

Single Point Bullseye

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When I first looked at single point rubrics, I didn't get them. At the time, I was big into learning progressions and proficiency scales. My focus was on learning as a movement from one step on a proficiency scale to another step on the proficiency scale over time. I couldn't wrap my head around how criteria could be compartmentalized into a single column. Then, someone on Twitter posted a single-point rubric with proficiency down the center and a lightbulb of inspiration lit up my assessment world. Single point rubrics are all I have used ever since.

Prior to my single-point rubric epiphany, I spent months creating assignment and project specific learning scales, unpacking curricular competencies, making sure to describe what each level of proficiency looked like for that assignment or project. They were great if I wanted to get every student to show their learning in just one way. If I truly wanted my students to show me a variety of evidence to show me their learning, learning scales needed to be detailed and specific, but generated with voice, choice, and multiple ways to provide evidence in mind. My existing method wasn't working.

I was also realizing that I needed to be careful with proficiency scales especially when communication learning with students. Learning scales make not just proficiency visible but all the levels visible. I'm not sure this is a positive motivator. I noticed that a student who saw themselves as "Emerging" had a hard time getting past that roadblock, especially since, historically, letter grades had served as ego boosters and deflators. It didn't take long for this student and others to figure out what each level translated to in terms of letter grades despite my best effort to downplay letter grades and not use them in my classroom. It was a problem.

Enter the single point rubric: proficiency (gently labelled as *Target*) down the center, glows evidence of going beyond target (*Glows*) to the right, and areas that need improvement (*Grows*) to the left. I love the word, *Target*. It has been like telling students, "Here's the bull's eye...aim for it!" It's also much simpler for students to comprehend one column instead of five. Every student aiming for the same goal felt more inclusive and supportive. Moreover, the columns give the teacher, student, and peers the opportunity to supply and respond to individualized descriptive feedback. I had learned from so many Edu gurus and my own experience with feedback, that students are more likely to apply feedback without an evaluative structure than if feedback was provided alongside an evaluative structure. The single point rubric worked well for giving the students opportunities to grow their skills.

For efficacy, I have tried to co-construct the language of the target column effectively, giving ownership to the students in some way. For one, they can co-construct criteria after seeing the target modeled by the teacher. In my English 11 New Media class, students examined what a proficient set of annotations look like. Their job was to dissect what made the annotations proficient. I knew what it was that made them proficient, so I had to carefully guide them into

creating clear “We can” statements. This was a powerful, critical thinking activity and by the end, every student understood what their goals were; they owned the single-point rubric.

Another way I have given students ownership of the single-point rubric is by providing the simple language and having the students provide exemplars. In Drama 10, I split the students into groups and gave each group one criterion from the rubric to model for the class. After the activity, we discussed the interpretation of the language and if I should adjust the language for clarity. Engaging the students in the hands-on activity acknowledged students as part of the assessment process.

When my students are part of criteria generation, they seem more engaged in the skill. They are also more focused on reaching the target. When I have students self-assess using the single point rubric, they are cognizant of where they didn’t hit the target and take a more proactive stance, searching for ways to hit the target or talking to me about strategies to hit the target. In my English 11 New Media class, for example, as students were highlighting the annotations’ criteria, many stopped and took the time to search for ways to hit the target so they *could* highlight it. It wasn’t a test situation. I wasn’t giving them the opportunity to self assess in order to play “Gotcha! You didn’t actually hit the bull’s eye!” I wanted them to be aware of their learning. By the time work was handed in, I had little to do except validate their self-assessment. They had done all the leg work for me. For those students who still missed meeting target criteria, I am able to reflect on why they didn’t meet the goals and provide new strategies for them to meet those goals. Win-win.

Single point rubrics have changed my attitude toward assessment and evaluation. Yes, it takes time to generate the target criteria, exemplars for modelling proficiency, and patience in having students co-construct criteria with the teacher, but when I consider the 21st century skills my students are developing, their engagement in the process and the development of their skills, it’s worth it.

Name:

What strategies can I use to show my comprehension of text?

Curricular Competency: Apply appropriate strategies in a variety of contexts to comprehend written, oral, visual, and multimodal texts, to guide inquiry and to extend thinking

Grows Areas that need improvement	TARGET	Grows Evidence of going beyond target
	<p><u>Summarize</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can figure out the universal message the author is trying to get across (theme). I can consider commenting on more than one theme to be thorough.• I can pick out the big details that catch our eye, highlighting just the main idea(s) in a couple of sentences and in my own words and using clear, descriptive language.• I can add to my summary by adding specific examples from the text. <p><u>Style</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can comment on how the text is written like: slang, informal/formal language, dialogue, jargon, and word usage.• I can identify what sets the author apart from other authors.• I can explain using specific examples.	

Make Connections

- I can connect to the author or the character's actions or situations by relating to our own experiences, the world and its problems and successes (current events or historical events), or anything I identify with on a personal level.
- I can support my connection with clear details, writing enough to explain the connection.

Infer

- I can guess/predict what the outcome of the story will be.
- I can decide to like or dislike certain characteristics that influence character's emotions, actions, or reactions to their situation or other characters
- I can support my ideas with evidence.

Visualize - TQE

- I can write a lingering thought, question or epiphany that cannot be answered from reading the book.
- I can create a question using "the author" so it focuses on the author.
- I can supply background information and a quote or scene that adequately sets up the question, thought, or epiphany.
- My TQE can be from anywhere in the assigned reading – specific area or the reading as a whole.