

Rubric Design

Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL)
NYU Shanghai

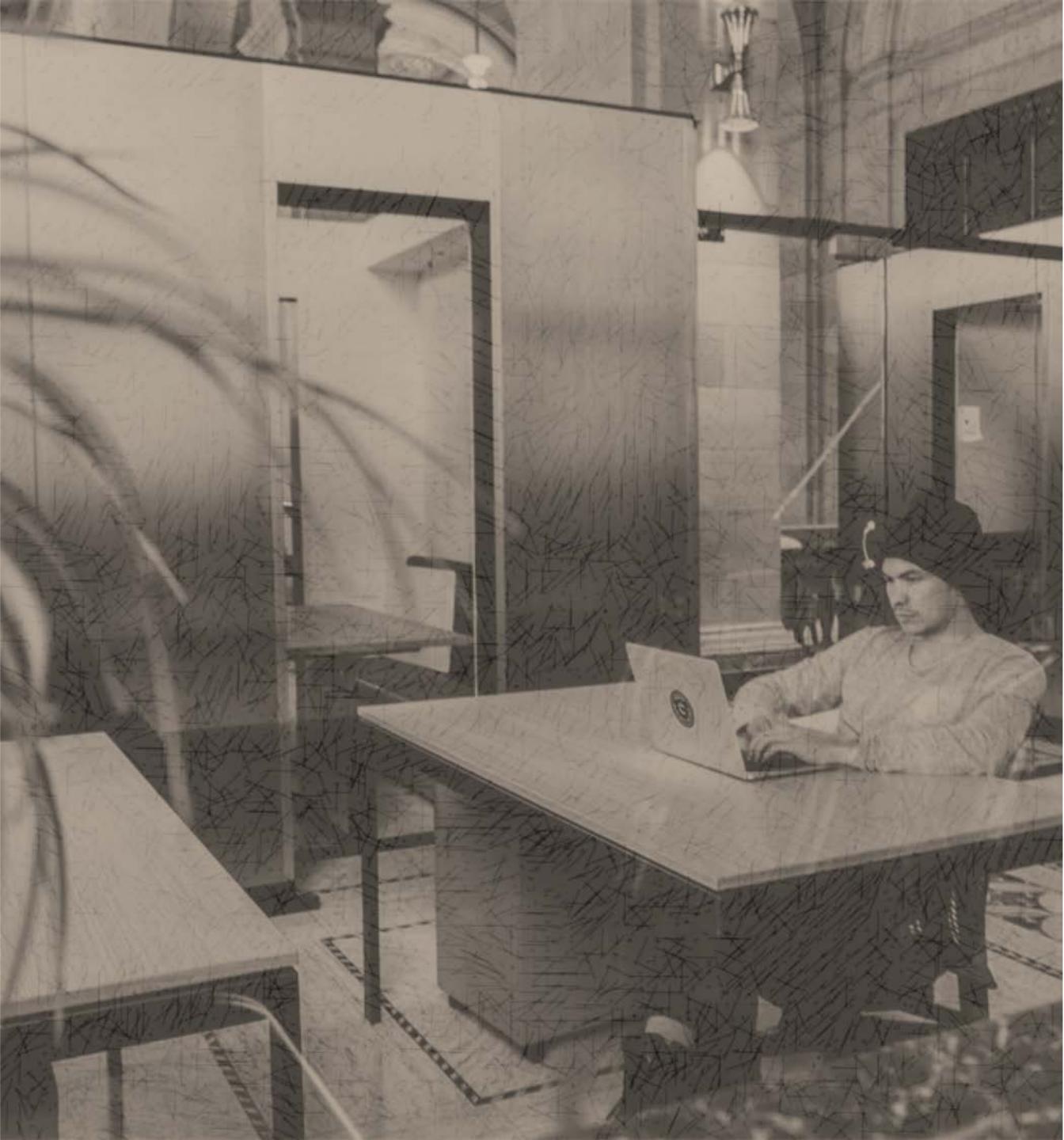


上海纽约大学
NYU SHANGHAI

What is a rubric?

- An assessment tool that **describes** and **differentiates** levels of **quality** as they relate to expected **outcomes**.
- Typically constructed in a **grid-form** (but not always)





Why use a rubric?

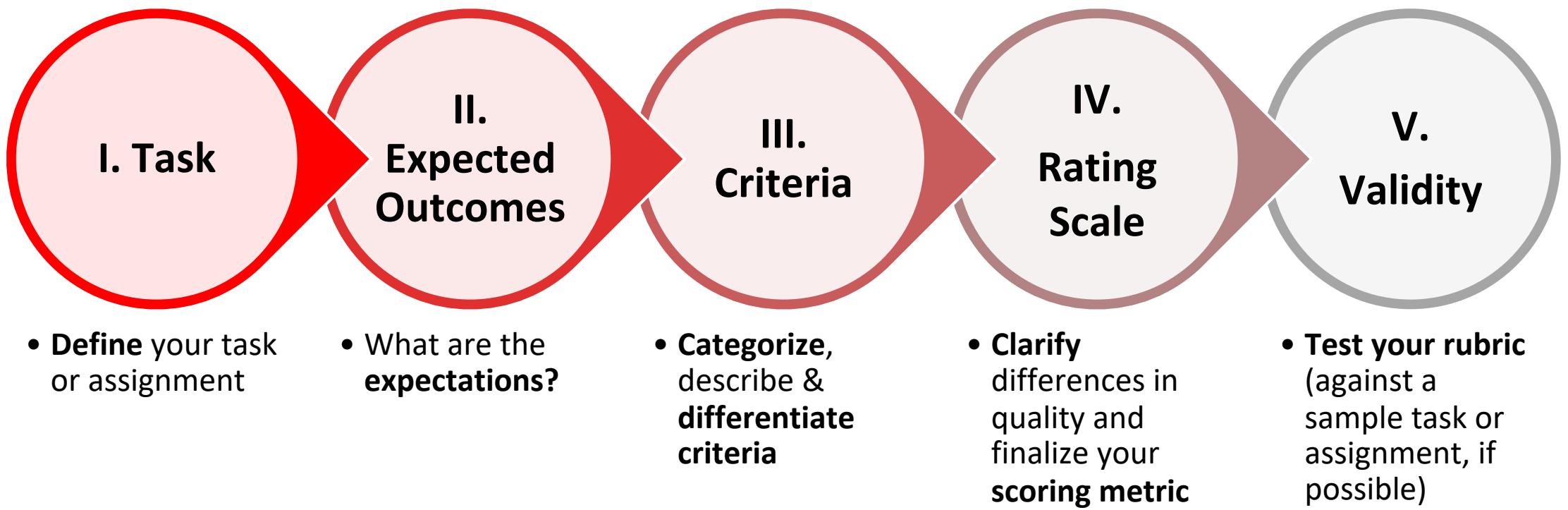
- Adheres to tenets of assessment: **validity, fairness & reliability**
- Clearly **delineates expectations** for students
- Provides **consistency** for students, instructors, and graders
- Offers students **feedback** and a **path to progress**
- **Reduces grading burden**
- Builds and maintains **standards of trust** between students and instructors

Rubric Example 1 (Analytic)

The diagram illustrates the structure of an analytic rubric. It features a large central table with five columns labeled A, B, C, and D. The rows represent different criteria: Organization, Language, Delivery, Supporting Material, and Central Message. Each cell in the table contains a detailed description of the quality level for that specific criterion and scale point. Three large, bold arrows point from the text labels to their corresponding parts in the table: a downward-pointing arrow labeled 'Scale' points to the column headers A, B, C, and D; a right-pointing arrow labeled 'Criterion' points to the row labels Organization, Language, Delivery, Supporting Material, and Central Message; and a left-pointing arrow labeled 'Descriptor' points to the detailed descriptions within the table cells.

	A	B	C	D
Organization	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable within the presentation.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is intermittently observable within the presentation, but the other criteria of enough quality that communicability is not impeded.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is not clearly observable within the presentation, but the other criteria of enough quality that communicability is not impeded.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is not clearly observable within the presentation, and some communicability is lost because of this.
Language	Language choices are thoughtful and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices are mundane and commonplace and partially support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices are unclear and minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is not appropriate to audience.	Language choices do not support the effectiveness of the presentation, but overall message is still discernible.
Delivery	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation interesting, and speaker appears comfortable.	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation understandable, and speaker appears tentative.	In one or two places, delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) detract from the understandability of the presentation, and/or speaker appears uncomfortable and/or perhaps somewhat less prepared as should be expected at this point.	In more than two places, delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) detract from the understandability of the presentation, and speaker appears highly uncomfortable and/or unprepared.
Supporting Material	Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that generally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic. Evidence of student's own research is at the highest level to be expected at this point.	Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that partially supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic. Some good evidence of student's own research is present.	Insufficient supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make reference to information or analysis that minimally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.	A noticeable absence of supporting material (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities), but at least one reasonable attempt is made.
Central Message	Central message is clear and consistent with the supporting material.	Central message is basically understandable but is not often repeated and is not memorable.	Central message can be deduced, but is not explicitly stated in the presentation.	Central message not explicitly stated in the presentation and difficult to deduce, but intelligent points are made here and there.

The Rubric Design Process





I. Task



I. Task

- Clearly **define** your task or assignment
- Align your task with learning outcomes & course goals
- Ensure your **directions** are clear & easy to follow
- **Walk-through** your task or assignment
- **Troubleshoot & refine**



II. Expected Outcomes



II. Expected Outcomes

Questions to ask yourself:

- What are the **learning outcomes**?
- Do LOs **align** with the **target task**?
- What are the **ideal expected outcomes** for this task?
- Other considerations?



III. Criteria

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Criteria also refer to 'evidence'. You are creating **categories** to define evidence of mastery/competency.

Q1: How might you begin to **differentiate** categories across each criterion?

Q2: '**Holistic**' vs '**Analytical**' criteria?



III. Criteria (Holistic Rubric)

- General
- Easier to grade
- Can be useful as a formative assessment
- Descriptors & criteria are merged
- May be overwhelming at times for students to follow
- Less focused feedback
- Can feel more arbitrary to students



III. Rubric Example 2 (Holistic)

Research Paper (Holistic Rubric)

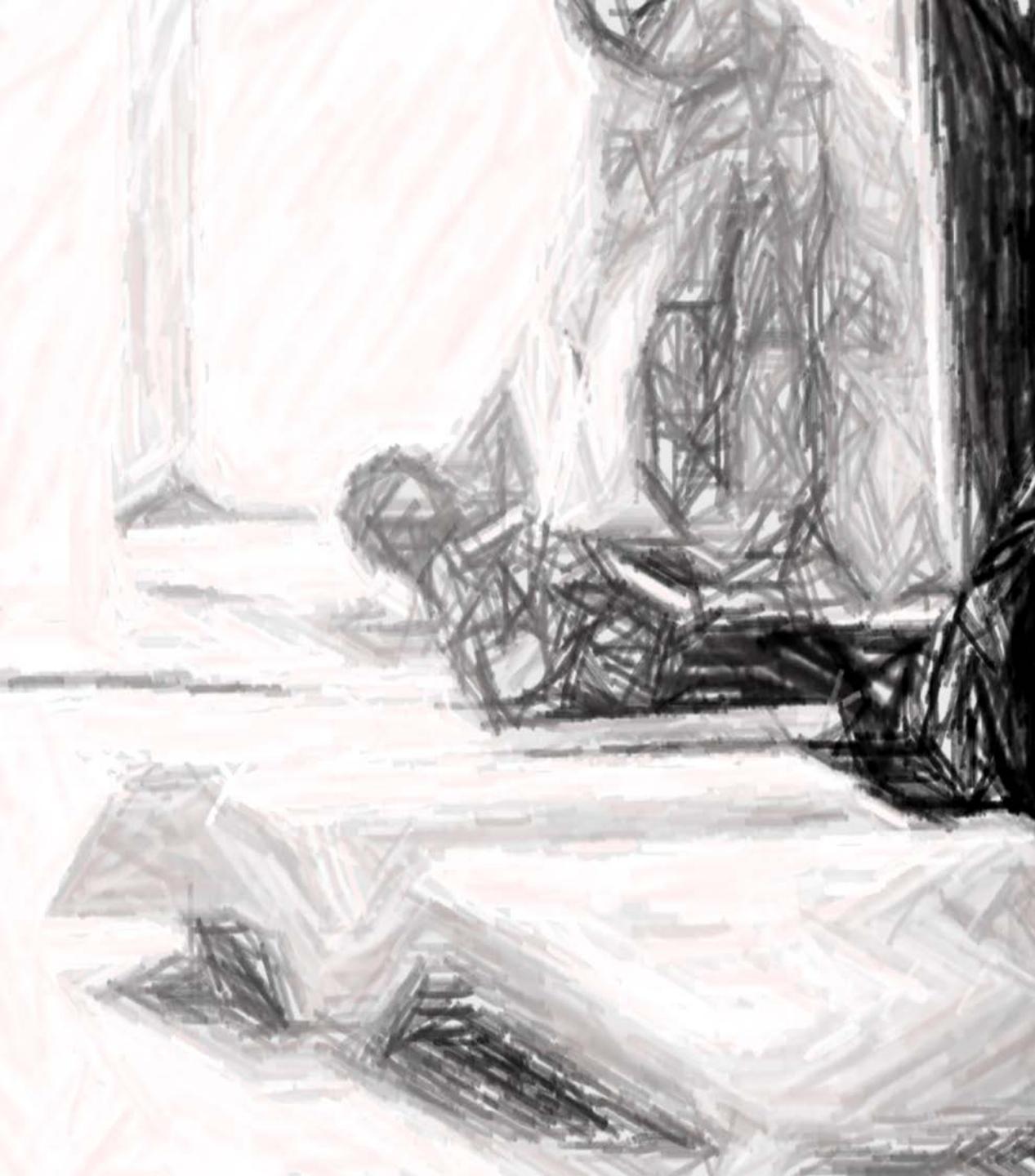
Score	Criteria
4 Excellent	Writing demonstrates a strong, coherent argument with substantial supporting research. Thesis statement/argument is clearly stated, complex and original, and the writing does not spend excessive time on any one point of development at the expense of developing other points in the body of the paper. Writing is also error-free, without ambiguity, and reads smoothly, creatively, and with a purpose.
3 Satisfactory	Writing demonstrates a coherent argument with supporting research. Thesis statement/argument is stated, verges on the complex and original, and the writing shows accuracy and balance in developing body points, but may exhibit occasional weaknesses and lapses in correctness. Writing also has some errors and ambiguities, yet does read clearly and coherently.
2 Below Expectations	Writing demonstrates a moderately clear argument with basic supporting research attempted. Thesis statement/argument is faintly stated and/or expected and not confident, and the writing is inconsistent in terms of balance in developing body points, and exhibits weaknesses and lapses in correctness. Writing also has many errors and ambiguities, and may read confusingly and incoherently.
1 Unsatisfactory	Writing demonstrates an incoherent argument with little relevant supporting research. Thesis statement/argument is simplistic, unoriginal, and/or not present at all, and the writing is unbalanced in developing body points, weak, and incomplete. Writing also has numerous errors and ambiguities, and reads confusingly.

III. Criteria (Analytical Rubric)

- More specific hierarchical descriptors
- Results are more focused
- Clearer feedback for students
- Easier for students to see areas for improvement

(See [Example 1](#))





Practice:

- 1) Take a task/assignment from your course
- 2) Write down **3-5 basic criteria** you consider **essential** for assessing **mastery** and/or **competency**.
- 3) Are they **distinct** from each other?
If not, then combine or rewrite.

A collage of three images. The left image shows a man with curly hair wearing headphones, working on a laptop. The middle image shows a woman with long hair singing into a microphone. The right image shows a man wearing headphones, looking down at a device. The overall theme is music and technology.

IV. Rating Scale

IV. Rating Scale & Example descriptors

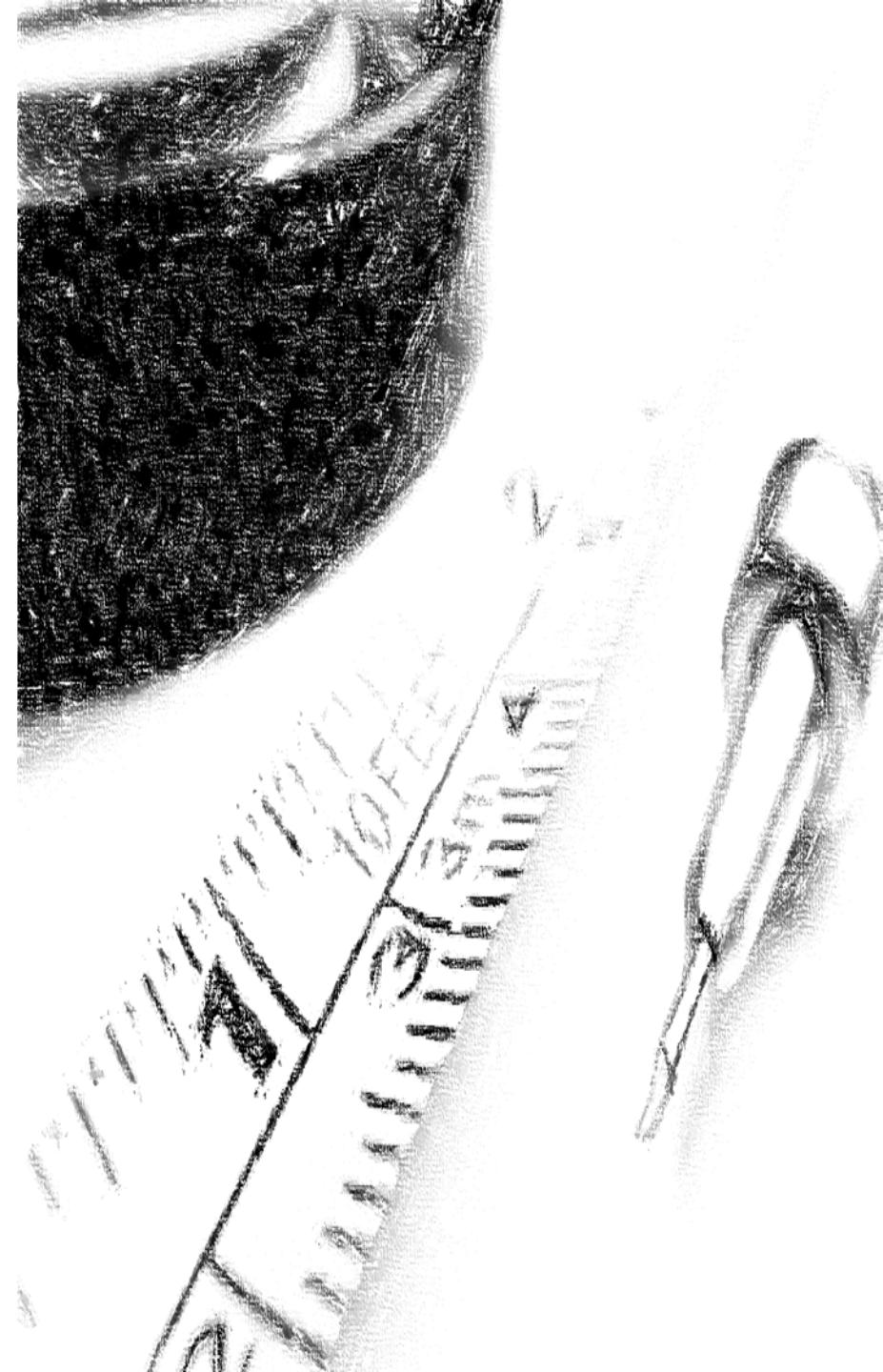
Let's look at one criterion and the leveled descriptors from an analytical rubric example:

	A	B	C	D
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Notice how the language stays consistent except for **key phrasal differences**. This phrasing needs to be clear to you as well your students, as it warrants the justification for a specific grade or score.

IV. Rating Scale / Practice

- 1) Using your set of criteria, **choose one criterion** and write a **descriptor** that represents the **highest level** of **quality/expectations**.
- 2) **Differentiate** your **descriptors** within the criterion using specific language. This will act to justify one level from another level such as 'A' vs 'B' vs 'C' etc.
- 3) Check your descriptors again – can any be improved?
- 4) Return to your remaining criteria and repeat for each criterion.





V.
Validity



V. Validity

- Validity refers to a test that accurately measures what it intends to measure.

Q1: How can you check for validity?

Q2: What other aspects of assessment must also be considered?

A collage of three images. The left image shows a man with curly hair working on a laptop. The middle image shows a woman singing into a microphone. The right image shows two men in a recording studio, one wearing headphones and the other with glasses, looking at a screen.

So you've made your rubric....

VI. Norming

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Keys to norming:

- 1) **Intra**-rater reliability
- 2) **Inter**-rater reliability
- 3) Norming 'sessions'
- 4) Access to scored samples



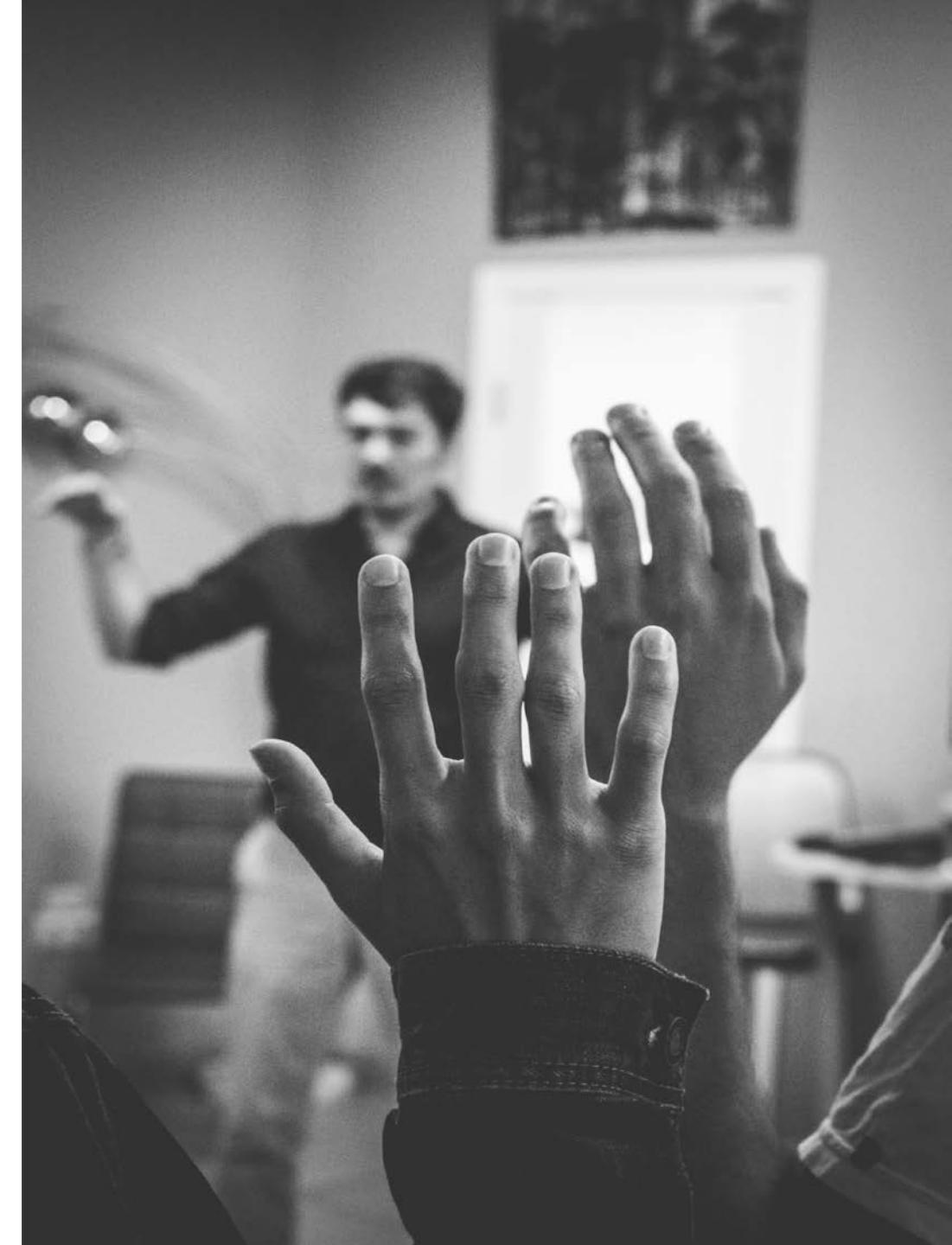


Not done yet-

VII. Building Trust

VII. Building Trust With Students

- 1) Aim for **transparency & consistency**
- 2) Seek '**student buy-in**'
e.g., provide the rubric ahead of time
- 3) Allow students **opportunities** to use the rubric
- 4) Make your language **clear & easily understood**
- 5) Be **humble** – revisit rubrics & ask graders/peers for feedback



Resources

<https://sites.reading.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2018/10/UoR-Rubrics-guide-18-2.pdf>

<https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1375&context=pare>

<https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/assesslearning/rubrics.html>

https://serc.carleton.edu/sp/library/qr/rubric_design.html

<https://www.sps.nyu.edu/homepage/academics/center-for-academic-excellence-and-support/Teaching-and-Learning.html>

<https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/teaching-resources/course-design/classroom-assessment/grading-criteria/designing-rubrics>