

Score 3-0 Comments	Category and Percent of Grade	Grade Rubric
	<p>Summary Paragraph – 10%                      Stating purpose of the memo, why important, and your recommendation, clearly written for intended audience</p> <p>Pro Points – 20%                      A complete list, clearly stated, supported with your own analysis and references</p> <p>Con Points – 20%                      A complete list, clearly stated, supported with your own analysis and references</p> <p>Graph – 10%                      Informative, correctly labeled and referenced in text, connected to objective</p> <p>Analysis/Calculations – 20%                      Demonstrating appropriate methodology, supporting objective, clearly explained</p> <p>Annotated Bibliography – 10%                      High-quality sources, explanation of value for your argument, referenced in report if used</p> <p>Mechanics – 10%                      Grammatically correct and clear report, has effective document design, is typographically correct</p>	<p>Total</p>

doesn't ask students to use all seven sources in the paper, but only those that serve the purpose of the recommendation memo. Research savvy, the assignment implies, includes rejecting sources, not just piling them up for a longer bibliography.

The professor's second assignment, due at the end of the term, again asks students to role-play being a tax consultant on a policy issue (this time they have to advise a legislator on whether to support a state sales tax on candy) but ups the ante by sending students to the library and the Web to find their own sources. To help students find their own sources, the professor schedules a class session with a reference librarian on appropriate databases and search strategies for finding relevant sources. Again, a required annotated bibliography allows the professor and the librarian to assess students' information literacy skills.

## Designing Backward: Teaching Research Skills to Novices

In the previous section, I suggested principles for designing short meaningful-constructing research assignments that can serve as scaffolding for longer papers. This section, based on the principle of backward design, offers

## EXHIBIT 14.1

## Generic Writing Rubric Using Analytic Method

Author's Name _____		Title of Piece _____				
1 Does Not Meet		2 Partially Meets	3 Does Not Fully Meet	4 Meets	5 More Than Meets	6 Exceeds
Content/Ideas	Writing is extremely limited in communicating knowledge, with no central theme.	Writing is limited in communicating knowledge. Length is not adequate for development.	Writing does not clearly communicate knowledge. The reader is left with questions.	Writes related, quality paragraphs, with little or no details.	Writing is purposeful and focused. Piece contains some details.	Writing is confident and clearly focused. It holds the reader's attention. Relevant details enrich writing.
Organization	Writing is disorganized and underdeveloped with no transitions or closure.	Writing is brief and underdeveloped with very weak transitions and closure.	Writing is confused and loosely organized. Transitions are weak and closure is ineffective.	Uses correct writing format. Incorporates a coherent closure.	Writing includes a strong beginning, middle, and end, with some transitions and good closure.	Writing includes a strong beginning, middle, and end, with clear transitions and a focused closure.
Vocabulary/ Word Choice	Careless or inaccurate word choice, which obscures meaning.	Language is trite, vague, or flat.	Shows some use of varied word choice.	Uses a variety of word choices to make writing interesting.	Purposeful use of word choice.	Effective and engaging use of word choice.
Voice	Writer's voice/point of view shows no sense of audience.	Writer's voice/point of view shows little sense of audience.	Writer's voice/point of view shows a vague sense of audience.	Writer uses voice/point of view. Writes with an understanding of a specific audience.	Writer has strong voice/point of view. Writing engages the audience.	Writes with a distinct, unique voice/point of view. Writing is skillfully adapted to the audience.
Sentence Fluency	Frequent run-ons or fragments, with no variety in sentence structure.	Many run-ons or fragments. Little variety in sentence structure.	Some run-ons or fragments. Limited variety in sentence structure.	Uses simple, compound, and complex sentences.	Frequently varied sentence structure.	Consistent variety of sentence structure throughout.
Conventions	Parts of speech show lack of agreement. Frequent errors in mechanics. Little or no evidence of spelling strategies.	Inconsistent agreement between parts of speech. Many errors in mechanics. Little evidence of spelling strategies.	Occasional errors in agreement between parts of speech. Some errors in mechanics. Some evidence of spelling strategies.	Maintains agreement between parts of speech. Few errors in mechanics. Applies basic grade-level spelling.	Consistent agreement between parts of speech. Uses correct punctuation, capitalization, and so on. Consistent use of spelling strategies.	Uses consistent agreement between parts of speech. No errors in mechanics. Creative and effective use of spelling strategies.

*This rubric is provided by ReadWriteThink.org, a Thinkfinity website developed by the International Reading Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, and in partnership with the Verizon Foundation.*

**EXHIBIT 14.2**

**Generic Rubric for Summary Writing Using Holistic Method**

**Explanation:** A summary should be directed toward imagined readers who have not read the article being summarized. The purpose of the summary is to give these persons a clear overview of the article's main points. The criteria for a summary are (1) accuracy of content, (2) comprehensiveness and balance, and (3) clarity, readability, and grammatical correctness.

**Rubric**

**6** A 6 summary meets all the criteria. The writer understands the article thoroughly. The main points in the article appear in the summary with all main points proportionately developed (that is, the writer does not spend excessive time on one main point while neglecting other main points). The summary should be as comprehensive as possible and should read smoothly, with appropriate transitions between ideas. Sentences should be clear, without vagueness or ambiguity and without grammatical or mechanical errors.

**5** A 5 summary should still be very good, but it can be weaker than a 6 summary in one area. It may have excellent accuracy and balance but show occasional problems in sentence structure or correctness. Or it may be clearly written but be somewhat unbalanced or less comprehensive than a 6 summary or show a minor misunderstanding of the article.

**4** A score of 4 means good but not excellent. Typically, a 4 summary will reveal a generally accurate reading of the article, but it will be noticeably weaker in the quality of writing. Or it may be well written but cover only part of the essay.

**3** A 3 summary must have strength in at least one area of competence, and it should still be good enough to convince the grader that the writer has understood the article fairly well. However, a 3 summary typically is not written well enough to convey an understanding of the article to someone who has not already read it. Typically, the sentence structure of a 3 summary is not sophisticated enough to convey the sense of hierarchy and subordination found in the essay.

**2** A 2 summary is weak in all areas of competence, either because it is so poorly written that the reader cannot understand the content or because the content is inaccurate or seriously disorganized. However, a 2 essay convinces the grader that the writer has read the essay and is struggling to understand it.

**1** A 1 summary fails to meet any of the areas of competence.

that the student has been assigned to summarize. In contrast, Exhibits 14.3 and 14.4 are task-specific rubrics, 14.3 for the genre of the practical proposal and 14.4 for an assignment requiring use of graphics. Note how particular details of the genre or the assignment appear in the rubrics, such as "Description of the Proposed Solution" in Exhibit 14.3 or "Quality of the Interrelationship between Graphics and Words" in Exhibit 14.4. Neither of these rubrics could be applied universally to a different genre or assignment.

EXHIBIT 14.3 Task-Specific Rubric for a Genre: Practical Proposal			
Letter of Transmittal and Document Design	Presentation of the Problem	Description of the Proposed Solution	Justification for Proposed Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has an effective letter of transmittal (addressed to appropriate decision maker; serves as executive summary: briefly explains problem, describes proposed solution, and summarizes supporting reasons)</li> <li>Has professional appearance; good document design with clear headings and appropriately labeled diagrams (if needed); conveys strong ethos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly describes the problem without presupposing the solution</li> <li>Gives problem "presence" (chooses appropriate methods for motivating reader to care about problem)</li> <li>Adequately develops the problem (shows who is affected, what is at stake); anticipates objections of a skeptical reader who dismisses the problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes proposed solution clearly</li> <li>Explains costs; pays attention to practical details; convinces reader that writer has done his or her homework</li> <li>Solution is made to seem doable</li> <li>If writer proposes a planning committee to develop details of solution, writer clearly points out the details of a successful solution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongly motivates reader to act on the proposal; designs justification section by imagining chief reasons for audience resistance</li> <li>States clear, effective reasons in support of proposal</li> <li>Supports reasons with effective evidence</li> <li>Effectively ties into values and beliefs of audience</li> </ul>
Meets all criteria at high level	Meets all criteria at high level; clear and developed	Meets all criteria at high level; clear, easy to follow	Meets all criteria at high level; clear, easy to follow
Meets some criteria; uneven	Meets some criteria; uneven; occasionally thin; some lapses in clarity	Meets some criteria; uneven or has some lapses in clarity or development	Meets some criteria; uneven or has some lapses in clarity or development
Meets few criteria	Meets few criteria; often unclear or undeveloped	Meets few criteria; often unclear or undeveloped	Meets few criteria; often unclear or undeveloped
10 9 8	10 9 8	10 9 8	10 9 8
7 6 5 4	7 6 5 4	7 6 5 4	7 6 5 4
3 2 1 0	3 2 1 0	3 2 1 0	3 2 1 0

(Continued)

**EXHIBIT 14.5**

**Analytic Rubric with Non-Grid Design: Argument Assignment**

1. Does the introduction effectively present the issue and the thesis, while evoking reader interest? (10 points)
2. Are the ideas sufficiently complex? Are there good reasons in support of the thesis? Is the argument logical? (30 points)
3. Are opposing or alternative views adequately and fairly summarized? Are the responses to the opposing views effective? (20 points)
4. Is there appropriate and sufficient evidence? Is the argument well-developed, with appropriate details? (20 points)
5. Is the essay well organized into a unified whole? Are there good transitions? Do paragraphs have topic sentences? (20 points)
6. Is language style effective? Is language well chosen for the intended audience? Is the tone appropriate? (10 points)
7. Are sentences well constructed? Is the paper carefully edited? (20 points)

rubric advocates—the achievement of interrater reliability in the evaluation of writing. This aim, he argues, promotes the false notion of a “universal reader,” trained to read in an unnatural way in order to apply negotiated criteria that do not, in any holistic or meaningful sense, belong to the actual reading practices of real readers. The message sent to students is that there are universally agreed-on standards for good writing, when in fact these standards are temporarily forged via norming sessions that cause individuals to read unnaturally. Moreover, the criteria set forth in typical rubrics are an oversimplification of what we really value, leaving out the subtleties and nuances valued by real readers.

Although rubrics can help assessors reduce a complex performance into a single grade, Broad argues that this practice hides an important reality that students must learn to negotiate: different readers read in different ways. (We teachers learn to negotiate this reality when an article submitted to a scholarly journal gets praised by one peer reviewer and slammed by another.) Consider, for example, the difference in the messages contained in the following two kinds of comments that we might hypothetically place on a student paper:

*Comment 1:* Although the ideas in this paper are often superb, showing lots of insights into the differences between Smith and Jones, the paper

