On The Way—I sometimes say things in ways that others understand.

- I think I sometimes use more words than needed to make a point.
- I think I sometimes use words that others don't understand.

I'm Just Starting—I'm unsure if I say things in ways that others will understand.

- I try to use big words to impress others.
- I'm not sure how to say things in ways others will understand.
- I didn't realize that I need to pay attention to how I say things.

Source: Educational Testing Service.

General Conceptual Understanding Rubric

Conceptual understanding is the extent to which students understand the content to be learned.

High

A high score in conceptual understanding means that the student shows an accurate and extensive understanding of the topic. This can be shown in many ways, including the following:

- Correct and precise use of terminology.
- Precise selection of the pieces of information required to make a point (no more, no less).
- Correct and appropriate use of examples and counterexamples.
- Few errors in information.
- Connections made to other, related topics.
- Demonstration of which distinctions are important to make.
- Key concepts identified and addressed.
- A relevant focus sustained throughout the work.
- Relevant use of a diagram or graph; knows when such things will aid understanding.
- Concise explanations that are to the point.

Medium

A medium score in conceptual understanding means that the student presents some important information, but there is a sense that the student is only about halfway home in terms of understanding. Performance is indicated by the following:

- Reasonably clear ideas, but the readers needs to make some guesses as to what the student meant.
- Even though a general point is made, the student hasn't fine tuned the topic.
- Some parts of the work seem repetitive.
- The balance in the work seems a little off.
- Some vocabulary is used well, some is not.
- Some examples and graphics are appropriate, some aren't.
- Sometimes the student seems to know which concepts and points are most important and telling; other times not.
- Information seems to be based on retelling rather than the student making his or her own connections.
- The focus tends to shift.

General Conceptual Understanding Rubric (Continued)

Low

A low score in conceptual understanding indicates that the student is still searching for the connections that will make the content meaningful. Weak performance is indicated by such things as the following:

- Ideas are extremely limited or hard to understand, even when the reader tries to draw inferences based on what is there.
- The text may be repetitious or read like a collection of disconnected, random thoughts.
- Information is inaccurate.
- Terminology is used incorrectly.
- There is little sense of which information is most important.
- Visual displays, when used, are not helpful or unrelated to any points the student is trying to make.

Source: Educational Testing Service.

Criteria for Judging the Whole Portfolio

Sometimes it is helpful to look at the story the whole portfolio tells—quite apart from the quality of individual pieces of work within that portfolio. The following criteria were developed to help you take the “whole story” approach to looking at a portfolio in any content area. You may wish to consider some or all of these criteria, depending on the purpose of the portfolio and what you and your students hold to be important. Are there other criteria that also influence your thinking about the strength or power of a portfolio? Please note them—and make them known to your students.

Change Over Time

Strong

The student selects material that clearly demonstrates growth in one or more specific areas. Examples might be math problem-solving skill or development of ideas in writing. In reviewing the examples, the reviewer can easily see how and in what areas the student has grown. The self-reflection (if present) generally matches what the reviewer sees.

Developing

The samples show evidence of some growth, but the growth is limited. That is, the change from one sample to another is evident but not dramatic. Self-reflection, if present, may comment on changes that are not immediately apparent to the reviewer in looking at the student’s work.

Not Yet

The samples in the portfolio do not show evidence of noticeable student growth or change over time. Either noticeable growth has not occurred, or the student has not selected the samples of work that would illustrate that growth clearly.

Diversity

Strong

The portfolio clearly demonstrates that the student has tried a variety of tasks/projects/assignments/challenges. There is great variety in the kinds of work presented or the outcomes/skills demonstrated. For instance, a math portfolio might include some problem analysis, samples of graphing skill, a problem-solving task that shows more than one solution, good use of math terminology, and a project showing application of math skills.

Developing

The portfolio reflects some diversity. Tasks are not all parallel and do not all demonstrate identical outcomes. For instance, a math portfolio might include open-ended problem solving with analysis of how the student did the task together with samples showing correct application of math procedures, concepts or symbols.

Not Yet

The portfolio reflects minimal diversity. All tasks represented are more or less alike, and demonstrate the same outcomes/skills.

Evidence of Problem Solving

Strong

The work in the portfolio provides evidence that the student has identified, analyzed, planned strategies, and worked through the solution to a problem or question. For instance, a high school science student might tackle the question of how to preserve wetlands in a rapidly developing area. An elementary science student might consider the question of whether rats can thrive on a vegetarian diet.

Developing

The work in the portfolio shows some evidence of thinking, reasoning, analyzing or problem solving, but the student may not have worked all the way through a solution, or may have missed opportunities to pull together interesting conclusions or plot alternate strategies. Still, the student's work overall shows signs of planning and purposeful effort.

Not Yet

The student has not included in the portfolio any work that clearly demonstrates purposeful planning of strategies, problem solving, analysis of a situation, reasoning out a conclusion, or considering alternative solutions.

Organization, Format, and Structure

Strong

The student has formatted and arranged the portfolio in a way that invites the reader inside. Items within the portfolio are clearly labeled and dated; the sequence is purposeful. All or most of the following are included: a table of contents, a main title page or title pages for major sections, an introductory letter to reviewers, a statement of purpose (may be contained within the introductory letter), criteria or rating scales (if relevant), and a closing, summary comment, or reflection.

Developing

The portfolio is arranged and formatted in a way that enables the reader to make sense of it with a little work. Most items within the portfolio are labeled, dated or both. At least some of the following items are included: table of contents, letter of introduction, statement of purpose, title pages, criteria/rating scales, closing reflection.

Not Yet

Arrangement and formatting of the portfolio make it difficult for the reviewer to determine when and under what circumstances it was assembled. Few items (if any) are clearly labeled or dated. Most or all of the following are missing: table of contents, letter of introduction, statement of purpose, title pages, criteria/rating scales, closing reflection.

Self-Reflection

Strong

Several (or more) examples of self-reflection show thoughtful consideration of personal strengths and needs based on in-depth understanding of criteria. Reflections may also include a statement of personal goals; responses to learning, to a unit of study, or to an assignment; a summary of growth over time; or other insight regarding the personal, individual story this student's portfolio tells.

Developing

Self-reflections included within the portfolio provide at least a superficial analysis of strengths and needs, which may or may not be tied to specific criteria for judging performance or growth. The student may include comments on what he/she likes or dislikes about a content area or unit of study, or about what he/she finds difficult or challenging; but the reflections may not include insights regarding growth, needs, goals, or changes in performance or learning styles over time.

Not Yet

Either no self-reflection is included within the portfolio, or the self-reflection is rudimentary: e.g., "I put this in because I like it"; "I included this in my portfolio because it took me a long time to do it"; "This is in my portfolio because we were asked to put it in."

Source: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (n.d.), 101 SW Main, Suite 500, Portland, OR 97204. Reprinted by permission.