

# How to Grade for Learning

## Grading Stories: Now is the Time to Fix Broken Grades

WSWHE BOCES  
SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY  
APRIL 29, 2010

*Presented by*  
*Ken O'Connor*  
*With thanks and apologies to Roland Barth*  
*Assess for Success Consulting*  
[kenoc@aol.com](mailto:kenoc@aol.com)  
416 267 4234

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**“I have become fascinated with the power of storytelling as a form of personal and professional development.**

...

**People tell stories about events that have left an impression on their lives.**

...

**By listening, one places value in the experience of another.”**

Roland S. Barth, *Lessons Learned*, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, 2

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**“Craft knowledge is the collection of wisdom and insights one accumulates by showing up on the job. If ways can be found to unlock, celebrate, and exchange craft knowledge, how much better each of us can perform our work. Storytelling is one way.”**

Roland S. Barth, *Lessons Learned*, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, 2

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# How to Grade for Learning

“War stories are *descriptions* of practice.

...

Craft knowledge is description of practice accompanied by *analysis* of practice.

...

By honoring storytelling in the workplace we can facilitate the revelation and exchange of craft knowledge.”

Roland S. Barth, *Lessons Learned*, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, 2

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## *Cruising Rule 1*

Any story worth telling is worth telling often.

## *Working Rule 1*

Every story - and every storyteller has value.

Roland S. Barth, *Lessons Learned*, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, 2 and 3

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## *Grading Issues*

- Achievement (only)
- Evidence (quality)
- Calculation
- Learning (support)

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# How to Grade for Learning

## Issues

Story 1 - E - assessment quality  
- inappropriate/hidden criteria

Story 2 - L - student involvement  
- no process  
(professional misconduct?)

Story 3 - L - purpose of tasks/sources of information  
- practice or performance?

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## *Cruising Rule 6*

Nondiscussibles may be discussed only  
within swimming distance of the home port.

## *Working Rule 6*

When nondiscussibles are discussed,  
progress will be made. (. . . but remember  
“progress always involves risk. You can’t  
steal second base and keep your foot on  
first.”)

Roland S. Barth, *Lessons Learned*, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, 18 and 20

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“Nondiscussibles are sufficiently  
important that they get talked about  
frequently. But they are so laden with  
taboos and fearfulness that these  
conversations take place only in the  
restrooms, at the water fountain, during  
the carpool home, or at the dinner table.”

Roland S. Barth, *Lessons Learned*, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, 19

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# How to Grade for Learning

**“I believe that the health of an organization is inversely proportional to the number of nondiscussibles: the fewer the nondiscussibles the healthier the culture; the more the nondiscussibles, the sicker it is.”**

Roland S. Barth, *Lessons Learned*, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, 19

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**“Every work culture has commonly accepted practices, so familiar and often so politically charged, that taking them on seems to approach sacrilege - or suicide.”**

Roland S. Barth, *Lessons Learned*, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, 19

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**“The grading box is alive and well, and in some schools and classrooms, it is impenetrable. “**

Patterson, William “Breaking Out of Our Boxes,” *Kappan*, April 2003, 572

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# How to Grade for Learning

[zhengfranklin](#) (Washington Post blog, July 27, 2008) wrote:

Before I start, I would like readers to know that I am currently a rising junior at TJ (Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Fairfax County, VA) so my views will have some bias in it (although I will do my best to minimize it).

For example, I recently finished an AP chemistry course. This class was coated with extra credit, and with a 0.5 boost on GPA's, my teacher was basically handing out either a 4.0 or 4.5 for chemistry. Another AP chemistry teacher is very strict about extra credit, and rarely gives any. His course is equally challenging to my course. I got a B with extra credit, without it, I would have a C or D.

I consider myself a below par TJ student. Every class I have taken, I've always been below the class average (I even took Mrs. Gecan's anthropology class, anyone you ask will tell you that many people take that class for the easy A. I got a B+). My current GPA is around 3.4 and I have to admit, at least half of my sophomore grades are inflated by at least a whole letter. If I had Matt's (the TJ student with a 2.8 GPA) combination of teachers, I would have been likely to be in his place. The large amount of chance factors heavily on ones GPA.

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**“Fair does not mean equal; yet,  
when it comes to grading,  
we insist that it does.”**

Patterson, William “Breaking Out of Our Boxes,” *Kappan*,  
April 2003, 572

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**“Those who experience . . . success gain the  
confidence needed to risk trying. . .**

**Students who experience failure lose confidence  
in themselves, stop trying, and . . . fail even more  
frequently.**

**As it turns out, *confidence* is the key to student  
success in all learning situations.”**

Stiggins, R., *Student-Involved Classroom Assessment*,  
Merrill Prentice Hall, 2001, 43

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**“the primary purpose of . . . grades . . . (is) to communicate student achievement to students, parents, school administrators, post-secondary institutions and employers.”**

Bailey, J. and McTighe, J., “Reporting Achievement at the Secondary School Level: What and How?”, in Thomas R. Guskey, (Ed.) *Communicating Student Learning: ASCD Yearbook 1996*, ASCD, Alexandria, VA, 1996, 120

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## The Essential Question(s)

**How confident are you that the grades students get in your school are:**

- accurate
- consistent
- meaningful, and
- supportive of learning?



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**Grades are broken when they -**

- include ingredients that distort achievement
- arise from low quality or poorly organized evidence
- are derived from inappropriate number crunching, and when they
- do not support the learning process.

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# How to Grade for Learning

It is time to say that it is no longer acceptable to have 'broken grades' in standards-based systems where the objective is proficiency for all.

Grading is not - and should never have been - a private practice. Teachers are not independent contractors - schools/districts must have policies and procedures and demand that all teachers follow regardless of their personal preferences/beliefs.

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Givens - quality assessment  
- student involvement

## SIX MUSTS/DEMANDS

- standards-based - *no single subject grades*
- performance standards - *no %*
- achievement separated from behaviors - *late, missing, academic dishonesty, attendance*
- summative only - *no mark, comment only*
- *formative assessment*
- more recent emphasized - *some, not all evidence*
- number crunching - *no means, no zeros*

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**1. Base grades on, and provide grades for, the intended learning goals, which means very limited use of single subject grades.**

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## Summary of Evidence for CO Mathematics

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessments ►	Achievement Evidence						Strengths, Areas for Improvement/Observations	S u m m a r y
	10/1 Test	10/15 PA	11/7 PA	11/18 PA	12/8 PA	12/17 Test		
▼ Strands								
Number Sense	3 (17/ 20)	3		3	3	3 (17/ 20)		3
Algebra					1			NA
Data Collection and Analysis	2 (15/ 20)		4	2	2	2 (15/ 20)		2
Geometry	4 (19/ 20)	4	4	1		4 (19/ 20)		4
Problem Solving and Communication		1	2	3	4	4 (20/ 20)		4
Computational Techniques		3						NA
Comments:								



# How to Grade for Learning

**“The principal limitation of any grading system that requires the teacher to assign one number or letter to represent . . . learning is that one symbol can convey only one meaning.**

**. . .**

***One symbol cannot do justice to the different degrees of learning a student acquires across all learning outcomes.”***

Tombari and Borich, *Authentic Assessment in the Classroom*,  
Prentice Hall, 1999, 213

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## **2. Focus on Outcomes (Standards)**

**2.1 All grading procedures will be linked to curricular goals/standards and/or outcomes as determined by Manitoba Education, C & Y.**

**2.3 When tracking student results, teacher's grade books will indicate student achievement by goal or outcome as opposed to by the method of assessment.**

Source: Sunrise (MB) School Division, Grading Guidelines 6-12

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**1.1 Teachers grade and report student progress and achievement based on Florida standards/benchmarks therefore the Sunshine State Standards are the grading variables.**

**1.3 Teachers measure student attainment of standards and assign grades based on predetermined, consistent grading procedures in the same courses and across grade levels.**

Source: Bay District Schools, FL  
Classroom Assessment Guidelines (CAG)

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**2. Use performance standards with a limited number (2-7) of clearly described levels which means no use of a percentage scale.**

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**“Performance standards specify ‘how good is good enough.’ They relate to issues of assessment that gauge the degree to which content standards have been attained. . . . They are indices of quality that specify how adept or competent a student demonstration should be.”**

Kendall, J., and R. Marzano, *Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education*, First Edition, McREL, 1997, 16-17

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For classroom assessment  
Performance Standards  
=  
OVERALL descriptors of 3 - 7 levels  
*which form the base for*  
SUBJECT/ scoring tools (rubrics, etc)  
TASK +  
SPECIFIC work samples (exemplars)  
+  
commentaries on the work samples

Adapted from *New Standards Sampler*, National Center on Education and the Economy, [www.ncee.org](http://www.ncee.org)

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## LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT Edmonton Catholic Elementary Schools



EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

A  
C  
C  
E  
P  
T  
A  
B  
L  
E  
  
P  
E  
R  
F  
O  
R  
M  
A  
N  
C  
E

### LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT COMMENT CODE

#### Demonstrates Excellent Achievement

This level of achievement describes assessment evidence that demonstrates **exemplary** performance in relation to the learner outcomes from the Alberta programs of study. The evidence is characterized by an **in-depth** understanding of subject-area content, and it demonstrates **excellence** in the knowledge and skills at this grade level at the time of the report card.



#### Demonstrates Proficient Achievement

This level of achievement describes assessment evidence that demonstrates **skilled** performance in relation to the learner outcomes from the Alberta programs of study. The evidence is characterized by a **solid** understanding of subject-area content, and it **proficiently** demonstrates the knowledge and skills at this grade level at the time of the report card.

#### Demonstrates Minimal Achievement

This level of achievement describes assessment evidence that demonstrates **limited** performance in relation to the learner outcomes from the Alberta programs of study. The evidence is characterized by a **basic** understanding of subject-area content, and it demonstrates **minimally acceptable** knowledge and skills at this grade level at the time of the report card.

#### Demonstrates Insufficient Achievement

This level of achievement describes assessment evidence that demonstrates **unsuccessful** performance in relation to the learner outcomes from the Alberta programs of study. The evidence is characterized by an **inadequate** understanding of subject-area content and it demonstrates **insufficient** knowledge and skills for this grade level at the time of the report card.



*Teachers use this level of achievement to screen for children not working at grade-level outcomes.*

**The purpose of a report card is to show how each of the key learner outcomes selected for a subject area has been assessed for a student.**

**Assessment is based on a level of achievement and measured against a standard of performance for that particular key learner outcome.**

# How to Grade for Learning

**Wow!**

**Got it!**

**Nearly there!**

**Oh no! Oops!**

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Practices related to the determination of individual achievement levels include:

- Relating them to criterion-referenced standards
- Determining them using level descriptors specific to the subject. . . .

(Ontario) Ministry of Education achievement charts and MYP criteria are aligned to form level descriptors for Grades 7-8, Grades 9-10 and Grades 11-12 which are used for grading purposes.

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Source: Branksome Hall Assessment Policy

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**3. Limit the student attributes included in grades to *Individual ACHIEVEMENT*, which means no penalties and no bonuses.**

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## Sum total of everything students do in school/classroom

### Select a representative sampling of what students do

#### Process

Assessment of students using observation over time

- e.g. • learning logs  
• journals  
• portfolios  
• teacher observations/anecdotal notes

Assessment tasks

- e.g. • performances  
• presentations  
• tests/quizzes/examinations  
• culminating demonstrations

#### Attitude/Learning Skills/Effort

- enjoys learning
- questions/investigates
- class participation
- works independently
- completes assignments
- completes research/projects
- cooperates with others
- respects others
- resolves conflicts
- attendance, punctuality
- reflects and sets goals

#### ACHIEVEMENT

Reporting Variables  
(Desirable Behaviors)

Report  
Card

Grading Variables  
(Learning Goals

O'Connor, K., *How to Grade for Learning*, Second Edition, Corwin, 2002, 42

Standards)

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Ministry of Education

## Provincial Report Card, Grades 9–12

Semester	Reporting Period	Date
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STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_ OEN: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_ Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ School Council Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL:	Telephone:	BOARD:	Email/Website:
Address:	Fax:	Address:	

Courses	Reporting Period	Percentage Mark	Course Median	Credit Earned	Learning Skills and Work Habits						Comments Strengths/Next Steps for Improvement	Attendance	
					Responsibility	Organization	Independent Work	Collaboration	Initiative	Self-Regulation		Classes Missed	Times Late
Course Title: Course Code: Teacher: <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> SHSM	First												
	Final										Teacher requests an interview <input type="checkbox"/>		
Course Title: Course Code: Teacher: <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> SHSM	First												
	Final										Teacher requests an interview <input type="checkbox"/>		
Course Title: Course Code: Teacher: <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> SHSM	First												
	Final										Teacher requests an interview <input type="checkbox"/>		
Course Title: Course Code: Teacher: <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELD <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> SHSM	First												
	Final										Teacher requests an interview <input type="checkbox"/>		

Principal's Signature ➡ \_\_\_\_\_

To parents/guardians and students: This copy of the report should be kept for reference. The original or an exact copy has been placed in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR) folder and will be retained for five (5) years after the student leaves school.  
To view provincial curriculum documents, visit the Ministry of Education's website: [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca).

## Learning Skills and Work Habits

E – Excellent    G – Good    S – Satisfactory    N – Needs Improvement

### Responsibility

- Fulfills responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment.
- Completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines.
- Takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour.

### Organization

- Devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks.
- Establishes priorities and manages time to complete tasks and achieve goals.
- Identifies, gathers, evaluates, and uses information, technology, and resources to complete tasks.

### Independent Work

- Independently monitors, assesses, and revises plans to complete tasks and meet goals.
- Uses class time appropriately to complete tasks.
- Follows instructions with minimal supervision.

### Collaboration

- Accepts various roles and an equitable share of work in a group.
- Responds positively to the ideas, opinions, values, and traditions of others.
- Builds healthy peer-to-peer relationships through personal and media-assisted interactions.
- Works with others to resolve conflicts and build consensus to achieve group goals.
- Shares information, resources, and expertise, and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions.

### Initiative

- Looks for and acts on new ideas and opportunities for learning.
- Demonstrates the capacity for innovation and a willingness to take risks.
- Demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning.
- Approaches new tasks with a positive attitude.
- Recognizes and advocates appropriately for the rights of self and others.

### Self-Regulation

- Sets own individual goals and monitors progress towards achieving them.
- Seeks clarification or assistance when needed.
- Assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs, and interests.
- Identifies learning opportunities, choices, and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals.
- Perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges.

**RESPONSIBILITY**  
**WORKS INDEPENDENTLY**  
**INITIATIVE**

**ORGANIZATION**  
**COLLABORATION**  
**SELF-REGULATION**

# How to Grade for Learning

**“Warm demanders** first establish a caring relationship that convinces students that the teacher believes in them and has their best interests at heart. . . .

**On the basis of this relationship, warm demanders relentlessly insist that all students perform required academic work and treat the teacher and their peers with respect.”**

Abstract of Bondy, E., and D. D. Ross. "The Teacher as Warm Demander," *Educational Leadership*, September 2008.  
Available on line at [www.ascd.org/](http://www.ascd.org/)

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## Firm due dates

1. Few days prior to due date - “full court press”
2. Day after due date some or all of:
  - removal from extra-curricular activities
  - completing the work under supervision - activity period, lunchtime, after school, Saturday morning work session
  - Last resorts - removal from class  
- in-school suspension

Source: Branksome Hall

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## Dealing with Late Work

1. Support/Clarity
2. Behaviors/Learning Skills
3. Communication
4. Consequences

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# How to Grade for Learning

**“The use of an I or “Incomplete” grade is an alternative to assigning zeros that is both educationally sound and potentially quite effective.”**

Guskey and Bailey, *Developing Grading and Reporting Systems for Student Learning*, Corwin Press, 2001, 144

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**Grades should not be inflated by the use of extra credit or bonus points but students should always be able to provide evidence that they are achieving at a higher level. It is not about the *quantity* of points, it is about what the evidence shows about the *quality* of achievement.**

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**Academic dishonesty is a behavior which should have behavioral consequences which will be indicated in the school/district Code of Conduct.**

**Assessment evidence needs to be accurate so we need untainted evidence, thus the assessment consequence is ‘DO IT AGAIN HONESTLY.’**

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# How to Grade for Learning

Academic dishonesty and plagiarism will be treated as a behavioral issue and not included in a student's mark.

When an incident has been discovered;

- a) the student will be required to re-submit the work in question in order to demonstrate mastery of the skills and content.
- b) the format and timing of the submission will be at the discretion of the teacher and will likely result in a loss of discretionary time privileges for the student.

Students who are found to have committed academic dishonesty on more than one occasion will have more severe consequences applied in a manner commensurate with the incident(s) in question. A clear statement of policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty will be added to the student code of conduct.

Source: SMUS Draft Policy

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**Absence has no place in determining grades; absences - excused and unexcused - should be reported separately. For the determination of grades the only issue is have they provided enough evidence whether they were present every day or rarely.**

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**“No student's grade should depend on the achievement ( or behavior) of other students.”**

Source: William Glasser

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# How to Grade for Learning

Separate achievement from other dispositions such as effort and participation.

Grades should be based solely on achievement, with all other behaviors (e.g., student attendance, effort, ability, participation, improvement, and attitude) reported separately.

Grades should be based on individual, not group, achievement.

*Source:* Grand Island Public Schools Grading & Reporting Guidelines and Practices

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**4. Grade performance, learn from practice which means comment only no mark formative assessment and homework has little or any place in grades.**

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“The ongoing interplay between assessment and instruction, so common in the arts and athletics, is also evident in classrooms using practices such as nongraded quizzes and practice tests, the writing process, formative performance tasks, review of drafts and peer response groups. The teachers in such classrooms recognize that ongoing assessments provide feedback that enhances instruction and guides student revision.”

Jay McTighe, “What Happens Between Assessments,” *Educational Leadership*, Dec. ‘96-Jan. ‘97, 11

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# How to Grade for Learning

- “Provide risk-free (that is, ungraded, formative assessment) opportunities . . .
- Provide timely and specific feedback to students on their assessments - not just a letter or number grade.”

Almeida, L., in Reeves, D (Ed) *Ahead of the Curve*, Solution Tree, Bloomington, IN, 157

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Summative assessments are used as the basis for determining levels. Practices related to summative assessment include:

- Gathering information about the results of learning at the end of a period of learning.
- Limiting the number of summative tasks in a grading period to *no more than five and no less than three*.

Source: Branksome Hall Assessment Policy  
(where they have *two* grading periods.)

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## Purposes of Homework

**PREPARATION** - introduces material presented in future lessons. These assignments aim to help students learn new material when it is covered in class.

**PRACTICE** - to reinforce learning and help students master specific skills.

**EXTENSION** - asks students to apply skills they already have in new situations.

**INTEGRATION** - requires students to apply many different skills to a large task, such as book reports, projects, creative writing.

Source: NCLB website - *Homework Tips for Parents*

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# Formative

SUBJECT AP Language

PAGE 1

PERIOD BEGINNING 9:00

PERIOD ENDING 10:00

CLASS                     

TIME                     

NAME	Resource Mktg	Comp. Work	A 1st Week					B 2nd Week					C 3rd Week					D 4th Week					E 5th Week				
			M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
1			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	III	I	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	III	II	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9		I	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	I		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13	III	III	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14	II	I	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
16			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
17			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
18	II		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
19			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
20			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Standards-based  
grade book - aligned  
with Principle 4 (all)

\* These pages should  
be viewed next to  
each other, as they  
would appear in a graduation

Tally marks for  
Selected Goal 3 Stats  
indicate infractions  
against accepted standard.

Developed by Kara Davis, Arnold High School

## Sample Assessment Plan

### Formative Assessment for Unit 1

TASK	METHOD(S)	STRATEGY(IES)	SCORING TOOL	ASSESSOR
ROLE PLAY Practice(s)	Performance Ass't	Performance	Rubric	self/peer
QUIZ(ZES)	Paper and Pencil	Selected Response	Marking Scheme	Teacher
BROCHURE Draft	Performance Ass't	Product	Rubric	peer
BROCHURE Near Final	Performance Ass't	Product	Rubric	self/peer

### Summative Assessment for Unit 1

TASK	METHOD(S)	STRATEGY(IES)	SCORING TOOL	ASSESSOR
ROLE PLAY	Performance Ass't	Performance assessment	Rubric	Teacher
TEST(S)	Paper and Pencil	Selected & Constructed Repo	Marking Scheme	Teacher
BROCHURE	Performance Ass't	Product	Rubric	Teacher

**Source: O'Connor, K. *A Repair Kit for Grading*, ETS, 2007, 102    52**

# How to Grade for Learning

**5. Grade in pencil, which means new evidence replaces old evidence and grades cannot be determined only numerically.**

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The key question is, “What information provides the most accurate depiction of students’ learning at this time?” In nearly all cases, the answer is “*the most current information.*” If students demonstrate that past assessment information no longer accurately reflects their learning, that information must be dropped and replaced by the new information. Continuing to rely on past assessment data miscommunicates students’ learning.

Guskey, Thomas R. (Editor), *Communicating Student Learning: The 1996 ASCD Yearbook*, ASCD, Alexandria, VA, 1996, 21

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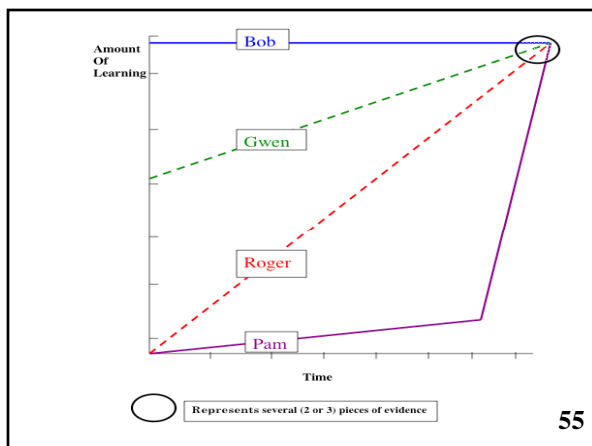
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# How to Grade for Learning

## Conditions for ‘Second Chance’ Assessment

*Always* - evidence of ‘correctives’

*Optional* - opportunity cost

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Teachers are to ensure that a student’s mark adequately reflects his/her most recent (or best) mastery of particular outcomes. Where a disparity or anomaly in student performance over time is evident, a dialogue should take place between teacher and student and a follow-up plan created if necessary. When a student misses a particular assignment or test, grades of zero should not be factored into the calculation – rather, a remediation/alternate plan should be set in place involving the student, teacher, parent and the grade advisor (see #2). Where a student has demonstrated significant improvement in terms of mastery of particular outcomes through the year, the most recent evidence should be heavily weighted in the calculation of the final grade. In summary, teachers are to be empowered to use their professional judgment in calculating final grades, for “fair, does not always mean equal.”

Source: SMUS Draft Policy

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**6. Don’t be a mean teacher -  
“crunch” numbers carefully, if  
at all, which means no zeros, no  
percentages, and  
acknowledging that grading is  
primarily an exercise in  
professional judgment.**

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# How to Grade for Learning

**“Data should be used to INFORM  
*not* determine decisions”**

Management Consultant, The Hay Group,  
personal conversation, January 2002

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**Alberta Written Test for Drivers License**

17/20 85% required to pass

*First test*  $\frac{10}{20} = 50\%$

*Second test*  $\frac{10}{20} + \frac{17}{20} = \frac{27}{40} = \frac{13.5}{20} = 67.5\%$

*Third test*  $\frac{10}{20} + \frac{17}{20} + \frac{18}{20} = \frac{45}{60} = \frac{15}{20} = 75\%$

*Fourth test*  $\frac{10}{20} + \frac{17}{20} + \frac{18}{20} + \frac{19}{20} = \frac{64}{80} = \frac{16}{20} = 80\%$

*Fifth test*  $\frac{10}{20} + \frac{17}{20} + \frac{18}{20} + \frac{19}{20} + \frac{20}{20} = \frac{84}{100} = \frac{16.8}{20} = 84\%$

*Sixth test*  $\frac{10}{20} + \frac{17}{20} + \frac{18}{20} + \frac{19}{20} + \frac{20}{20} + \frac{20}{20} = \frac{104}{120} = \frac{17.3}{20} = 86.5\%$

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### Issues with the Mean

Assessment in Order	Karen	Alex	Jennifer	Stephen
Assessment #1	0	63	0	0
Assessment #2	0	63	10	0
Assessment #3	0	63	10	62
Assessment #4	90	63	10	62
Assessment #5	90	63	100	63
Assessment #6	90	63	100	63
Assessment #7	90	63	100	90
Assessment #8	90	63	100	90
Assessment #9	90	63	100	100
Assessment #10	90	63	100	100
Total	630	630	630	630
Mean	63%	63%	63%	63%
Median	90%	63%	100%	63%

**Figure 6.1**

O'Connor, K., *How to Grade for Learning*, Second Edition, Corwin, 2002, 142

# How to Grade for Learning

## The Effect of Zeros

	<u>5 pt scale</u>		<u>101 point scale</u>		
4	(A)	90-100	11	95	95
3	(B)	80-89	10	85	85
2	(C)	70-79	10	75	75
1	(D)	60-69	10	65	65
0	(F)	<60	60	0	50
<u>2</u>	(C)			<u>64</u> (D)	<u>74</u> (C)

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Grades across content areas and within grade levels will be determined using a body of evidence of achievement for each student. Teachers should look at patterns and trends in student achievement to determine the most consistent level of achievement (4-3-2-1 or A-B-C-D).

If using measures of central tendency...

- Consideration may be given to a student's mode and median scores, rather than a primary reliance on average score (mean).
- If a mean (average) is used, then the other measures of central tendency should be reviewed to ensure that a true picture of academic achievement is determined/reported.
- When learning is developmental and will grow with time and repeated opportunities, emphasis should be placed on the more recent evidence rather than giving equal weight to the total body of evidence.

Source: Bremerton School District Grading Procedures #8

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An ASSESSMENT PLAN should start with the

- *desired results* (learning goals, standards, etc), *then* the
- *summative assessments* that are going to be used to determine whether the student 'knows and can do,' *next* should be the
- *diagnostic assessment(s)* that are going to help to determine the what and how for teaching and learning, *then* should come the
- *formative assessments* that are going to help students achieve the learning goals and that are going to cause the teacher to adjust teaching and learning activities.

- homework, quizzes **preparing for** tests
- practices **preparing for** performances
- first draft, second draft **preparing for** product(s)

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# How to Grade for Learning

A vital part of the ASSESSMENT PLAN is

*how much* evidence and

*which* assessments

are critical to being able to determine student achievement/grades, e.g., there will be *9 summative assessment* opportunities, of which *at least six*, (including the *third, fifth and ninth*) must be done.

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## Fixes for ingredients that distort achievement

1. Don't include student behavior (effort, participation, etc) in grades; include only achievement.
2. Don't reduce marks on 'work' submitted late; provide support.
3. Don't give points for extra credit or use bonus points; seek evidence of a higher level of achievement.
4. Don't punish academic dishonesty with reduced grades; apply behavioral consequences and reassess.
5. Don't consider attendance in grade determination; record only absences.
6. Don't include group scores in grades; use only individual achievement evidence.

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## Fixes for low quality or poorly organized evidence

7. Don't organize information around assessment methods; use standards/learning goals.
8. Don't assign grades using inappropriate or unclear performance standards; provide clear descriptions.
9. Don't assign grades based on student's achievement compared to other students; use absolute standards.
10. Don't rely on evidence from assessments that fail to meet standards of quality; check against standards.

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# How to Grade for Learning

## Fixes for inappropriate number crunching

11. Don't be a 'mean' teacher relying on 'the average' - consider other measures of central tendency.

12. Don't include zeros as a reflection of lack of achievement or as punishment; use alternatives, such as Incomplete.

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## Fixes to support the learning process

13. Don't use information from formative assessments and practice to determine grades; use only summative evidence.

14. Don't accumulate evidence over time and use all of it when learning is developmental and will grow with time and repeated opportunities; emphasize recent achievement.

15. Don't leave students out of the grading process- they can play key roles that promote achievement; involve students.

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For grades that are:

Accurate	fixes	1 2 3 4 5 6 9 10 11 12
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Consistent	fix	8
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Meaningful	fix	7
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Supportive of learning	fixes	13 14 15
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# How to Grade for Learning




Grades

should come from

a  
body  
of  
evidence

+ performance + guidelines  
standards

i.e., professional judgment  
NOT  
just number crunching



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Enduring Understandings

1. There are no *right* grades only *justifiable* grades.
2. Nothing really changes till the grade book and the report card both change.

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