



**MARKING COMPOSITION:  
DESIGNING RUBRICS THAT  
WORK**

**Roger Graves**

**Professor, EFS**

**Director, Writing Across the Curriculum**

# RUBRICS DEFINED



- Rubrics describe your criteria for evaluating student performances

---

**As promised! Feedback from your session.**

**Do you VALUE having access to learning opportunities such as this?**

This workshop assisted in two ways:

- it make me think about my written communication in more focused way AND
- it made me aware of more of the resources available to assist me with my writing.

Very much!

very focused and manageable within other time constraints- thank you!

I would like to see more workshops focusing on writing skills.

**What additional topics would you be interested in?**

- 1 More specific writing topics - grant proposals, letters, etiquette reminders...
- 2 converting technical writing/jargon into layman's language would be helpful.
- 3 Grammer



# KINDS OF RUBRICS

## **Holistic**

Descriptions of overall achievement and effect  
Faster to use

## **Analytic**

Separate scores for each criterion  
Precise

**or**

## **General description**

- General criteria applicable to all assignments

## **Primary trait scoring**

- Criteria specific to an assignment



# TYPE A: HOLISTIC SCALES

## Writing Program General Grading Rubric

### Grade Ranges

Below 50	50-60	60-70
<p>Grades in this range identify assignments with problems sufficiently severe and/or pervasive that they significantly compromise the document's ability to communicate.</p> <p>Grades in this range generally indicate ONE or more of the following characteristics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Plagiarism.</li><li>2. Failure to follow the assigned topic.</li><li>3. Severe systematic problems</li></ol>	<p>Grades in this range identify assignments that, while generally acceptable, have AT LEAST ONE of the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ a significant global deficiency (mistaken audience, inconsistency in purpose)</li><li>▶ several major problems (see list below)</li><li>▶ numerous minor problems</li></ul>	<p>Grades in this range tend to be fairly common in writing courses.</p> <p>These grades identify a generally good performance on the criteria listed below with minor problems of various kinds throughout the assignment or in more than one category.</p>

Please note that these descriptions are guidelines only, and do not cover all situations.



# TYPE A: HOLISTIC SCALE

## **Holistic Grading Rubric for Writing Assessment (GERM 111/112) A**

### **“A” DEMONSTRATES HIGH PROFICIENCY**

#### **Excellent command of the language:**

Addressed the topic; appropriate to the writing prompt (also in format, e.g. a letter requires greeting and conclusion); all expected elements are included; text flows; comprehensible; writing is appropriate to current level; length is appropriate

Word choice is appropriate and varied; sentence structure shows variety if possible on this level of writing (e.g. sub- and coordinating sentences, not only S-V-O structure; use of transitions);

Some errors which do not interfere with comprehension (i.e. word order is correct most of the time; subject-verb agreement is accurate most of the time, minor slips; spelling and punctuation are mostly accurate); learner demonstrated control of the forms focused on in this exam with very few mistakes



# TYPE B: ANALYTIC SCALES

## Oral Presentation Grading Sheet

---

### Visuals

- Size
- Brevity
- Informative titles
- Appropriateness

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

### Presentation Skills

- Face audience
- Speak clearly
- Clear view of visuals
- Elaborated on visuals
- No excuses offered
- Handling of questions

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

---



# 111/112 RUBRICS

- See handout
- The original is holistic
- The revised one is analytic

<b>DEMONSTRATES HIGH PROFICIENCY</b>	
<b>Excellent command of the language:</b>	
<b>A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed the topic; appropriate to the writing prompt (greeting and conclusion); all expected elements are in writing is appropriate to current level; length is appropriate</li> <li>• Word choice is appropriate and varied; sentence structure level of writing (e.g. sub- and coordinating sentences; transitions);</li> <li>• Some errors which do not interfere with comprehension; subject-verb agreement is accurate most of the time; punctuation are mostly accurate); learner demonstrated exam with very few mistakes</li> </ul>
<b>CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES PROFICIENCY</b>	
<b>Good command of the language:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally addressed the topic; generally appropriate</li> </ul>

## Analytic Rubric for 111/112

1. Answered the question/addressed the topic	1	2	3
	Unclear		mostly
2. Format appropriate and correct	1	2	3
	Inappropriate		few errors in format



# RUBRICS IN ACTION

## **Writing in the sciences:**

Writing for non-scientific audiences

Rubric

Student essay

1. Read the essay
2. Grade it using the rubric
3. Compare your scores to others in your group





# YOUR RUBRICS

1. Get out your rubrics
2. Share them with the other people near you
3. Discuss how differences/similarities
4. Do these criteria accurately represent your expectations for students?



# WEIGHTING THE RUBRIC

Which categories are more important to the overall grade?

This is another way of asking what are the most important factors for you when you evaluate a student's assignment.

Not all categories have to be or should be evenly weighted.

Rubrics should be different from first year to fourth year as expectations change.

