Why Are Rubrics so Important?

Rubrics help students, parents and teacher identify what quality work is. Students can judge their own work and accept more responsibility of the final product. Rubrics help the teacher to easily explain to the student why they got the grade that they received. Parents who work with their children also have a clear understanding of what is expected for a special project. Ask for a rubric to be sent home with project directions or other assignments such as writing.

How Do Rubrics Benefit Students?

- When students are given the rubrics prior to the task, the students’ success is not left purely to chance. Since expectations and requirements are clearly identified on rubrics, students can understand where they need to work on to improve their results.

- A well-designed rubric allows teachers to compare a student’s performance or product to what it should be rather than to another student’s performance or product.

- Teachers and students using rubrics can create a positive atmosphere for evaluation together. Both parties are encouraged to go beyond rightness and wrongness to include identifying the strengths and/or weaknesses in project or performance that were well done.

- Rubrics make it possible for students to assess their own work, and make it possible for peers to assess one another’s work. During the task, students use the rubric as a checklist to assess their product and track their progress. Rubrics are excellent tools to promote peer assessment, where students learn how to give and receive constructive feedback.

How Do Rubrics Benefit Parents?

- Parents can feel more confident and comfortable helping students with homework because they know exactly what is expected of their child.

- Knowing what is being graded in a project or piece of work creates opportunity for discussion on “what counts” between teachers, students, and parents.

- Rubrics provide good discussion points about what it takes to meet or exceed a standard, and what further learning needs to take place.

Why use rubrics?

Many experts believe that rubrics improve students' end products and help increase learning. When teachers evaluate (or grade) assignments and projects, they know what makes a good final product and why. When students receive rubrics beforehand, they understand what is expected and how they will be evaluated, and they can prepare accordingly. Parents can understand what is expected and why certain grades are given.
Rubrics

What is a rubric?

- A rubric is a “guide” that states what is expected in an assignment or project, and helps to evaluate (or grade) a student’s performance.
- A rubric is an assessment tool used to measure students’ work.
- A rubric is a working guide for students and teachers, usually handed out before the assignment begins in order to get students to think about what is expected of their work.
- A rubric helps parents understand why a certain grade is given to their child’s work.

An Example:
Chocolate Chip Cookie Rubric

The cookie elements being measured are:

- Number of chocolate chips
- Texture
- Color
- Taste
- Richness (flavor)

4 - Delicious:
Chocolate chip in every bite
Chewy
Golden brown
Home-baked taste
Rich, creamy, high-fat flavor

2 - Needs Improvement:
Chocolate chips in 50 percent of the bites taken
Texture is either crispy/crunchy from overcooking or doesn’t hold together because it is at least 50 percent uncooked
Either dark brown from overcooking or light from undercooking
Tasteless
Low-fat content

3 - Good:
Chocolate chips in about 75 percent of the bites taken
Chewy in the middle, but crispy on the edges
Either brown from overcooking, or light from being 25 percent raw
Quality store-bought taste Medium fat content

1 - Poor:
Too few or too many chocolate chips
Texture resembles a dog biscuit
Burned
Store-bought flavor with a preservative aftertaste – stale, hard, chalky Non-fat contents

A Rubric Table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Chips</th>
<th>Delicious</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate chip in every bite</td>
<td>Chips in about 75% of bites</td>
<td>Chocolate in 50% of bites</td>
<td>Texture either crispy/crunchy or 50% uncooked</td>
<td>Too few or too many chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture</td>
<td>Chewy</td>
<td>Chewy in middle, crisp on edges</td>
<td>Texture resembles a dog biscuit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color</td>
<td>Golden brown</td>
<td>Either light from overcooking or light from being 25% raw</td>
<td>Either dark brown from overcooking or light from undercooking</td>
<td>Burned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taste</td>
<td>Home-baked taste</td>
<td>Quality store-bought taste</td>
<td>Tasteless</td>
<td>Store-bought flavor, preservative aftertaste – stale, hard, chalky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richness</td>
<td>Rich, creamy, high-fat flavor</td>
<td>Medium fat contents</td>
<td>Low-fat contents</td>
<td>Non-fat contents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>