



# TSD Technology Toolbox

Texas School for the Deaf

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What is a rubric? A rubric is a type of scoring guide. It is comprised of two parts: criteria and standards (statements of what students should know and be able to do at a certain point). It is an authentic assessment tool. It helps the teacher organize and interpret data gathered from observations and student performance. Rather than giving a student one numerical score, a rubric helps the teacher grade a student's performance on the sum of a range of criteria. Rubrics can be beneficial for both teaching and assessment.

One advantage to rubrics is that they clearly show a student how he/she is being evaluated. When rubrics are shared with students before a project, they can be a big motivator. The degrees of quality are clearly spelled out for the student, from excellent to poor. So rubrics can provide the scaffolding necessary to improve a student's quality of work. While some students seem to know what teachers want, others don't seem to have a clue. It is important for us to make the criteria clear for them. When expectations are laid out for students in language they can understand, then we increase the chance that all students will get the feedback they

"Assessments that work in the best interests of children will enhance their ability to see and understand their learning for themselves, to judge it for themselves, and to act on their judgments."  
Drummond 1994

need to improve their work.

But what about improving teaching? Rubrics can enhance the quality of direct instruction by teachers as well. By planning with the rubric in mind, the instructor can provide focus, emphasis and attention to particular details as a model for students. Rubrics may also assist with heterogeneous classes by offering a range of quality levels based on individual needs. Hopefully, the use of the rubric will result in a reduced amount of time teachers spend evaluating student work.

Rubrics are an excellent tool for grading technology projects, but they can be used in any subject area...from science projects to literature essays. There are sites on the web with ready-made rubrics and places where you can develop your own. You can even involve your students in the creation of the rubric. That way they have a better understanding of the expectations and feel some ownership in the assessment tool.

So what should you take into consideration when developing your own rubric? Heidi Goodrich Andrade suggests in her article, "Understanding Rubrics," that the following steps be included:

- 1) **Look at models.** It is important for students to see examples of good and not-so-good products. What does a piece of work look like that earns an "A" and what should you do to avoid a low grade?
- 2) **List criteria.** List standards that should be considered in the qualities of the work. Try to avoid unclear and negative language. Try to make the standards using language that the students can easily understand.
- 3) **Articulate gradations of quality.** Start with the best and worst qualities. Then fill in the middle based on your knowledge of common problems you've seen in student work.



### Rubrics cont'd...

- 4) **Practice on models.** Have students practice using rubrics with examples.
- 5) **Use self- and peer assessment.** Give students their assignment. Stop occasionally for self- and peer-assessment. This should increase students' sense of responsibility for their own work.
- 6) **Revise.** Always give students some time to revise their work after the self- and peer assessments have taken place. We want this to be a learning experience.
- 7) **Use teacher assessment.** You should use the same rubric students use to assess their work.

There is no specific number of criteria or levels of performance a rubric should include. It can have as few as two or as many as you feel necessary. This will vary depending on the task. Just make sure the standards are clear and measurable. Rubric scores can be translated into final grades, but not every rubric score should count. Remember, rubrics can be used to improve teacher instruction and to give students prescriptive feedback so they can learn and grow.

**Fiction-writing content rubric**

Criteria	4	3	2	1
PLOT: "What" and "Why"	Both <i>plot</i> parts are fully developed.	One of the <i>plot</i> parts is fully developed and the less developed part is at least addressed.	Both <i>plot</i> parts are addressed but not fully developed.	Neither <i>plot</i> parts are fully developed.
SETTING: "When" and "Where"	Both <i>setting</i> parts are fully developed.	One of the <i>setting</i> parts is fully developed and the less developed part is at least addressed.	Both <i>setting</i> parts of the story are addressed but not fully developed.	Neither <i>setting</i> parts are developed.
CHARACTERS "Who" Described by behavior, appearance, personality, and character traits.	The main <i>characters</i> are fully developed with much descriptive detail. The reader has a vivid image of the characters.	The main <i>characters</i> are developed with some descriptive detail. The reader has a vague idea of the characters.	The main <i>characters</i> are identified by name only.	None of the <i>characters</i> are developed or named.

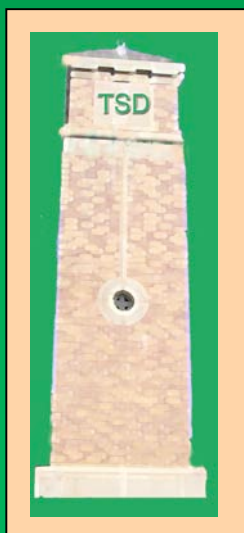
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Create your own rubrics or download rubrics created by others:

**Rubistar** - A free tool to help teachers create quality rubrics. Registered users can save and edit rubrics online for one year. You can also use rubrics created by other teachers.  
<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>

**Tech4Learning - Rubric Maker.** Use the Rubric Maker to make customized assessments for student work. You can create rubrics for primary, elementary, middle, and high school. The default text has been written to be appropriate for each level. After choosing a title and grade level for the rubric, you will be able to choose and edit a variety of existing performances, as well as create performances specific to the content your class is studying.  
[http://myt4l.com/index.php?v=pl&page\\_ac=view&type=tools&tool=rubricmaker](http://myt4l.com/index.php?v=pl&page_ac=view&type=tools&tool=rubricmaker)

**Teach-nology** - Create rubrics that can include a graphic.  
[http://www.teach-nology.com/web\\_tools/rubrics/general/](http://www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/rubrics/general/)

**Scholastic** - Use this form to create a rubric with up to ten skills.  
<http://www.sites4teachers.com/links/redirect.php?url=http://teacher.scholastic.com/homepagebuilder/rubric.htm>

**Rubrics 4 Teachers** - 54 pages of rubrics.  
<http://www.rubrics4teachers.com/archive.php>

**Rubician** - Tons of rubrics to be downloaded.  
<http://www.rubrician.com/>



#### Department Mentors:

CTE - Dan Guerra  
 HS - Michelle Halvorsen  
 MS - Sandy Kimball  
 SND - Ellen Weed  
 ECE/Elem - Terri Mittelsteadt



#### Web Sites of Interest:

TEAMS Educational Resources – hundreds of resources for the classroom:  
<http://teams.lacoe.edu/teachers/index.asp>

Cool free online tools for teachers:  
<http://www.leastern.com/workshops/cooltools/>

Free downloadable graph and grid paper:  
<http://www.incompetech.com/beta/plainGraphPaper/>

Dr. Goodword's Word Wizard Club:  
<http://www.alphadictionary.com/ww/>



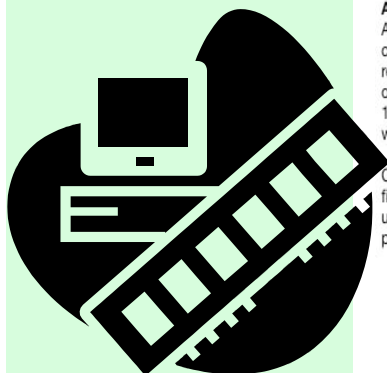
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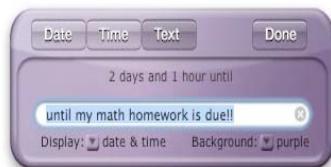
## Dashboard

Handy widgets at your command.

Did you ever wonder what that little circular black symbol was for in your dock? It's the Dashboard icon. Dashboard is the home for your Widgets. Widgets are mini-applications that let you perform common tasks and give you fast access to information from the internet. Tiger includes a suite of widgets to get you started, but you can add more from the Apple web site. <http://www.apple.com/downloads/dashboard/>

Launch Dashboard and then click the plus sign in the lower left corner, and Dashboard launches a Widget Bar displaying every available widget. Drag widgets from the Bar to the Dashboard. Once you have your widgets where you want them, just close the Widget Bar with a single click. Try customizing them. Change the color of a sticky note, check the time in a different city, choose stocks to track and view the current weather conditions anywhere in the world. Just flip a widget over by clicking its info button (the little *i* in the corner). Edit its preferences, flip it back over and watch your widget go to work. There are lots of widgets available. Don't get carried away, but give them a look and see how they can help you be more informed and productive.

### Countdown Plus



#### About Countdown Plus

A simple widget that counts down to a date and event of the user's choosing. Count downs can be set either to the day (with a daily refresh) or to the second (a live count down whenever Dashboard is open.) Times to count from can be set anywhere from 12:00 AM, 1/1/1995 to 11:59:59 PM, 12/31/2100. Dates earlier than the current c will count up rather than down.

Count Down Plus has several colorful styles and an appearance that fits in with the standard widget set built into Dashboard. It is small, unobtrusive and has a user-friendly set of options on the preference panel on the back the widget.



#### Unit Converter

Convert numerous weights and measures, including area, currency, length, speed, temperature, weight and more.

### Moon Phase



#### About Moon Phase

The Moon Phase widget displays the current lunar phase as visible from the Earth. North is at the top.

### WeatherBug Local Weather



#### About WeatherBug Local Weather

Receive live weather conditions for anywhere in the world on your Dashboard. Get detailed forecasts, radar, weather cameras, and severe weather alerts from WeatherBug's community of neighborhood weather stations.



#### World Clock

Check local time anywhere in the world. Open multiple widgets to display the time in different cities.