



# RESPONDING TO STUDENTS' WRITING



LET'S HEAR FROM YOU FIRST -  
WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING FEEDBACK?

It's the first day of your English 100, 101, 201, or 221 class. You're going over some of the groundwork for the course, and a student asks about your grading and feedback practices. How would you address the following

- **WHY** I comment/provide feedback on students' writing
- **HOW** I comment/provide feedback on students' writing
- **WHAT** should students do with my feedback

## Agenda

- Opening discussion
- Assessment + Curriculum design
- Types of rubrics
- Suggested practices for commenting
- Reflection activity

## ASSESSMENT BEGINS WITH (BACKWARDS) CURRICULUM DESIGN

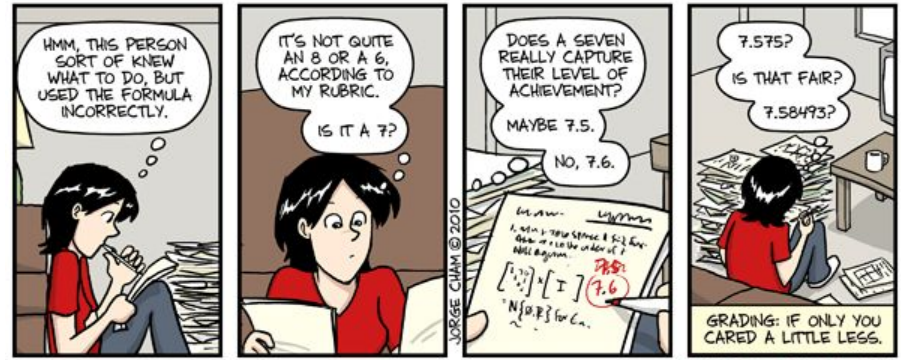


Effective assessment requires (1) transparency, (2) purpose and (3) repetition

1. **Transparency:** Students should have access to and understand expectations for their written work
2. **Purpose:** Effective assessment is purposeful - it works towards pre-defined student learning goals and offers formative feedback on their writing
3. **Repetition:** Assessment becomes more meaningful and available to students when learning goals and expectations are communicated across multiple documents

## TYPES OF RUBRICS

- Analytic – Provides a score for each criterion; totals up scores to create; Provides accountability
- Holistic – Considers all criteria at once; Provides flexibility
- Generic: One size fits all; Criteria can describe effective writing of any genre (Content/ideas; Organization; Mechanics; etc.) Can be used for multiple assignments
- Task-specific: Criteria are customized to a specific assignment or genre; Provides more details about expectations and conventions of a given assignment/genre



Assignment Criteria	Score (1-5)	Comments
Essay demonstrates engagement with narrative and reflective styles		
Essay works within the genre of the personal essay and is organized around a controlling idea or theme		
Essay is well-organized and contains transitions and topic sentences		
Essay demonstrates evidence of careful reflection and multi-draft writing process		
Essay meets length requirements (900-1200 words) and is carefully proofread.		
Essay includes a thoughtful and creative title that emphasizes its controlling idea or theme		
Final Score/Comments		

## Task Specific, Analytic Rubric

- Links directly to assignment criteria, which should also link directly to assignment goals and overall learning outcomes
- Provides transparent expectations about how the work will be assessed
- Teaches genre conventions
- Opens up space for qualitative feedback
- Generates formative feedback that students can use to revise and develop their writing

## Commenting Tips & Strategies

Bean, John, *Engaging Ideas*, p. 335

1. Sweet before the sour: Praise!
2. Comment first on ideas and organization.
3. End comments begin with positive points then lead into developmental/action items.
4. Avoid over-commenting.
5. Raise questions about ideas.
6. Resist the urge to edit.
8. Use marginal comments to indicate places where structure becomes confusing.
9. Praise good titles, good thesis statements, good transitions, and so forth.

The screenshot shows a commenting interface with a toolbar at the top containing icons for video, camera, link, and a dropdown menu. The main content is a table with three rows. The first row has a student comment 'no major problems' and an instructor response 'Structure is well-done. You do a nice job with transitions and topic sentences.' The second row has a student comment about sources and an instructor response 'Yes, good job on Works Cited page.' The third row has a student comment 'Final Comments/Assessment' and a detailed instructor response praising the student's work and providing a grade of 'A' and the name 'Dr. Vetter'. A bottom toolbar contains icons for grid, close, add, subtract, and other editing functions.

	no major problems
Essay follows a thesis-driven structure	Structure is well-done. You do a nice job with transitions and topic sentences.
Primary and secondary sources (readings from Writing Spaces, your “artifact”) are included in a Works Cited page	Yes, good job on Works Cited page.
Final Comments/Assessment	<p>Very nice work on this, [Student Name] I really appreciate how you are able to articulate a thorough understanding of the theories surrounding social/community knowledge and how those theories can transfer to help writers be more prepared to move across communities. You also a nice job bringing in grounded examples of the artifacts from the two communities. Finally, you do a nice job with organization and using topic sentences and transitions to help guide the reader. One suggestion might be to acknowledge or explain how journalistic writing can be seen as both academic and public - for instance, the journalistic writing you will do after college will be outside of your academic community and will speak to more general audiences. Overall, though, terrific job!</p> <p>Grade: A </p> <p>Dr. Vetter</p>