

Grading for Learning: The Meaning Behind Number Grades

Grades must be purposeful; must communicate what a student knows, has learned, and is able to do. Grading scales should indicate where a student is along the continuum of mastery. Since there are multiple learning goals, grades can be broken down into product criteria:

- Performance Criteria –based per specific criteria
- Process Criteria – includes effort of work habits
- Progress Criteria – based on improvement.

Standards based grading is typically associated with a rubric that uses a four (4) point scale-based assessment. The following is an example of Performance Criteria used by 5th grade teachers.

5th Grade Performance Rubric				
	4 Advanced	3 Proficient	2 Developing	1 Incomplete
Meeting Targets	Met and expanded on all criteria of learning target(s)	Met all criteria of learning target(s)	Met some, but not all, of the criteria of learning target(s)	Met minimal or no criteria of the learning target(s)
Critical Thinking	Consistently shows evidence of higher level thinking skills*	Shows some evidence of higher level thinking skills*	Shows minimal or inconsistent evidence of higher level thinking skills*	Shows minimal or no higher level thinking skills*
Communication	Clearly communicates understanding and expands on all ideas	Clearly communicates understanding of most ideas	Inconsistently communicates understanding of ideas	Unclearly communicates understanding of ideas
What does this mean to a 5th grader?	Fully loaded I-Phone (Internet, texting, camera, video, apps)	Regular Cell Phone (texting, calling from anywhere, camera)	Land line phone (only works at your house)	No phone (have to walk next door to talk to your neighbor)