

From Objectives to Rubrics

“[A]n important key to direct assessment on classroom work is *making criteria very clear and explicit in writing.*”¹ A rubric expresses the criteria (which stems from course objectives) desired succinctly to both instructor and student. A rubric clarifies what is expected of the student, and facilitates grading for the instructor. Rubrics are assessment devices that are useful to instructors *and* students.

Rubrics for oral presentations help instructors decide what kinds of qualities they are looking for in a student presentation.

- Review course objectives. What should students be able to do at the end of the course?
- Make a list of desired qualities/variables that make a good presentation and correspond with course objectives.
- Develop a rubric from the list of variables.
- Share the rubric with your students. This demystifies the grading process- and prevents problems students may have with the instructor’s assessment of their presentation. Take 10-15 minutes of class time and explain the components of each “level” of the rubric so that students know exactly how they will be assessed and how they can obtain high marks.
- Alternately, use the rubric as a point of discussion in class. Ask your students to contribute to the criteria defining what makes a good oral presentation.

Many resources indicate that **purpose, audience, research, organization and outline, visuals, rehearsal, delivery, and answering questions** were typical categories that students need to consider in giving oral presentations. Consequently, these could be used as general categories in a rubric or evaluation form. By presenting students with a clear rubric or by helping them design their own, teachers can both introduce the oral presentation assignment and clarify expectations of the assignment.

¹ Barbara Walvoord, *Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education*, (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2004) 19.