

**LANGUAGE**

English as a foreign language

**TARGET**

Primary School, Secondary School I and II

**AIMS**

- > To have learners become aware of writing criteria for different genre of text
- > To use what learners know from the local language and apply it to the foreign language

**MATERIALS**Zahner-Stauffer, K. (2013). *Explorers Resource Book*. Lehrmittelverlag Kanton Zürich.*Didattica*

## STUDENT GENERATED RUBRICS TO GUIDE AND ASSESS

Patrick Büchel describes how he uses student-generated rubrics for assessment purposes in his sixth (and fourth) grade English language classrooms.

When doing my longer-term planning, I first decide on what products I think would be useful to the children over the course of a term. So in the 6th grade, I decided that my students will have to turn in several of the following products by the end of the term in the form of a portfolio:

- > **Invitation of adult guests to a school performance** (A2.1: können für andere Jugendliche eine Einladung schreiben)
- > **Simple narrative in the past tense about an event experienced** (A2.2: können ein Ereignis beschreiben, indem sie in einfachen Sätzen darüber berichten, was wann und wo geschehen ist/können eine einfache Geschichte erzählen)
- > **Interview questions about somebody's profession** (A1.1 – oral production goal: können anderen Menschen persönliche Fragen stellen)
- > **Cooking recipe with language support given** (B1.2 – oral production goal: können anderen detaillierte praktische Anweisungen geben, wie man etwas macht, was sie selbst gut können)

In the following examples, I had learners working together with pre-service student

teachers from the Zurich University of Teacher Education so we could work in smaller groups to create these various rubrics, but generally, I take half or an entire lesson to do this with my classes before we start each product. I use the same system when I teach German. As with any larger product, I think it is important if the children know what they should be doing and have some success criteria for their work. Thus, the first thing we do is to look at an example of a poorly and a well written story/invitation/recipe and find out what makes it good or what would make it better. We then write a rubric on the blackboard with the entire class and then re-read the story, or one of our own, to see if the rubric makes sense (see Figure 1 on the next page).

In the Interview Questions rubric (Figure 2 on the next page), learners were learning to ask questions of people in the community in English. Here, we organized it so it was more than just a “checklist” (as in Figure 1) but that there were three levels of scores.

Figure 3 below shows the rubric for recipe writing, which is even more complex

Patrick Büchel | Zürich



4th grade classroom teacher and 6th grade English language teacher in Schwamendingen, Zürich

Figure 1: Story rubric-in-development

<b>Rubrics for a Narration/Story</b>	
Vergleicht die folgenden Kriterien mit euren Geschichten "Late for School".	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sind diese Kriterien sinnvoll?</li> <li>• Muss man welche ändern?</li> <li>• Fehlt etwas?</li> </ul>	
<b>Structure reflected by content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction: W-Questions are answered, at least who, where, when, sometimes implicitly</li> <li>• Main part: Tension is built up (problem, question, mystery)</li> <li>• Ending: Tension is released, question answered, problem solved</li> <li>• Short and understandable sentences</li> </ul>
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great variety of vocabulary</li> <li>• No repetitions (some repetition is allowed, as long as there is variety)</li> </ul>
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tension</li> <li>• Central theme (roter Faden)</li> <li>• Introduction: W-Questions are answered</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Past tense is used correctly</li> <li>• Word order</li> </ul>
<b>Spelling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punctuation</li> <li>• Capital and lower case letters are used correctly</li> </ul>

Figure 2: Rubric for interview questions about somebody's profession

	Good interview questions	Not good	OK	good
<b>Mechanics</b>	Have correct sentences/questions (grammar, spelling)			
	Start sentences differently, use question words Example: How/Why/Do/Tell me...			
<b>Interview structure</b>	Have a structure beginning (warm up, general questions, state your purpose) questions related to aims end, follow-up questions and thank you			
<b>Content</b>	Are short, important questions that get the interviewee to talk Not too many YES/NO questions should be used			
	Fit the topic → make sense in content and don't go off-topic			

because the learners and the students wanted to create a rubric for an exact grade. I leave this decision up to the learners, but find it mostly too complex to do this with the class and I think that just knowing what general success criteria are is enough.

The question I had about Figure 3 is also whether or not I should include creativity/neatness on here because these things are not specifically language-related. Thus I leave it on the rubric because it is important to the task but I do not use this for report card grades.

So after developing rubrics with the class, the learners work on the specific product. They then compare their own texts to the respective rubric and get feedback on their own writing according to the rubric (several times) through peer correction and the teacher. Final products are turned in and I correct them in reference to the rubrics, for example in Figure 4, or I write general specific feedback so they have to go back through the text and re-write it (Figure 5) before I get back to the rubric.

After the products have been reworked several times with both teacher and peer feedback, the learners can file them in their portfolios. However, at some point, they have to choose to re-work anything in the portfolio for further development and this is how their grades for writing and reading are assigned – they need to show proof of having met the curricular aims. Like this, my learners can choose what versions they put in their portfolios for a grade and what shows the most progress on their part and this encourages them to take ownership of their learning. Finally, I leave you, dear reader, with Figures 6 and 7 which show some examples of good sixth grade work!

Figure 3: Rubric for recipe writing

	Note 3	Note 4	Note 5	Note 6
<b>Content</b> • ingredients • tools • instruction	Incomplete (missing parts) → the reader can't follow the process	Something is missing but the reader can still follow the process	All ingredients with amounts All tools All steps are mentioned	All ingredients with amounts All tools Steps are clear and easy to follow (step by step)
<b>Structure</b> • title • list of ingredients / tools • instruction	No list Text without paragraphs No order	No list (one text) Text with instruction is easy to follow	Ingredients, tools and instruction are separately mentioned	Title List is separately mentioned before the instruction All steps are in the correct order.
<b>Language</b> • vocabulary • grammar • spelling	Wrong words Wrong tense and wrong word order in the sentences Impossible to understand Many mistakes in the spelling (more than 20)	Easy words but not precise Many repetitions of the same word Some mistakes in word order and tense. Many mistakes in spelling	Easy and precise words with few repetitions Few mistakes in spelling Few mistakes in word order and tense	Precise words Use different words (e.g. verbs) Almost no mistakes in word order and tense Almost no mistakes in spelling
<b>Creativity / Neatness</b> • decoration • writing • -writing	Dirty paper, Writing is hard to read	Writing is easy to read Sheet is clean	Writing with colours Only little decoration No picture or drawing Nice and clear writing	Picture, drawings and decoration Very nice writing with colours

*Invitation to a breakfast with entertainment*

Dear students,

We cordially invite you to a breakfast buffet. We wanted to thank you that you took part in our project. We hope that you will like tomorrow because we have made a big effort.

So the process will look like this:

1. We welcome you.
2. We go to other rooms in groups.
3. We say goodbye.

**Where:** in school Auhof 8051 Zürich  
**Time:** 8:50-9:50 am  
**Date:** 16.12.2015  
**Room:** 6



*Palacinke, a Serbian specialty served tomorrow*



Figure 6: Invitation.

**Figure 4: Feedback to use the rubric**

You decided to write another which sounds very promising. Just make sure your story satisfies the criteria of the rubrics.

**Figure 5: General feedback**

- Feedback (10.11.2015)
- Look up the underlined words (dictionary or resource book) and write them correctly
  - From „On a holiday“ on; write all verbs in the past tense
  - Start all sentences big
  - Write „i“ (ich) big („I“)
  - Write the corrected story on a new sheet of paper.

The decision

Alex the 20 year old adventures and Ivor the 30 years old mage are ~~competing~~ <sup>competing</sup> to own the jungle beside their town. The Mayor of ~~the~~ the city didn't want the forest anymore, so he announced a competition. Many knights, adventures, Barbarians and other brave warriors ~~competed~~ competed in the arena. Alex and Ivor were the best among them.



Figure 7: Story introduction.