Creating Rubrics
for SEL

How to Create Rubrics for SEL

INTRODUCTION:

A rubric is an assessment tool used to evaluate and improve student learning. In SEL class, rubrics are especially helpful for assessing skills such as: managing emotions, listening to instructions, working in groups, resolving conflicts, solving problems, and so on. Rubrics help teachers communicate expectations to students and students to keep track of their progress. Research indicates that when used appropriately, rubrics help students perform better and experience less stress because they know what is expected. Also, if a number of teachers happen to be grading the same students, rubrics can help improve the consistency of scores.

Rubrics are created in a tabular form and consist of:

- A summary description of the skill to be evaluated *(such as a student decision-making)*
- The criteria to be evaluated *(row headings)*
- A rating scale showing different levels of performance *(column headings)*
- A description of each performance level *(each box of the table)*

CASEL Rubric - Responsible Decision-Making

Select a white box to learn more or highlight specific boxes.

	Exemplary (4 points)	Proficient (3 points)	Progressing (2 points)	Emerging (1 points)
Identifying Problems	Consistently demonstrates an ability to identify warning signs of lurking problems	Often demonstrates an ability to identify warning signs of lurking problems	Sometimes demonstrates an ability to identify warning signs of lurking problems	Rarely demonstrates an ability to identify warning signs of lurking problems
Analyzing Situations	Consistently demonstrates an ability to analyze important situations	Often demonstrates an ability to analyze important situations	Sometimes demonstrates an ability to analyze important situations	Rarely demonstrates an ability to analyze important situations
Solving Problems	Consistently demonstrates an ability to solve personal or social problems	Often demonstrates an ability to solve personal or social problems	Sometimes demonstrates an ability to solve personal or social problems	Rarely demonstrates an ability to solve personal or social problems
Evaluating and Reflecting	Consistently demonstrates an ability to evaluate the effects of choices on self and others	Often demonstrates an ability to evaluate the effects of choices on self and others	Sometimes demonstrates an ability to evaluate the effects of choices on self and others	Rarely demonstrates an ability to evaluate the effects of choices on self & others
Ethical Responsibility	Consistently makes responsible choices based on the highest ethical standards	Often makes responsible choices based on the highest ethical standards	Sometimes makes responsible choices based on the highest ethical standards	Rarely makes responsible choices based on the highest ethical standards

Highlighter   Highlighter   Highlighter   Highlighter   Clear

Ideally, teachers should evaluate the validity, reliability, and fairness of any rubric they might consider using.

1. **Validity**– the rubric measures what it is intended to measure
2. **Reliability** – scores accurately and consistently represent students' ability and/or knowledge over time
3. **Fairness**– the rubric can be equally understood by and applied to all students regardless of race, ethnicity, or background

It is important to note that while an assessment can be reliable without being valid, it cannot be valid without being reliable. For example, if an assessment shows consistent results over time it is reliable; however, unless it measures what it is intended to measure, it isn't valid. Accordingly, inviting colleagues and students to review and comment on the rubric(s) is helpful to this process due to the fact that most teachers are not technically trained to ensure a rubric's reliability or validity.

TYPES OF RUBRICS:

- **Holistic** – For this type of rubric, a single score is provided based on the teacher's overall perception of the quality of a student's performance. Holistic rubrics are useful when only one element is being evaluated, with different levels of performance described within that one element *(example below)*. Although the holistic rubric is designed for quick scoring, it does not provide separate scoring or detailed feedback on different aspects of a performance. Students just get the one overall score that summarizes the entire presentation or performance.

Self Management (Holistic Rubric)

Select a white box to learn more or highlight specific boxes.

	Exemplary (4 points)	Proficient (3 points)	Progressing (2 points)	Emerging (1 points)
Self Management	Consistently demonstrates an ability to control oneself in all areas of scholastic life	Usually demonstrates an ability to control oneself in all areas of scholastic life	Sometimes demonstrates an ability to control oneself in all areas of scholastic life	Rarely demonstrates an ability to control oneself in all areas of scholastic life

Highlighter   Highlighter   Highlighter   Highlighter   **Clear**

NOTES   DRAW   1. Self Management (Holistic Rubric)   TOOLS   EXIT

- **Analytic** – For this type of rubric *(example below)*, scores are given for several different criteria, providing much more detailed feedback to students about their performance. Also, scoring tends to be more consistent across all students and graders. For these reasons, it is advisable that most music rubrics be constructed using the analytic model.

SCORING PERFORMANCE LEVELS

Regardless of the type, all rubrics utilize a scale containing three, four, or five levels that indicates different degrees of success on a particular assignment. The numeric scale is typically coupled with a short descriptor, and both are situated at the top of the rubric grid in the column headings. *(Note: The middle column is shown only as a reference. Again, many scales contain only four levels.)*

Some examples are:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Needs Work	Progressing	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
Poor	Minimal	Sufficient	Good	Excellent
Not yet	Emerging	Approaching Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard

CREATING RUBRICS FOR SEL

Recommendations:

- **Begin with the Final Result in Mind** – Define the purpose of the activity to be evaluated. Prior to constructing a rubric, teachers should review objectives associated with a given assignment and decide which are the most important. Have skills, content, conceptual knowledge, and expectations been clearly articulated? And have class activities, projects, and assignments been working towards the intended outcomes? The rubric can only function in an effective manner if goals have been made clear and student work has been progressing towards them.

- **Decide which type of rubric to use** – The kind of rubric you choose will depend on the nature of the assignment or performance, the intended learning outcomes, and the amount and kind of feedback you would like students to receive. It will also depend on whether the task involves a formative (in process) or summative (final) assessment. An example of a formative assessment would be weekly quizzes. An example of a summative assessment would be a final project. For the most part, SEL instructors will select the analytic rubric template for creating rubrics. This will allow them to score and give detailed feedback on several criteria.

- **Delineate the Criteria** – Teachers should review the learning outcomes and assessment parameters to determine specific criteria to be covered by the rubric. Consider what knowledge or skills will be required for successful completion and create a list of criteria that can assess outcomes across all aspects of the performance, assignment, or whatever is being evaluated. Criteria should be distinct, clearly described, and measurable, and ideally not exceed three to six in number. For example, if evaluating student self-management, "sets goals" would be a valid criterion, as opposed to "enjoyable experience." We can measure whether or not a student is setting goals, but we cannot objectively measure an enjoyable experience because "enjoyment" is a subjective element. Therefore, criteria such as "controlling impulses" or "being organized" are all elements that can be measured.

- **Determine the Rating Scale** – To measure different levels of performance, teachers need to specify how the scale will be set up. Most scales include numbers (1–4) with short written descriptors (example below). If you want your scale header to include descriptions, choose words that not only mirror the numeric designations, but also avoid punitive language. To encourage students, descriptors such as "Progressing" or "Emerging" would be more effective than terms such as "Poor" or "Bad." But whatever rating scale you choose, ensure that it is clear by reviewing it in class ahead of time and by addressing any questions students might have.

- **Write Descriptions for Each Performance Level of the Rating Scale** – Include a short detailed description across from each assessment – criterion outlining performance expectations for each level *(example follows)*. If desired, add an example of an ideal performance within each level. Some teachers like to write descriptions for the highest and lowest levels first, finding it easier to fill in the other levels once the highest and lowest levels are spelled out. Yet, whatever the approach across the rubric, descriptions should be parallel, observable, and measurable. In this example, the descriptions reflect parallel language, observable actions (takes perspective of others), and measurable results (number of times perspective-taking behavior is displayed).

	Exemplary (4 points)	Proficient (3 points)	Progressing (2 points)	Emerging (1 points)
Perspective Taking	Consistently demonstrates an ability to take the perspective of others	Usually demonstrates an ability to take the perspective of others	Sometimes demonstrates an ability to take the perspective of others	Rarely demonstrates an ability to take the perspective of others

- **Test and Revise the Rubric** – If possible, test the rubric before implementation, either on your own or by enlisting other teachers who can test the rubric as well. After evaluating students using the rubric, teachers might grade the same activity using a different method to ensure consistency. Teachers can then consider any discrepancies, share the results with each other, and revise the rubric as needed. They can also compare the rubric with ones they have used in the past, to once again evaluate the consistency of results and make any needed adjustments.

  Grading rubrics should be handed out on the **first day** of SEL class, special project, assignment, or grading period in order to make grading expectations clear! **The rubrics should fit on a single page** so that all elements of the rubric (including criteria and detailed descriptions) are viewable at a glance. Also, upon the completion of an SEL class/course, the teacher should hand out surveys so students can anonymously share opinions and feelings about the efficacy of the rubric(s). Teachers can then revise rubrics (if needed) based on student performance and input.

- **Consider Adding Self-Assessment Rubrics** – To enhance the overall effectiveness of your rubrics, consider allowing students to assess their own work. So students know what to expect, hand out the rubric you will use to assess students' skills ahead of time. Then if possible after the lesson, sit down with each student and compare your assessment (rubric) with the student's rubric and discuss any discrepancies. To help with this process, consider videotaping student behavior so students are better able to objectively assess their own skills.

REFERENCES

- Andrade, H. (2005). Teaching With Rubrics: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly. College Teaching.

- NCCAS Music Model Cornerstone Assessment: General Music Grade 3-5

- Reddy, Y.M., & Andrade, H. (2010). A review of rubric use in higher education. Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education.

- Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, Brown University

- Yale Center for Teaching and Learning: Creating and Using Rubrics

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Cox, G.C., Brathwaite, B.H., & Morrison, J. (2015). The Rubric: An assessment tool to guide students and markers.

- Creating and Using Rubrics – Carnegie Mellon Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovation

- Creating a Rubric – UC Denver Center for Faculty Development

- Grading Rubric Design – Brown University Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning

- Moskal, B.M. (2000). Scoring Rubrics: What, when, and how? Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation 7(3).

- Quinlan A.M., (2011). A Complete Guide to Rubrics: Assessment Made Easy for Teachers of K-College, 2nd edition, Rowman & Littlefield Education