

Workshop, Grades 2-3

Assessment

Research rubrics help teachers monitor students' progress as researchers and as team members by providing the teacher with a list of specific behaviors that indicate progress for each step in the inquiry/exploration cycle. Rubrics also provide support and direction for instruction. These rubrics can be found on the Assessment pages in the beginning of each lesson in Levels 2-6 of *Open Court Reading* ©2002. For example, the research rubrics for Level 6, Unit 2, Lesson 1, which goes with this course, are on page 114J in the Level 6, Unit 2 *Teacher's Edition*. In *SRA Imagine It!* Inquiry rubrics found in the Level Appendix provide similar support to guide teachers in monitoring student progress.

Students engage in research and inquiry activities based on the unit concepts. They will present the findings of their research to the class. In this way, they exhibit the wealth of knowledge and understanding they have gained about that particular concept. In addition to gaining knowledge about the concepts, students will be honing their research skills. Students should also:

- Become more and more sophisticated in their ability to formulate questions.
- Make conjectures about those questions.
- Recognize their own information needs and conduct research to find that information.
- Reevaluate their questions and conjectures as new information is added to their knowledge base.
- Communicate their findings effectively.
- Become more and more adept at working as a team and being aware of the progress made as individuals and as a group.

Research Rubrics

Rubrics for each phase of the inquiry/exploration cycle are listed below.

Formulating Research Questions and Problems

1. With help, identifies things he or she wonders about in relation to a topic.
2. Expresses curiosity about topics; with help, translates this into specific questions.
3. Poses an interesting problem or question for research; with help, refines it into a researchable question.
4. Identifies something he or she genuinely wonders about and translates it into a researchable question.

Making Conjectures

1. Offers conjectures that are mainly expressions of fact or opinion. ("I think the Anasazi lived a long time ago." "I think tigers should be protected.")
2. Offers conjectures that partially address the research question. ("I think germs make you sick because they get your body upset." "I think germs make you sick because they multiply really fast.")
3. Offers conjectures that address the research question with guesses. ("I think the Anasazi were wiped out by a meteor.")
4. Offers reasonable conjectures that address the question and that can be improved through further research.

Recognizing Information Needs

1. Identifies topics about which more needs to be learned. ("I need to learn more about the brain.")
2. Identifies information needs that are relevant though not essential to the research question. ("To understand how Leeuwenhoek invented the microscope, I need to know what size germs are.")
3. Identifies questions that are deeper than the one originally asked. (Original question: "How does the heart work?" Deeper question: "Why does blood need to circulate?")

Finding Needed Information

1. Collects information loosely related to topic.
2. Collects information clearly related to topic.
3. Collects information helpful in advancing on a research problem.
4. Collects problem-relevant information from varied sources and notices inconsistencies and missing pieces.
5. Collects useful information, paying attention to the reliability of sources and reviewing information critically.

Revising Problems and Conjectures

1. No revision.
2. Produces new problems or conjectures with little relation to earlier ones.
3. Tends to lift problems and conjectures directly from reference material.
4. Progresses to deeper, more refined problems and conjectures.

Communicating Research Progress and Results

1. Reporting is sparse and fragmentary.
2. Report is factual; communicates findings but not the thinking behind them.
3. Report provides a good picture of the research problem, of how original conjectures were modified in light of new information, and of difficulties and unresolved issues.
4. Report not only interests and informs the audience, but also draws helpful commentary from them.

Overall Assessment of Research

1. A collection of facts related in miscellaneous ways to a topic.
2. An organized collection of facts relevant to the research problem.
3. A thoughtful effort to tackle a research problem, with some indication of progress toward solving it.
4. Significant progress on a challenging problem of understanding.

Collaborative Group Work

1. Group members work on separate tasks with little interaction.
2. Work-related decisions are made by the group, but there is little interaction related to ideas.
3. Information and ideas are shared, but there is little discussion concerned with advancing understanding.
4. The group clearly progresses in its thinking beyond where individual students could have gone.

Participation in Collaborative Inquiry

1. Does not contribute ideas or information to team or class.
2. Makes contributions to Concept/Question Board or class discussions when specifically called upon to do so.

3. Occasionally contributes ideas or information to other students' inquiries.
4. Takes an active interest in the success of the knowledge-building efforts of the whole class.

Informal Assessment

Working on the research for each unit requires a tremendous amount of discussion and collaboration on the part of the students. These discussions are a prime opportunity to conduct informal assessments of the students' increase in subject area knowledge, their growing ability as researchers, and their role as a group member.

Choose one or two students each day to pay particular attention to. Watch how they interact with the group and how they use their Workshop time. Pay particular attention to their responses during class discussions.

You do not have to assess every student every day. Once or twice during the course of an inquiry/investigation project will provide much information about each student's progress.

The Inquiry Journal

The *Inquiry Journal* can give you a good overall picture of how the students are progressing as researchers. With each new unit, the information they gather and the manner in which they organize their time and efforts will be evident in the *Inquiry Journal*. Although the *Inquiry Journal* is not a good source of specific subject-related assessment, it is an excellent source for assessing students' abilities to solve problems, gather pertinent information, synthesize input, and draw conclusions from that input. The *Skills Practice* component of ***SRA Imagine It!*** plays a similar role in assessing students' abilities.