

## *Evaluating Student Work*

This appendix includes several sample evaluation rubrics and guidelines that were used in the studies profiled in the genre-based chapters of this book. As with the studies themselves, these rubrics are intended to provide ideas, not mandate evaluation standards. There is no one right way to make a rubric, as the variety of the rubrics shown here will attest. The methods and standards that are used in individual classrooms should derive directly from the original expectations of the study for that genre in that classroom. Readers should adapt, rearrange, revise, or rework these rubrics as appropriate for their classrooms.

### Guidelines for Developing and Using Evaluation Rubrics in the Classroom

#### *Develop Rubrics in Collaboration with Students*

In each study, teachers spent time with the students developing the rubrics that would be used for evaluation. Teachers kept a running list of the lessons that were taught and the strategies that were studied. These lists provided many of the criteria that were incorporated into the rubrics. Published texts or models of proficient reading behaviors and responses were analyzed by the classes to provide benchmarks of mastery. Work from former students was also analyzed to benchmark various levels of proficiency.

#### *Use Rubrics During the Study for Student Self-Evaluation and Progress Assessment*

Once rubrics were developed and benchmarks established, students were encouraged to assess their own work using the rubrics. Reviewing their writing or

responses to literature with specific standards in mind helped students to recognize both strengths and weaknesses and to improve their work, where appropriate, during the study itself.

### *Evaluate Reading and Writing Separately*

Both reading and writing need to be evaluated; each should be evaluated on its own. Although reading and writing within a genre go hand in hand, student achievement in one does not automatically indicate ability in another.

Suggestions follow for evaluating reading and writing.

**Reading Evaluation** Teachers in the studies used one or more of the following methods to evaluate student reading:

- *Review of reading response journals.* Students were asked to select reading response journal entries that they believed demonstrated achievement of specific evaluation criteria. These entries were then evaluated by both teacher and students against the rubric.
- *Individual exit conferences.* With journals or specific readings in hand as evidence, students sat down with teachers to discuss specific readings and their individual progress.
- *Final reading tests.* Using a previously unseen reading, students were asked to read, demonstrate the use of appropriate strategies, and respond to questions appropriate to the genre. Student work was then evaluated against the reading rubric.

**Writing Evaluation** The primary method for evaluating student writing was to read and assess the final written product within the genre study. Additionally, teachers conferred with the students individually and considered their self-evaluations when determining final rubric placement.

### *Award Grades for Both Achievement and Effort*

In addition to making a final evaluation of academic achievement, teachers regularly evaluated students' effort. Students were held accountable for turning in drafts, participating in classroom discussions, and reading and responding to common classroom texts and independently selected texts. Regular reading conferences, review of reading response journals and writer's notebooks, classroom observation, and occasional taping of classroom discussions were used to ensure that students regularly participated and put effort into the work of the study.

### Writing Rubric Memoir

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Event Selection	Event seems very significant to the author's life.	Event seems kind of significant to the author's life.	Event does not seem significant to the author's life.	Author does not seem to be aware of significance of the event.
Structure	Memoir is clearly focused on a single memorable moment. All additional text events directly support the significance of the memorable moment.	Memoir is mostly focused on a memorable moment. Some of the additional text events support the significance of the memorable moment.	Memoir has a central event. Other events are included that have some relevance to the central event but do not necessarily show its significance.	Memoir includes multiple events that are disconnected and do not reveal significance.
Style and Technique	Author consistently reveals the significance of the events through engaging details, compelling language, and a balance of action, thoughts, and dialogue.	Author sometimes reveals the significance of the events through details, compelling language, and a balance of action, thoughts, and dialogue.	Author tells the significance of events through direct statements.	No effort is made to reveal the significance of the events to the reader.
Mechanics and Presentation	No mistakes in spelling, grammar, or punctuation; neat and clean.	A few minor mistakes that do not interfere with the reader's ability to comprehend the text; neat.	Many minor mistakes. Mechanics and presentation make text somewhat difficult to read.	Many or careless mistakes and sloppy presentation make text very difficult to read.

**Comments:****Score:**

Writing Rubric for Feature Article

Criteria	Point Score (4, 3, 2, or 1)
<b>The text is informative.</b>	
Information is new or presented in a fresh way.	
There is an appropriate amount of information.	
Information comes from a variety of sources appropriate to topic.	
<b>The text is well organized.</b>	
Information is organized around a "big idea."	
Organizing structure is appropriate to topic and "big idea."	
Subtitles, topic sentences, evidence tags, and so on, are effectively used.	
<b>The text is engaging.</b>	
Stories, examples, and quotations are interesting to the reader.	
Language is carefully crafted to pull reader into text.	
<b>The features—</b>	
Support the information and the "big idea."	
Engage reader's attention and pull reader into text.	
<b>The overall work is—</b>	
Neat: text is legible, layout is clear, organization supports text.	
Mechanically correct: all or nearly all spelling and grammar are correct.	
<b>Comments:</b>	<b>Total:</b>

### Reading Rubric for Editorial

Criteria	Point Score (3, 2, or 1)
<b>Successful editorial readers will be able to—</b>	
Ask and respond to the essential editorial questions.	_____
Explain author's argument in their own words.	_____
Ask thoughtful questions of the text.	_____
Ask thoughtful questions about the issue.	_____
Assess the merits of the editorial and explain their assessment using evidence from the text.	_____
Assess their position on the issue using evidence from the editorial as well as their questions and their own background knowledge.	_____
Explain how the editorial and their interactions with the text altered their positions on the issue.	_____
<b>Comments:</b>	<b>Total:</b> _____

Reading Rubric for Fairy Tale

Criteria	3	2	1
Recognizing author’s message	Student consistently recognizes multiple layers of themes or messages in a wide range of fairy tale texts: simple picture books to complex young adult tales.	Student regularly recognizes one or more themes or messages in most fairy tale texts.	Student occasionally recognizes a single theme or message in simple fairy tale texts.
Defending understanding of author’s message with evidence	Student can consistently defend own understanding of themes or messages in the text using a range of text evidence, including analysis of characters, conflicts, symbols, and aphorisms.	Student can regularly defend own understanding of themes or messages in the text using specific text evidence.	Student can occasionally defend own understanding of theme or message in the text using general descriptions of text evidence.
Responding to author’s message	Student can consistently and thoughtfully respond to author’s message with insightful connections to own experience, other texts, and real-world situations.	Student can regularly and thoughtfully respond to author’s message with connections to own experience and real-world situations.	Student can occasionally respond to author’s message with connections to own experience.
Applying the strategies to other genres	Student shows strong evidence of being able to apply strategies learned in fairy tales to narrative texts in other genres.	Student shows evidence of learning to apply strategies learned in fairy tales to narrative texts in other genres.	Student is not yet able to effectively apply strategies learned in fairy tales to narrative texts in other genres.

Comments:

Score: