Planning for Quality 103

Part I: Why Assess the Arts?

Dr. Doug Boughton
dboughton@niu.edu

Dr. Kerry Freedman
kfreedman@niu.edu
WHY ASSESS THE ARTS?

Is assessment good for arts learning?

Why assess the arts anyway?
ASSESSMENT SKEPTICISM
Assessment per se is not the problem in the arts. The problem is inappropriate assessment!
INAPPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

- Hinders students’ understanding of progress
- Diminishes interest in arts participation
- Inhibits creative thinking
Helps students to:
• Understand their progress
• Achieve goals
• Become effective critics
• Take risks & think creatively
Helps teachers to:

• Understand their students’ progress
• Understand their teaching effectiveness
• Plan more effectively
• Provide evidence of student learning to administrators and parents
Helps parents, administrators, and other stakeholders to:

- Understand the nature of students’ learning
- Understand the value of the program
- Support funding
- Protect the program
Planning for Quality 103

Part II: Objectives, Criteria, Rubrics, and Benchmarking

Dr. Doug Boughton
dboughton@niu.edu

Dr. Kerry Freedman
kfreedman@niu.edu
Objectives → Criteria → Rubrics → Benchmarking
HOW TO WRITE A GOOD OBJECTIVE

State the **condition** (instruments, materials, context, etc.).

State the **student behavior** that demonstrates learning (make, perform, play, etc.).

State how well the student is expected to perform the behavior.
EXAMPLE OF A GOOD OBJECTIVE

Given graphite and color pencils students will use symbols to create a powerful personal message that is communicated effectively through the use of visual qualities such as line, color, texture, shape and composition.

THE CONDITION

WHAT THEY WILL DO

HOW WELL THEY WILL DO IT
HOW TO EXTRACT THE CRITERIA FROM THE OBJECTIVE

- Identify key quality or qualities expressed in the objective.
- Keep it short and simple.
OBJECTIVE: Given graphite and color pencils students will use symbols to create a powerful personal message that is communicated effectively through the use of visual qualities such as line, color, texture, shape and composition.

CRITERION: Effective visual communication of powerful personal message.
QUALITIES OF A GOOD ANALYTIC RUBRIC

- Focus attention upon qualities sought.
- Facilitate RELIABLE judgment (agreement).
- Clarify the assessment task EVEN FOR NOVICE JUDGES!
A rubric describes the highest level of performance, the lowest level of performance and one to three steps in between.
BUILDING A GOOD RUBRIC

• Each quality identified in the rubric should be referenced at each level of the rubric.
• No new qualities should be introduced at any level.
• Five levels maximum!
EXAMPLE OF A GOOD RUBRIC

CRITERION: Effective visual communication of powerful personal message.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The message is unclear and unconvincing, symbols used are inappropriate, and visual qualities are not employed appropriately to support the message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The message is understandable with limited conviction, some symbolism is appropriate, and visual qualities are somewhat supportive of the message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The message is clear and powerful, symbol use is highly appropriate and visual qualities effectively enhance the message.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**EXAMPLE OF A GOOD RUBRIC**

**CRITERION**: Effective visual communication of powerful personal message.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The <em>message is unclear and unconvincing</em>, symbols used are inappropriate, and visual qualities are not employed appropriately to support the message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The <em>message is understandable with limited conviction</em>, some symbolism is appropriate, and visual qualities are somewhat supportive of the message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The <em>message is clear and powerful</em>, symbol use is highly appropriate and visual qualities effectively enhance the message.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CREATING BENCHMARKS

• Review student work.
• Select best samples of products, recordings, or videos that best exemplify each level of the rubric.
• Make available to those who will assess the work.
For the most effective results, it is advisable to have selected expert judges discuss the rubric and agree upon best examples to use as benchmarks for each level.
USING ANALYTIC RUBRICS

Appropriate for:
• Short term projects or lessons.
• Inexperienced examiners.
• Heavily skill based lessons.
USING ANALYTIC RUBRICS

Some Cautions:

• Students may perform well in relation to one criterion and poorly on another.

• Some criteria are more important than others (Weighting may be necessary).
HOLISTIC RUBRICS

• Individual criteria are written.
• All are considered in the judgment.
• Any qualities in the work not addressed by the criteria are considered as well.
• The rubric includes broad statements addressing all qualities expressed by the criteria.
• A single score is awarded.
# EXAMPLE OF A HOLISTIC RUBRIC

Adapted from the International Baccalaureate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>HOLISTIC DESCRIPTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A very powerful collection of work has been produced which demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the conceptual and technical underpinnings of artistic expression representative of the cultural context and chosen artistic genre(s). The work overall illustrates a highly sophisticated exploration of ideas appropriate to the visual arts, and an outstanding resolution of concept, media, and technical expression.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## EXAMPLE OF A HOLISTIC RUBRIC
Adapted from the International Baccalaureate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>HOLISTIC DESCRIPTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A strong collection of work has been produced which demonstrates a very good understanding of the conceptual and technical underpinnings of artistic expression representative of the cultural context and chosen artistic genre(s). The work illustrates a comprehensive exploration of ideas appropriate to the arts, and a good resolution of concept, media, and technical expression in the majority of works.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Example of a Holistic Rubric

Adapted from the International Baccalaureate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>HOLISTIC DESCRIPTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A reasonable amount of work has been produced which demonstrates an adequate understanding of the conceptual and/or technical underpinnings of artistic expression representative of the cultural context and chosen artistic genre(s). The work illustrates a reasonably focused exploration of ideas appropriate to the arts, and a good resolution of concept, media, and technical expression in many works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL</td>
<td>HOLISTIC DESCRIPTORS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A small amount of work has been produced which demonstrates a limited understanding of the conceptual and/or technical underpinnings of artistic expression. The work illustrates a limited or diffused exploration of ideas appropriate to the arts, and a limited ability to resolve concept, media, and technical expression.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## EXAMPLE OF A HOLISTIC RUBRIC
Adapted from the International Baccalaureate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>HOLISTIC DESCRIPTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>An inadequate amount of work has been completed, and is lacking in evidence of technical skill or relevant knowledge of artistic expression.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
USING HOLISTIC RUBRICS

Appropriate for:

• Long term projects, residencies, or ensemble performances.

• Summative Assessments.
Some Cautions:

• Complex and demanding.

• Requires experienced examiners.
Implementing Quality 201
Promoting Creativity through Assessment, Risk-taking, Evidence and Tools Beyond Rubrics

Dr. Doug Boughton
dboughton@niu.edu
Dr. Kerry Freedman
kfreedman@niu.edu
Creativity can be promoted (or inhibited) through assessment!

Assessment that rewards creative pursuit is likely to produce creative outcomes.

Assessment that rewards predictable outcomes is likely to inhibit creative outcomes.
NOTHING WILL STOP YOU FROM BEING CREATIVE SO EFFECTIVELY AS THE FEAR OF MAKING A MISTAKE.

- JOHN CLEESE
RISK TAKING RESEARCH: A MULTI-NATIONAL STUDY

• Research conducted in USA, Ireland, The Netherlands.
• Do high school students understand the notion of risk taking?
• Under what conditions are they most likely to “risk”? 
Arts students do understand the nature and significance of risk taking as part of the creative process!

“Mostly when I take risks it’s because I feel the piece is missing something, and there is more I can add. Sometimes it’s because the piece looked too plain and planned when most of my art is loose. Other times I just wanted to enjoy what I was making and doing something to help me feel that”
“At home it is not a finished piece that will contribute towards my school exam results so I feel more freedom to express myself through mediums I haven’t used before”.

“Because your artwork at home is for yourself only and will not be judged or graded”.
UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS DO KIDS TAKE RISKS?

At the beginning of a project.

“When I am not working on a finished piece of art there is more freedom. When you are in the middle of the piece and you have already put in a lot of time and effort you are less inclined to take a chance because you don’t want to mess up.”
UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS SHOULD KIDS TAKE RISKS?

When it is NOT for the exam.

“If you are not going to be graded on it. Particularly for the leaving CERT you aren’t very likely to take any risks as your future does depend on it, like points are in the picture.”
IMPLICATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

• Don’t assess everything students do.
• Value students’ interests.
• Reward risk taking through assessment.
ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE
ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

- Finished performances/pieces
- Portfolios - audio/video/visual
- Reflective (working) diaries
- Check lists
- Tests and Quizzes
- Interview notes
- Self-assessments
ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE: THE PORTFOLIO

- A collection of work over time
- Provides evidence of intellectual footsteps
- Contains reflective component
Of all things in the world, people are the most precious.

Codres

masses →

masses growing

longer later

concept: supreme irony of Mao's saying vs. population boom. I don't want the words to be to conspicuous. I like the idea of the transparent Mao.
I did some research on the use of replication by modern Chinese artists to satirize the cultural revolution. After the Tiananmen Square demonstration in 1989, many artists left China, but those who stayed took new artistic paths, using satire and irony to express disapproval of political, cultural, and social issues. Many reused propaganda images of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).

Yu Youhan
“The Waving Mao” 1990
Acrylic on canvas

Many artists merged Pop style with revolutionary imagery. Here the profile of Mao is cut out and decorated with brightly-colored floral designs. These designs are common in traditional Chinese folk art. The artists’ comments on the iconic reverence the Chinese people have toward Mao, their “Great Helmsman” that still somewhat exists. (Compare to pg 57-58)
ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT
EVIDENCE: THE CHECKLIST

• Good for technical skill.
• Provides quantitative evidence.
• Not necessarily authentic.
ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT
EVIDENCE: TESTS AND QUIZZES

• A test is a response to a task.
• Useful for specific investigations.
• Is not necessarily multiple choice.
ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT
EVIDENCE: INTERVIEW/VIVA VOCE

• An interview or oral exam.
• Useful to determine understanding.
Can provide unexpected insights.
COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

• Electronic Benchmarks
• Portfolios
• Performances & Exhibitions
• Reports including assessment methods and evidence
ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO RESOURCES

Nicholas Leonard (Elementary)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSYDGLm641E&feature=youtu.be

Karen Popovich (Secondary)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rprHh4X5cNk&feature=youtu.be