

“Rubrics” Presentation Notes, FAQs, and Activity Directions

Slide #	Notes
1	Distribute Handouts (slides/notepages, pp. 14 & 15 of the “Road to the Constitution” unit).
2	<u>Teach to Standards</u> – refer to p. 15 (rubric w/ Standards references) handout to illustrate. <u>Clarify Instructional Goals</u> – refer to p. 14 (rubric) handout to illustrate. Note that preparing a rubric can not only insure that you thoroughly think through an assignment, it can also clarify your instructional goals to students, parents, your principal, and other interested parties. If you share your rubric with students when an assignment is made, it should help <u>Improve Student Performance</u> by giving your students detailed directions. <u>Grade Objectively and Consistently</u> – Note that rubrics can insure that you apply the same criteria to each student’s assignment, in the same way.
Between 2 & 3	Acknowledge that there are books, websites and other sources of generic rubrics for use with different kinds of assignments, but urge teachers to create their own rubrics to guarantee that their needs are met. Why wear a one-size-fits-all suit when you can have one that’s tailor-made?
3	To create your own rubric you must first decide on some basic issues, like “odd or even?”
4	Good arguments can be made for either, but research shows that...
5	Another basic issue is “how many points?”
6	The more points you have, the more difficult it becomes to distinguish between them, but too few points may not differentiate sufficiently.
7	Perhaps the most challenging aspect of creating your own rubric is establishing your evaluation criteria, and wording them in a useful way. But using the Standards makes this a simple process.
8	Use the language of your Standards-based assessment to develop criteria – refer to p. 14 (rubric) handout to illustrate.
9	Now you have your Evaluation Criteria, but what do the points mean?
10	Again, use the Standards for guidance – rate student performance in relation to the Standards.
11	Define the levels of student achievement in terms of the Standards.
12	Since your assessment and evaluation criteria are Standards-based, why not also use the language of the Standards to determine what a performance that “Meets Standard” looks like? Refer to p. 15 (rubric w/ Standards references) handout to illustrate this point more fully. Once you have established what “Meets Standard,” use similar terminology to define “Far Below,” “Approaches,” and “Exceeds” Standard. Refer to p. 14 (rubric) handout to illustrate.
Between 12 & 13	One thing that deters some teachers from using rubrics is that rubrics can distort the scoring of an assignment by applying the same values to all criteria, but...
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15	It might be wise to caution teachers to pay close attention at this point: this is where—inevitably – some get “lost.”
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18	Use the p. 14 (rubric) handout to illustrate this point: on the handout there are 25 points at “Far Below Standard” spread out over 11 Evaluation Criteria. Their distribution reflects the relative values of those Criteria.
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Questions

The most frequently asked question relates to the vague quantitative language used in the Rubric Handout (for example, evaluation criterion #10 lists “many spelling errors,” “several spelling errors,” “few spelling errors,” “no spelling errors”). Explain that this rubric was taken from a unit designed to be disseminated as a model to many teachers, and its authors didn’t want to pre-empt the judgment of individual teachers as to how many errors might be acceptable, how many sources should be used, etc. Encourage teachers to be as specific as they feel is appropriate, given their particular circumstances and needs, when they create their own rubrics.

You may also need to go back through the “Weighting” process illustrated in slides 15 – 19.

Activity

Distribute either the “Rubric Worksheet” or the “Rubric Worksheet – Standards refs,” depending on your sense of what your audience needs. If you are working with teachers who are not particularly familiar with, or committed to, the Standards, it might be a good idea to use the “Rubric Worksheet – Standards refs.” If, however, your audience is thoroughly conversant with the Standards, then the “Rubric Worksheet” might be more appropriate. Pair teachers up – preferably by grade level – and have each pair [1] pick some History-Social Science Standards (encourage them to include “History and Social Science Analysis Skills”), [2] develop an assessment that ascertains student mastery of those Standards, and [3] start to create a rubric for that assessment, beginning with the “Evaluation Criteria.” Save 10-15 minutes at the end to allow teachers to share their own – and comment upon each other’s – work.