

GRADING WITH INTEGRITY

FSP requires that two report cards be submitted each year for each child. Report cards can be a wonderful means of grace – for both parents and students. When students see their academic progress on paper, it can be an opportunity for them to rejoice over progress during any given quarter, semester or year. Many families use report cards as an occasion for principal (dad) participation. Dad can review report cards, encourage and exhort where necessary. Report cards can also be a great opportunity to go out for a special celebratory ice-cream to commemorate all that God is doing in your homeschool.

WHY OBJECTIVELY GRADE/MEASURE PROGRESS

Building vision for progress reports will help your child enjoy, and not dread involvement, assessment and grading time. Knowing that parents are involved and enthusiastic about growth can help your child be secure and confident about his or her progress, and understand that there are reasonable and concrete expectations for growth in the homeschool.

- Offers critical information to the principal (dad) so that he is informed and can effectively lead the family and homeschool
- Provides clear goals
- Creates unambiguous targets for improvement
- Encourages and rewards areas of excellence
- Affords evidence of academic growth and reasonable promotion to the next grade
- Presents helpful standards for providing evidence of successful schooling, academic progress, promotion to the next grade, and mastery of materials essential for transcripts and admission to most colleges
- Imparts grace, supplies a reason to celebrate
- Report cards should include student's full name, grade, school year, and parents' names

Grading with Integrity

“...You need to determine how you will evaluate your students' work. Will you use tests, papers, oral reports, or other measures? Next, decide what percentage of the final grade each test, quiz, paper, or other assignment will contribute to the final grade. You should determine these percentages before beginning a course...It is unethical to change a percentage simply to raise a student's final grade in the course.”

-Jeanne Gowen

Dennis

“Homeschooling High School, Planning Ahead for College Admission”

Progress Reports Online

Cindy Downes (Oklahoma)

Lots of forms!

Scroll down to find "report cards."

<http://www.oklahomahomeschool.com/forms.html#okhsforms>

Microsoft Office Report Card Templates

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/report-card-TC030001828.aspx>

Nelson Stuff

Click "forms," scroll down to find "progress reports."

<http://mysite.verizon.net/vzeqs0bu/id1.html>

Measuring Progress Isn't Just a Letter Grade (Although It Can Be)

➤ **Clear Goals can be translated into measurable progress.** Add character components or strategies to progress report to help children both understand goals and work towards something achievable. Note: this can be particularly helpful for LD kids.

Practical Example 1: Honesty measured in terms "Excellent, Satisfactory, Needs Improvement, Unsatisfactory"

Practical Example 2: Sitting in your seat or completing a difficult task earns a gold star, a reward, or commendation from the principal (dad)

➤ For Elementary Grades (esp. K-3): **Excellent, Satisfactory Needs Improvement, Unsatisfactory** can be used to measure progress, effort, or both.

Please See Elementary Report Card Sample below.

➤ **Summary Progress Reports** as a supplementary way of measuring progress (this helps as a means of grace to encourage students who may be weak in a given area but are putting forth grand effort but not seeing significant progress)

➤ **Pass/Fail** for Bible, Drama, or other difficult to measure subjects.

Please see Elementary, Middle School and High School sections for more specific grading information at each level.

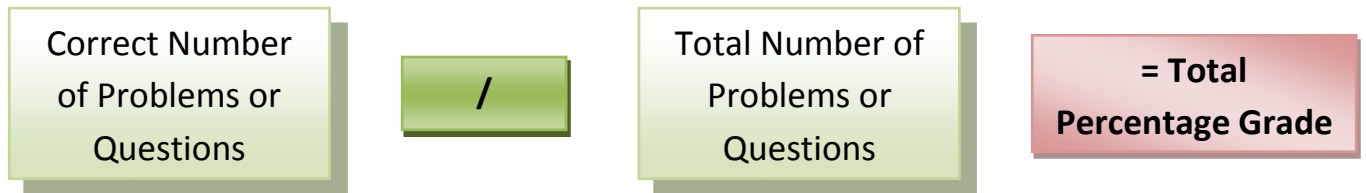
Grading

LETTER GRADES FOR THE “HARD” STUFF

Math, science and any subject from a curriculum vendor with tests, quizzes and other objective ways of measuring progress are relatively easy to grade. However, subjects like writing can be fewer objectives, and therefore more challenging to grade. That’s why we’re providing a little extra information to help you through this process.

CALCULATING A NON-WEIGHTED GRADE

Converting a number grade to a letter grade to find a percentage grade is a straightforward process. This is how it works:



Thus, suppose little Sally is working diligently on her Saxon Math problems. She finishes 42 problems. You grade her work, and she gets 39 of the problems correct. This how it works:



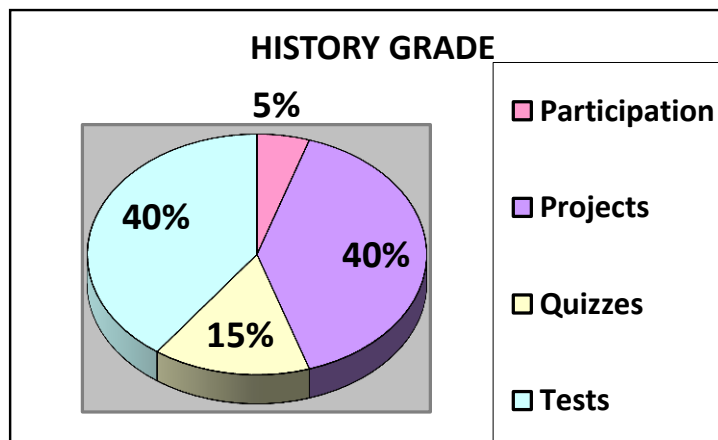
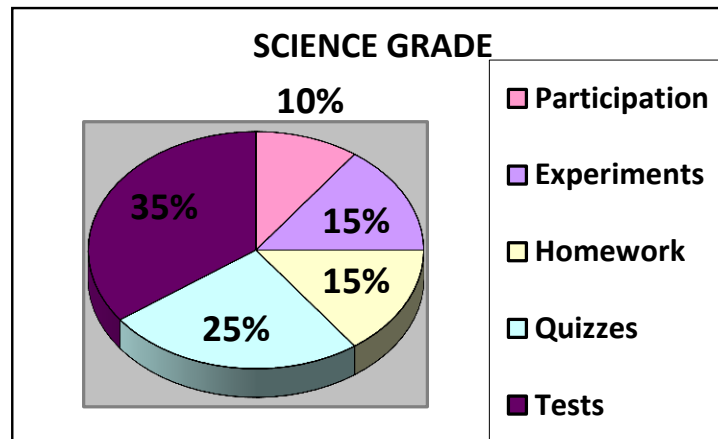
CALCULATING A FINAL WEIGHTED GRADE

Many teachers, especially those who provide grades for High School classes provide “weighted” grades. This means that tests, projects, homework, class participation, papers and the like are given different percentages and each percentage is calculated into the final grade. Weighting grades are particularly helpful when an instructor has incorporated goals into their grading methodology. For example, if an instructor wants to make sure that each student diligently completes all of his or her homework – then the instructor can provide a weighted percentage of the grade for homework. Similarly, if the student is taking an outside class and the instructor wants to insure that students participate fully, then having a percentage of the grade allotted for class participation is a fair representation of the teacher’s goal. Many curriculums (A Beka, Bob Jones, and Sing Spell Read Write) include weighted grading criteria.

Observe The Following Hypothetical Science & History Grade Distribution:

Note: *Participation Grades are particularly relevant for outside classes because they are a good component to add as a standard of measure for class participation. In a homeschool setting, participation should not be the determining grade since this is not an*

objective, standard, or typical measure of progress. However, rewarding participation is a nice way to reward effort (as a smaller component of the overall grade).



Grading

Hypothetical Weighted Grade

You calculate an average by adding every grade to find the total, then dividing the total by the number of tests (or assignments, etc.). For example, suppose during the first Quarter, Sally had the following grades for her Science Tests:

Test One: 89%

Test Two: 92%

Test Three: 88%

Total: 269

Divide by 3 (Number of Tests): $269/3=89.66666$ (Round to 90%)

*To Derive Sally's Quarterly & Final Grade, This Table Illustrates the Process
(Multiply each of Sally's Grades by the weighted percentage):*

Quarter	Participation	Experiments	Quizzes	Tests	Homework	Total
1	100 X .10 = 10.00	95 X .15 =14.25	95 X .15 =14.25	90 X .35 =31.50	94 X .25 =23.50	10.00 14.25 14.25 31.50 <u>+ 23.50</u> 93.50
2	100 X .10 = 10.00	90 X .15 =13.50	90 X .15 =13.50	86 X .35 =30.10	92 X .25 =23.00	10.00 13.50 13.50 30.10 <u>+ 23.00</u> 90.10
3	100 X .10 = 10.00	95 X .15 =14.25	95 X .15 =14.25	89 X .35 =31.15	89 X .25 =22.25	10.00 14.25 14.25 31.15 <u>+ 22.25</u> 91.90

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Quarter	Participation	Experiments	Quizzes	Tests	Homework	Total
4	100 X .10 = 10.00	100 X .15 = 15.00	100 X .15 = 15.00	92 X.35 =32.20	96 X .25 =24.00	10.00 15.00 15.00 32.20 <u>+ 24.00</u> 96.20
Final Average of all 4 Quarters	10 +10 +10+10=40 40/4= 10.00	14.25+13.5+ 14.35+15 =57 57/4 = 14.25	14.25+13.5+ 14.35+15 =57 57/4 = 14.25	31.5+30.1+ 31.15+32.2 = 124.95/4= 31.24 (Rounded)	23.50+23.00+2 2.25+24.00= 92.75/4= 23.20 (Rounded)	10.00 14.25 14.25 31.24 <u>+ 23.20</u> 92.94 Rounded: 93.00

WHAT IS A RUBRIC?

Heidi Goodrich, a rubrics expert, defines a rubric as "a scoring tool that lists the criteria for a piece of work or "what counts." So a rubric for a multimedia project will list the things the student must have included to receive a certain score or rating. Rubrics help the student figure out how their project will be evaluated. Goodrich quotes a student who said he didn't much care for rubrics because "if you get something wrong, your teacher can prove you knew what you were supposed to do."

Generally rubrics specify the level of performance expected for several levels of quality. These levels of quality may be written as different ratings (e.g., Excellent, Good, Needs Improvement) or as numerical scores (e.g., 4, 3, 2, 1) which are then added up to form a total score which then is associated with a grade (e.g., A, B, C, etc).

Grading

Rubrics are particularly helpful for harder to measure subjects like projects, English composition, and some electives. For English composition, 6+1 writing traits is an excellent standard for measuring writing, and many rubrics for this particular standard are online.

<http://www.nwrel.org/assessment/pdf/rubrics/6plus1traits.pdf>

Please see the appendix for a description of the 6+1 writing traits. If you are interested in learning how to grade writing, there is a plethora of online information. If you would like a hard copy resource, Ruth Culham's, "6 + 1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide (Grades 3 And Up)" is a viable resource for learning how to grade using 6+1 rubrics.

LEARNING DISABILITIES

FSP provides advice, referral information and some special assistance for students with learning disabilities. FIN (Families with Instructional Needs) is a program developed to provide additional services of FSP families with children who struggle with various learning disabilities.

- Learning disabilities may need to be assessed differently, and with help. This is called "making accommodations. It is completely acceptable and even standard practice within public schools, to adjust curriculum and expectations for students with learning disabilities.
- Learning Disabilities of America has helpful information on individual progress and what that can look like:
<http://www.ldaamerica.org/>.
- An Excellent Hard Copy Resource: For help in establishing strategies and setting goals, is the "**Pre-Referral Intervention Manual (PRIM)-Third Edition,**" by Stephen B. McCarney, Ed.D., Kathy Cummins Wunderlich, M.Ed., Edited by Sann N. House.

Homeschooling Your Struggling Learner by Kathy Kuhl

Special Needs

From HSLDA:

"What does Home School Legal Defense Association consider a special need?"

Generally, we define a special needs child as one who is working two or more years behind grade level in his subjects, a child who has been receiving special education services, or a child with any other disability that greatly impacts his or her ability to learn."

Homeschooling a Special Learner

http://www.hslda.org/strugglinglearner/s_n_questions.asp

Grading