

Build a Better Rubric for Stating and Supporting a Position

Learner Outcome

Grade 6 Social Studies

6.2.3.5

To what extent were democratic ideals of equity and fairness part of the structure of government and society in ancient Athens?

THE NON-EXAMPLE

CRITERIA	Excellent	Proficient	Adequate
State and support position	I can provide evidence to support my opinion about the fairness and equity of government and society in Ancient Athens.	I can provide examples of fairness and equity in the government and society of Ancient Athens.	I can describe the government and society of Ancient Athens.

An AAC Non-example
FOR DISCUSSION
PURPOSES ONLY

Let's Talk about It

Many rubrics available through online sources attempt to differentiate the quality of student responses by using a taxonomy of critical thinking levels, such as in the above rubric. While well-intentioned, this practice misses the intent of the learning outcome.

With the above rubric, students could receive a score of 'proficient' or 'adequate' without actually demonstrating the skill of stating and supporting a position. There may be little motivation for students to learn and internalize the skill if they receive passing 'grades' for *not* demonstrating the skill.

A BETTER CHOICE

CRITERIA	Excellent	Proficient	Adequate
State and support position	I can provide persuasive evidence to support my opinion about the fairness and equity of government and society in Ancient Athens.	I can provide relevant evidence to support my opinion about the fairness and equity of government and society in Ancient Athens.	I can provide simplistic evidence to support my opinion about the fairness and equity of government and society in Ancient Athens.

Let's Talk about It

The above rubric descriptors are based on the *quality* of the evidence that students provide to support their opinion. Such descriptors may be critiqued as being 'too subjective'; however, through the use of exemplars, teachers and students can come to a common understanding of what various levels of quality 'look like' in student work. Ongoing formative feedback (from the teacher and peers) can assist students to improve their work in progress.

The benefit of consistently using rubrics that are clearly focused on the required skills is that students can work towards a better understanding of each skill. They will become more proficient with its use over time.