Generic Assessment Strategies

Rubrics used in assessing writing typically list expectations for content, organization, vocabulary, voice, sentence structure, and conventions. Rubric scores tell you about your degree of success in completing a writing task. They have an even more important function, however—to help you improve your writing.

Rubrics included in this book have been written in student-friendly language so you can assess your own writing and your classmates'. Just as with the planning and revision strategies in this book, you can use a double approach to assessment. Combine the generic rubric with the specific rubric for the writing form of your composition.

As you use rubrics to assess your own and others' writing, set personal writing goals. Use each rubric to make helpful changes that will improve your writing.

Generic Writing Rubric

	I'm not there yet	I'm getting there	I'm there now
Content	• Readers are not sure about my meaning. • I have included few details related to my topic.	• Most of my writing is understandable. • I could have included additional details in my writing.	• My writing is consistently clear and understandable. • I have included adequate details in my writing.
Organization	• My writing is disorganized. • I use no or few transitions among the sections of my writing.	• My writing is arranged logically, but I could improve the structure. • I use some transitions among the sections of my writing but using more transitions would improve the flow of my writing.	• My writing has a logical structure that makes it easy for readers to follow. • I have included adequate and effective transitions among the sections of my writing.
Vocabulary	• My words are inaccurate, misused, and unclear.	• My words are sometimes appropriate, effective, and purposefully selected.	• My words are consistently appropriate, effective, and purposefully selected.
Voice	• I show little originality in the details I have included. • I show no originality in comparisons.	• I have included a few original details. • I have included one original comparison that is original and effective.	• I have included several striking details that other writers might have overlooked. • I have included more than one original comparison.
Sentence Structure	• I seldom vary the length and structure of my sentences. • I seldom write complete sentences.	• I demonstrate some variety in the length and structure of my sentences. • Most of my sentences are complete.	• I frequently vary the length and structure of my sentences. • All of my sentences are complete.
Conventions	• I make frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, and usage that will confuse my reader.	• I make some errors in spelling, punctuation, and usage.	• I make few errors in spelling, punctuation, and usage.