

This grading rubrics for digital media is offered by Ron Bruner. It has been adapted from the 6 + 1 writing traits developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

5. Ideas and Content

This production is clear and focused. It holds the user's attention. Relevant anecdotes and details enrich the central theme.

- A. ___ The topic and design are narrow and manageable.
- B. ___ Relevant, telling, quality details give the user/viewer important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable.
- C. ___ Reasonably accurate details are present to support the main ideas.
- D. ___ The producer seems to be creating from knowledge or experience; the ideas are fresh and original.
- E. ___ The user/viewer's questions are anticipated and answered.
- F. ___ Insight—an understanding of life and a knack for picking out what is significant—is an indicator of high level performance, though not required.

3. Ideas and Content

The producer is beginning to define the topic or design, even though development is still basic or general.

- A. ___ The topic or design is fairly broad; however, the user can see where the producer is headed.
- B. ___ Support is attempted, but doesn't go far enough yet in fleshing out the key issues.
- C. ___ Ideas are reasonably clear, though they may not be detailed, personalized, accurate, or expanded enough to show in-depth understanding or a strong sense of purpose.
- D. ___ The producer seems to be drawing on knowledge or experience, but has difficulty going from general observations to specifics.
- E. ___ The user/viewer is left with questions. More information is needed to "fill in the blanks."
- F. ___ The producer generally stays on the topic but does not develop a clear theme. The producer has not yet focused the topic past the obvious.

1. Ideas and Content

As yet, the production has no clear sense of purpose, central theme or coherent design motifs. To extract meaning from the production, the user/viewer must make inferences based on sketchy or missing details. The production reflects more than one of these problems:

- A. ___ The producer is still in search of a topic, brainstorming, or has not yet decided what the main idea of the piece will be.
- B. ___ Information is limited or unclear or the length is not adequate for development.
- C. ___ The idea is a simple restatement of the topic or an answer to the question with little or no attention to detail.
- D. ___ The producer has not yet begun to define the topic/design in a meaningful, personal way.
- E. ___ Everything seems as important as everything else; the user has a hard time sifting out what is important.
- F. ___ The content may be repetitious or may viewed like a collection of disconnected, random elements with no discernible point.

5. Organization

The organization and design enhances and showcases the central idea, theme or lay out. The order, structure, or presentation of information is compelling and moves the user through the piece.

- A. ___ An inviting introduction draws the user in; satisfying conclusion leaves user with a sense of closure and resolution.
- B. ___ Thoughtful transitions clearly show how ideas connect.
- C. ___ Sequencing is logical and effective.
- D. ___ Pacing is well controlled; the producer knows when to slow down and elaborate and when to pick up the pace and move on.
- E. ___ The title (if desired) is original and captures the central theme of the piece.
- F. ___ Organization flows so smoothly the user hardly thinks about it; the choice of structure matches the purpose and audience.

3. Organization

The organizational structure is strong enough to move the user through the production without too much confusion.

- A. ___ The production has a recognizable introduction and conclusion. The introduction may not create strong sense of anticipation; conclusion may not tie up all loose ends.
- B. ___ Transitions often work well; at other times, connections between ideas are fuzzy.
- C. ___ Sequencing shows some logic, but not under control enough that it consistently supports the ideas. Sometimes it is so predictable and rehearsed that the structure takes attention away from content.
- D. ___ Pacing is fairly well controlled, though the producer sometimes lunges ahead too quickly or spends too much time on details that do not matter.
- E. ___ A title (if desired) is present, although it may be uninspired or an obvious restatement of the prompt or topic.
- F. ___ Organization sometimes supports the main point, design; at other times the user feels an urge to slip in a transition or move things around.

1. Organization

The production lacks a clear sense of direction. Ideas, details, or events seem strung together in a loose or random fashion; there is no identifiable internal structure. The content reflects more than one of these problems:

- A. ___ There is no real lead to set up what follows, no real conclusion to wrap things up.
- B. ___ Connections between ideas are confusing or not even present.
- C. ___ Sequencing needs lots and lots of work.
- D. ___ Pacing feels awkward; the writer slows to a crawl when the user wants to get on with it and vice versa.
- E. ___ No title is present (if requested) or, if present, it does not match well with the content.
- F. ___ Problems with organization make it hard for the reader to get a grip on the main point/design or story line.

5. Conventions

The producer/designer demonstrates a good grasp of standard production conventions and uses conventions effectively to enhance usability. Errors tend to be so few that just minor tune-ups would get this piece ready for presentation.

- A. ___ Spelling, language and design elements are generally correct.
- B. ___ The media usage is accurate, even creative, and guides the user through the content.
- C. ___ A thorough understanding and consistent application of skills are present.
- D. ___ Equipment and software skills are correct and contribute to clarity and style.
- E. ___ The design tends to be sound and reinforces the organizational structure.
- F. ___ The producer may manipulate conventions for stylistic effect—and it works! The piece is very close to being to publish.

3. Conventions

The producer/designer shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard production conventions. Conventions are sometimes handled well and enhance usability; at other times, errors are distracting.

- A. ___ Spelling, language and design elements are usually correct or reasonably phonetic on common elements but the more difficult are problematic.
- B. ___ The media usage is usually correct; links or transitions are sometimes missing or wrong.
- C. ___ Understanding and consistent application of skills may be spotty.
- D. ___ Problems are not serious enough to distort meaning but may not be correct or accurately applied all of the time.
- E. ___ Design is attempted but may run together or begin in the wrong places.
- F. ___ Moderate (a little of this, a little of that) editing would be required to polish the production for publication.

1. Conventions

Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, usage and grammar, and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:

- A. ___ Spelling, language or design errors are frequent.
- B. ___ The media is often incorrect.
- C. ___ Skill is random and only the easiest rules show awareness of correct use.
- D. ___ Problems in usage is very noticeable, frequent, and affect meaning.
- E. ___ Design is missing, irregular, or so frequent that it has no relationship to the organizational structure.
- F. ___ Extensive editing (virtually everything) would be required to polish the production.

5. Language Content/Word Choice

Words convey the intended message in a precise, interesting, and natural way. The words are powerful and engaging.

- A. ___ Words are specific and accurate; it is easy to understand just what the producer means.
- B. ___ The words and phrases create pictures and linger in the user's mind.
- C. ___ The language is natural and never overdone; both words and phrases are individual and effective.
- D. ___ Lively verbs energize the writing. Precise nouns and modifiers add depth and specificity.
- E. ___ Striking words and phrases often catch the user's eye—and linger in the user's mind. (The reader can recall a handful when reflecting on the paper.)
- F. ___ Precision is obvious. The producer has taken care to put just the right word or phrase in just the right spot.

3. Language Content/Word Choice

The language is functional, even if it lacks much energy. It is easy to ascertain the producers meaning on a general level.

- A. ___ Language/words are adequate and correct in a general sense; they simply lack flair and originality.
- B. ___ Familiar words and phrases communicate but rarely capture the user's imagination. Still, the production may have one or two fine moments.
- C. ___ Attempts at colorful language show a willingness to stretch and grow, but sometimes it goes too far (thesaurus overload!).
- D. ___ The production is marked by passive verbs, everyday nouns and adjectives, and lack of interesting adverbs.
- E. ___ The words are only occasionally refined; it's more often "the first thing that popped into my mind."
- F. ___ The words and phrases are functional— with only a moment or two of sparkle.

1. Language Content/Word Choice

The producer struggles with a limited vocabulary, searching for words to convey meaning. The production reflects more than one of these problems.

- A. ___ Language is so vague that only a limited message comes through.
- B. ___ Meaningless words is all the user hears or sees.
- C. ___ Words are used incorrectly making the message secondary to the misfires with the words.
- D. ___ Limited vocabulary and/or frequent misuse of parts speech impair understanding.
- E. ___ Jargon or cliches distract or mislead. Persistent redundancy distracts the reader.
- F. ___ Problems with language leave the reader wondering what the producer is trying to say. The words just don't work in this piece.

5. Language Fluency

The language has an easy flow, rhythm and cadence. Sentences are well built, with strong and varied structure.

- A. ___ Sentences are constructed in a way that underscores and enhances the meaning.
- B. ___ Sentences vary in length as well as structure. Fragments, if used, add style. Dialogue, if present, sounds natural.
- C. ___ Purposeful and varied sentence beginnings add variety and energy.
- D. ___ The use of creative and appropriate connectives between sentences and thoughts shows how each relates to and builds upon the one before it.
- E. ___ The writing has cadence; the writer has thought about the sound of the words as well as the meaning. Reading it aloud is a breeze.

3. Language Fluency

The language hums along with a steady beat but tends to be more pleasant or businesslike than musical, more mechanical than fluid.

- A. ___ Although sentences may not seem artfully crafted or musical, they get the job done in a routine fashion.
- B. ___ Sentences are usually constructed correctly; they hang together; they're sound.
- C. ___ Sentence beginnings are not ALL alike; some variety is attempted.
- D. ___ The reader sometimes has to hunt for clues (e.g., connecting words and phrases like however, therefore, naturally, after awhile) that show how sentences interrelate.
- E. ___ Parts of the text invite expressive oral reading; others may be stiff, awkward, choppy, or gangly.

1. Language Fluency

The user/viewer has to practice quite a bit in order to give this production a fair interpretive use. The production reflects more than one of the following problems:

- A. ___ Sentences are choppy, incomplete, rambling, or awkward; they need work. The patterns may create a singsong rhythm or a chop-chop cadence that lulls the reader to sleep.
- B. ___ There is little or no "sentence sense" present. Even if this piece was flawlessly edited, the sentences would not hang together.
- C. ___ Many sentences begin the same way—and may follow the same patterns (e.g., subject-verb object) in a monotonous pattern.
- D. ___ Endless connectives (and, and so, but then, because, and then, etc.) or a complete lack of connectives create a massive jumble of language.
- E. ___ The text does not invite expressive reading or listening.

5. Voice

The producer speaks directly to the user/viewer in a way that is individual, compelling, and engaging. The producer "aches with caring" yet is aware and respectful of the audience and the purpose for the production.

- A. ___ The user feels a strong interaction with the producer, sensing the person behind the words.
- B. ___ The producer takes a risk by revealing who he/she is and what he/she thinks.
- C. ___ The tone and voice give flavor and texture to the message and are appropriate for the purpose and audience.
- D. ___ Narrative seems honest, personal, and produced from the heart. Expository or persuasive reflects a strong commitment to the topic by showing why the user needs to know this and why he/she should care.
- E. ___ The production makes the user think about and react to the producer's point of view.

3. Voice

The producer seems sincere, but not fully engaged or involved. The result is pleasant or even personable but not compelling.

- A. ___ The production communicates in an earnest, pleasing manner.
- B. ___ Only one or two moments here or there surprise, delight, or move the user.
- C. ___ The producer seems aware of an audience but weighs ideas carefully and discards personal insights in favor of safe generalities.
- D. ___ Narrative seems sincere, but not passionate; expository or persuasive writing lacks consistent engagement with the topic to build credibility.
- E. ___ The producer's willingness to share his/her point of view may emerge strongly at some place.

1. Voice

The producer seems indifferent, uninvolved, or distanced from the topic and/or audience. As a result, the production reflects more than one of the following problems:

- A. ___ Production is in a kind of monotone that flattens all potential highs or lows of the message.
- B. ___ The production is humdrum and "risk-free."
- C. ___ Producer is not concerned with the audience or the style is a complete mismatch for the intended user.
- D. ___ The production is lifeless or mechanical; depending on the topic, it may be overly technical or jargonistic.
- E. ___ No point of view is reflected in the production.

5. Presentation

The piece is published and ready to be used in an educational or a professional environment.

- A. ___ There is appropriate use of design in graphic elements (e.g. fonts, line, shape, form, color, texture), video and/or other digital media conventions which invite the user/viewer into the production.
- B. ___ The use of space and design allows the user to focus on the message. There is just the right amount of balance between space, design elements and the message; the formatting suits the purpose of the production.
- C. ___ The design allows the hierarchy of information to be clear to the user/viewer; the correct use of stylistic items (when appropriate) makes it easy for the user to access the desired information.
- D. ___ When appropriate to the purpose and audience, there is effective integration of text and visuals (illustrations, charts, graphs, maps, tables, etc.); the visuals support and clarify important information.

3. Presentation

The production is good but still needs work. It shows well in the normal educational atmosphere but does not meet professional requirements.

- A. ___ The experimental use of graphical design elements, video and other digital media conventions is sometimes successful, sometimes fussy and cluttered; the effect is inconsistent.
- B. ___ The use of space and design sometimes confuse the user; inconsistent spacing is present, but a different choice would make the information more accessible.
- C. ___ Some markers are present (title, page, number, bullets, etc.), but they are not used to their fullest potential as a guide for the user/viewer to access the greatest meaning from the text.
- D. ___ An attempt is made to integrate visual, text and font elements, however, the connections may be limited.

1. Presentation

The piece definitely needs work. It does not show well in the normal educational nor professional environment.

- A. ___ Multiple and often incorrect graphic usage distract the user.
- B. ___ Random design usage confuse the user/viewer.
- C. ___ Lack of markers (title, page number, bullets, etc.) leave the user wondering how one section connects to another and why the project is organized in this manner.
- D. ___ Visuals do not support or illustrate key ideas for the user; they are misleading, undecipherable, or too complex.