Assessment Using Rubrics

What are rubrics?

A rubric is an assessment tool that lists the criteria for a piece of work. It lists the things that students, either as individuals or groups, must do or include to receive a certain rating.

Why use rubrics?

Reasons include:

- When students know how their work will be evaluated and what is expected they can improve the quality of their work and revise it before handing it in.
- Assessment is more consistent when everyone knows what is expected for each category.
- Teachers have to clarify what is important or 'what counts' for a particular task.
- Rubrics provide teachers with useful feedback that assists them to plan future teaching.
- Rubrics provide students with useful feedback about their strengths and the areas that need improvement.

How do I use the rubrics in this resource?

The nine rubrics that appear on the following pages were developed using real classrooms and real student samples. The authors know the rubrics work and that students of that age respond as shown in the given criteria and as supported by the authentic student work samples.

From the nine available rubrics, choose a task that is appropriate for your students and decide if you want them to complete the task individually or in small groups.

It is strongly recommended that you discuss with and/or give students the rubric that accompanies a task before they do the task. Students then understand what is expected and how they will be evaluated and can judge and revise their work before they hand in the task.

Sometimes you will find that completed work contains criteria that do not exactly match a category. The work may contain elements that fit into two categories or elements that are not included on the rubric. In such cases, you will need to use your knowledge of the student's previous performance and work to decide how to categorize it.

How do I design my own rubric?

When you give students a task from this book (other than the ones that have an accompanying rubric) and you wish to make your own rubric, there are two ways you can do this, described below.

Method 1

1. Choose a suitable task and, after an initial class discussion to ensure all students understand it, ask them to do the task individually.
2. Collect students' responses and use them to work out categories and the criteria that put students' responses into those categories. You can do this yourself or you can ask the students to say what things they consider to be important in each category.

3. Don't tell students what category you determined their response to be in, but do make it clear to students what criteria their work needs to show in order to be assessed in each category. You either can do this through discussion or by sharing a copy of the rubric that shows the criteria for each category.
4. Alter the initial task slightly and ask students to do it again, but this time with knowledge of what they need to do to be assessed in each category. For example, an initial task may have been: *One-fourth of a bunch of flowers are pink. What might the bunch of flowers look like?* The new task could be: *One-third of the fruit in a bowl are apples. What might the bowl of fruit look like?*
5. Assess this second piece of work according to the criteria that you have decided for each category.

Method 2

1. Choose a suitable task.
2. Work out appropriate categories and criteria for the task without student input.
3. Tell students what criteria they will have to display to have their work evaluated in each particular category and provide time for them to work on the chosen task.
4. Collect students' work and assess it according to the criteria that you have decided for each category.

Reproducible Rubric Templates

Rubric templates that you may find useful when designing your own rubrics have also been included at the back of this book (pages 134 to 136).

Assessment Rubric 7

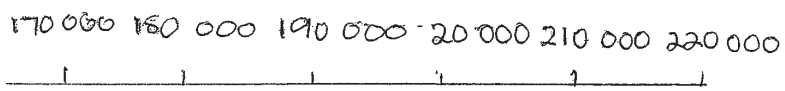
This task was given to grades 5 and 6 students. Relevant work samples are shown for each category.

Task: *Draw various number lines that each have at least six numbers marked at equal intervals and include the number 180,000.*

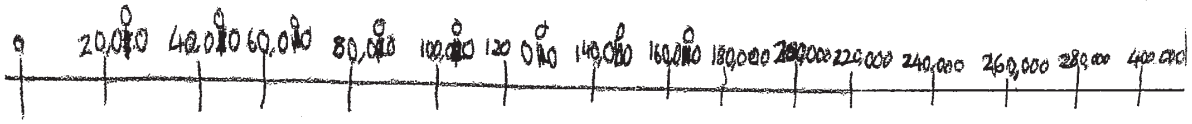
Category	Criteria
Above expectations →	Student completes two or more number lines either correctly or with minor errors. Examples of minor errors include: • writing fewer than six numbers on their line • missing a zero within or on the end of a number (See student work sample.) • adding a zero or zeroes to a number
Demonstrates clear understanding →	Student completes at least one number line either correctly or with what you consider to be a minor error. In this category, you might include students with a number interval error who have clearly shown strong counting ability in other sections of their number lines.
Demonstrates some understanding →	Student completes at least one number line but in the lines completed has more than one minor error and/or a major error. Examples of major errors include: • a number interval error • interval spacing absent or very irregular • correct numbers written but in descending order (Number lines can go in both directions from zero but positive numbers ascend to the right.) • numbers written are in ten thousands instead of hundred thousands • the numbers are written between the interval lines rather than above
Not satisfactory →	Student attempts or completes at least one number line but has more than one major error.
No understanding evident →	Student does one of the following: a) Makes no attempt. b) Draws a line but does not write numbers. c) Draws a number line with numbers that are totally incorrect.

Student Work Samples

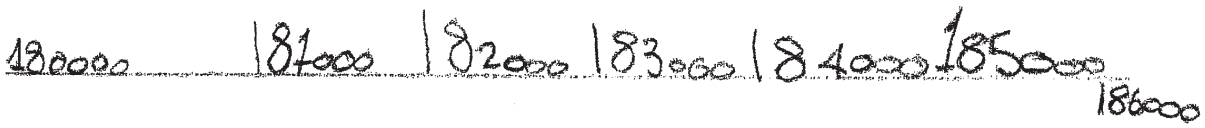
Above expectations
Student misses a zero with the number 200,000. (Shown here is one of two number lines drawn by student.)



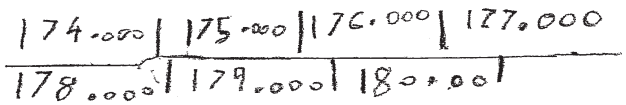
Demonstrates clear understanding
Student demonstrates strong counting ability but makes an error in the last number.



Demonstrates some understanding
Student representation of interval spacing is absent and irregular.



Not satisfactory
Student represents numbers written between interval lines and incorrectly represents numbers by using a decimal point.



No understanding
Student incorrectly represents numbers.