

“Potato Chip Rubrics” – Lesson Plan

(How to Understand a Rubric)

- Audience** Parents of school aged children attending public school - approximately 20
(Can be adjusted to accommodate more if necessary)
- Goal** Parents will better understand how rubrics are used in the classroom as a tool to evaluate student work. This will strengthen their tools to better guide their children’s learning at home.
- Objective** To help parents understand the concept of rubrics as an assessment tool. This is particularly useful before Parent Teacher Conference Week, or when explaining to parents about standards-based grading.
- Time Needed** 15 – 30 minutes (Can easily be extended or shortened)
- Materials**
- “What is a Rubric?” Handout (available in this packet)
 - “Potato Chip Rubrics judging page” Handout (available in this packet)
 - Sample rubrics from teachers of different grade levels in your school
 - Small bowls
 - Permanent Marker
 - Napkins
 - Pencils (one for each parent)
 - 1 cylinder Pringles Potato Chips
 - 1 bag Maui Potato Chips
 - 1 bag “Veggie” Chips
 - 1 bag Brand X Potato Chips (Any brand, made soggy with water prior to the presentation)

Procedure

Set up

1. Arrange chairs and tables so that parents can sit in clusters of 4. Set napkins and pencils at each place setting.
2. Each cluster will share four bowls of the different brands of potato chips. Fill each bowl with potato chips, and use the permanent marker to label the bowl with the corresponding brand.

Introduction/Explanation

1. Welcome parents and explain the purpose of the demonstration.
2. Distribute “What is a Rubric?” Handout.

Points to include:

- A rubric* is a tool used to grade student work
- Rubrics show students how their work will be graded, and what is expected of them
- Rubrics help teachers to be consistent in their grading
- Rubrics help students and teachers know what quality work should look like
- A rubric can be used by teachers to evaluate written work, handson projects, oral presentations, and student behavior
- Students are using rubrics to evaluate their own work and behavior

Demonstration

1. Distribute “Potato Chip Rubric” judging page.
2. Explain that parents will now experience firsthand how to use a rubric as an evaluation tool. Although they may have their own biases about potato chips, and may already know which of the brands their favorite is, they **MUST** stick to rubric that is provided and judge the chip according to the rubric.
3. Once everyone clearly understands the task, have him or her evaluate each brand of potato chip. Allow 5 minutes. Encourage each parent to work individually before discussing with other parents.
4. Allow time for discussion between parents and facilitator. Below are some questions/topics for this discussion.

Questions/ Topics of Discussion

Was this harder than you thought? Why? Explain that this is what teachers have to do when they are evaluating student work.

- How else are rubrics relevant to your life, besides at school?
- If you were a potato chip maker, would having this rubric **BEFORE** you made your recipe help? Explain that when children have a rubric *before* they begin a project, they know exactly what is expected of them, and what they need to do in order to get a good grade.