

### **Key Terms for Types of Rubrics**

*Analytic Rubric* – a rubric that separates criteria (a.k.a., traits or dimensions) into distinguishable groupings so that a separate score can be given for each one. The advantage is that it helps highlight strengths and weaknesses so teachers can use the assessment formatively. See *Holistic Rubric*.

*Checklist* – an inventory of items that allows for verifying whether they’ve been done or not. Checklists do not describe levels of quality and, therefore, some people do not consider them to be rubrics.

*Criteria* – the recognizable categories of performance of work product that are to be evaluated, also known as *dimensions* or *traits*. The criteria are usually based on the academic content standards or on desirable student dispositions towards learning and classroom participation.

*Descriptors* – the phrases that explain how to distinguish one level of quality from other levels. The substance of the descriptors can be drawn from content standards and can be modified into “kid-friendly language” as appropriate.

*General Rubric* – a rubric that contains descriptors expressed in terms that allow it to be used for more than one specific task or assignment. The descriptors may be specific to certain learning targets or objectives, but they do not refer to any of the particular characteristics of a given task. General rubrics are recommended for performance assessment tasks with higher-order learning targets (i.e., reasoning proficiency, performance skill, and product-creation tasks). See *Task-Specific Rubric*.

*Holistic Rubrics* – a rubric that combines all criteria and yields only one overall score. Holistic rubrics tend to help raters move faster when evaluating large numbers of assessments. See *Analytic Rubric*.

*Indicators* – sub-units of criteria. Some rubrics break criteria down into an extra layer to organize them logically. The terms *indicator*, *trait*, *criteria*, and *descriptor* are frequently used differently and/or somewhat interchangeably among different authors and creators of rubrics.

*Rubric* – an organized set of written criteria that guide the evaluation of a student’s work product or performance. It helps define various levels of quality to give students clear targets for achievement and to allow for comparison of the product or performance to a desired level of quality.

*“The bottom line is that all types of scoring guides are useful if you attend to the learning target to be assessed and the purpose for the assessment. However, do not use a task-specific rubric when a general rubric would better fit the learning target and purpose, and do not use a holistic rubric when an analytic one would be a better fit.”*

- Judith Arter and Jan Chappuis (2006)