

Co-creating Criteria

What does co-creating criteria mean and why use it?

“Criteria are, simply the standards by which something can be judged or valued. When we determine these criteria, we are deciding what counts. When students take part in developing criteria, they are much more likely to understand what is expected of them, ‘buy in,’ and then accomplish the task successfully.” (Gregory, Cameron, Davies, 1997)

Teachers working together with students to co-create criteria allows for the establishment of clear learning goals. Students will be able to understand what they will be learning and how they will be assessed. The process of co-creating criteria is a student centered one that allows students to create their own understanding of what is significant in assignments. Students who are involved in co-creating criteria are able to set goals, self assess, and improve their overall learning experience. (Davies, 2000)

How do we co-create criteria with students?

In their book, *Setting and Using Criteria* Gregory et al. (1997) provides a four step process for setting criteria with students:

- Step one: Brainstorm.
- Step two: Sort and categorize.
- Step three: Make and post a T-chart.
- Step four: Add, revise, refine.

The first three steps of this process are carried out either before or as students are beginning their projects and assignments. It’s important to set criteria before beginning the assignment or during the planning stages.

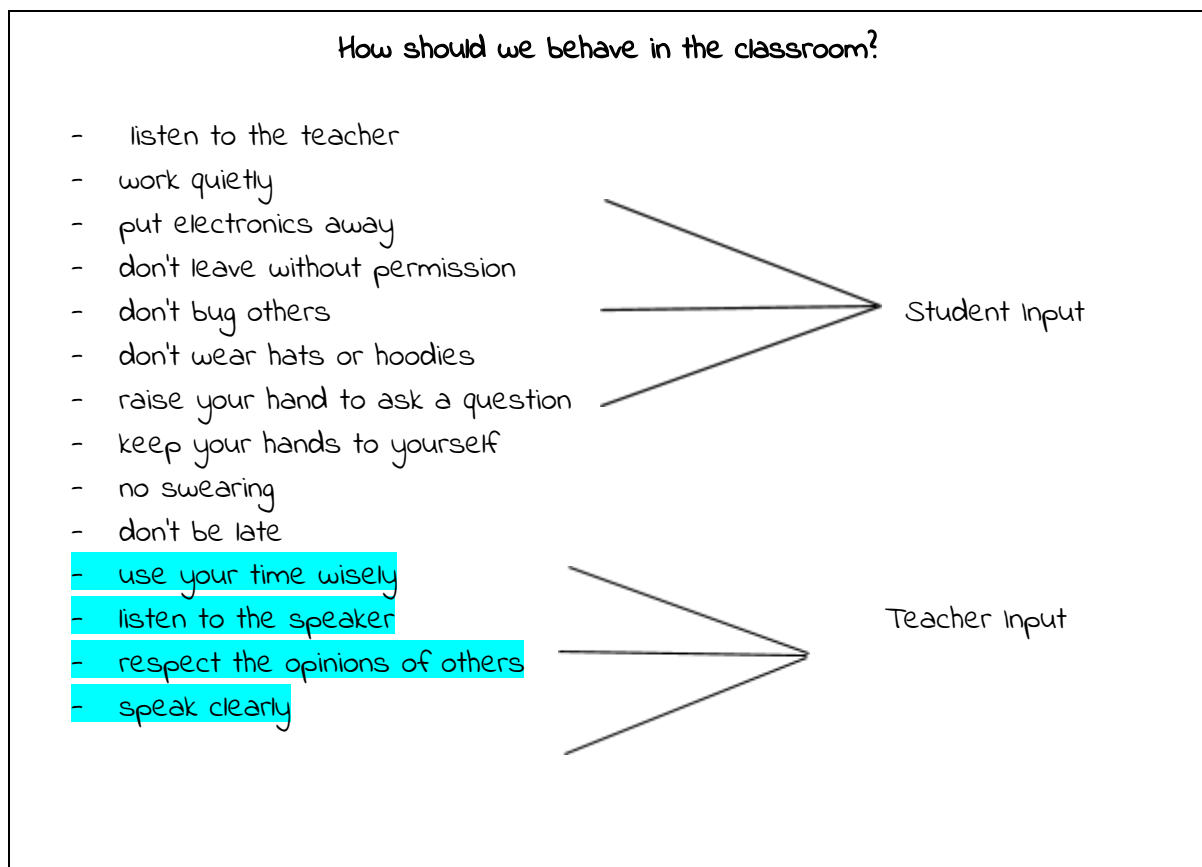
How do I introduce the co-creating criteria to students?

Introducing the co-creating criteria should begin with a simple process that allows students to voice their opinions in the classroom. Multiple methods can be used to introduce the technique to students for the first time. One such method can occur when implementing classroom rules and expectations. The key is to have students be actively involved.

Example:

Step 1: Brainstorm

Start with asking the students a question: How should we behave in the classroom? Have the students give their responses and create a list on chart paper or on the board. Add your own ideas to ensure important details are not missed.



Step 2: Sort and Categorize

In order to assist students in remembering the criteria, we need to sort the attributes into three to five groups. Ask the class to find any patterns or ideas that fit together.

Using different colours, label each idea with a symbol representing a larger concept (see below). This will give students a more manageable number of ideas to work with.

How should we behave in the classroom?

- listen to the teacher - L&S
- work quietly - WE
- put electronics away - R
- don't leave without permission - R
- don't bug others - R
- don't wear hats or hoodies - R
- raise your hand to ask a question - L&S
- keep your hands to yourself - R
- no swearing - R
- don't be late - WE
- use your time wisely - WE
- listen to the speaker - L&S
- respect the opinions of others - L&S
- speak clearly - L&S

We have a number of ideas about Respect; let's code those with 'R'.

There is also a lot about Work Ethic, which we will code with 'WE'.

When we look at the ideas we have left, they're mainly about Listening and Speaking. Let's code these ideas with 'L&S'.

Step 3: Make and Post a T-Chart

For this step, draw a large T-chart. Label the headings with “Criteria for Classroom Behaviours” on the left, and “Details/Specifics” on the right (see below). Transfer your big ideas onto the left-hand side of the T-chart. Write the specific ideas opposite the criteria they relate to. Post the T-chart where students can access it. Then ask the class if they have any additional details that they would like to add that would support the criteria.

Criteria for Classroom Behaviour	Details / Specifics
- Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- put electronics away- don't leave without permission- don't bug others- don't wear hats or hoodies- keep hands to self- no swearing
- Work Ethic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- work quietly- don't be late- use time wisely
- Listening & Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- listen to teacher- raise hand to ask question- listen to speaker- respect opinion of others- speak clearly

By going through the process of co-creating the T-chart, students will identify their **goals** for that particular assignment. This is the first stage of self-assessment.

Step 4: Add, Revise, Refine

The T-chart is a living document. Review the criteria periodically as needed, and ask if any ideas need to be added, removed, or revised. If any changes are made, date the adjustments (see below). This practice will indicate to the students that setting criteria is an ongoing process.

Criteria for Classroom Behaviour	Details / Specifics
- Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- put electronics away- don't leave without permission- don't bug others- don't wear hats or hoodies- keep hands to self- no swearing- don't take other students' supplies (Oct.)
- Work Ethic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- work quietly- don't be late- use time wisely- complete work on time (Nov.)
- Listening & Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- listen to teacher- raise hand to ask question- listen to speaker- respect opinion of others- speak clearly- participate in class discussions (Jan.)

What are some scenarios for setting criteria with students?

“There are five scenarios to use when setting criteria with students. Although originally designed for specific subject areas, they are easily transferable to other curricular areas. Find the one(s) that best fit you, your students, and your subject area.” (Gregory et al., 1997)

1. Using personal experience (ie. “What makes a good friend?”)
2. Using familiar classroom experiences (ie. “What counts when I do a social studies map?”)
3. Using specific examples (ie. “What is common in the ‘level 4’ science lab reports from previous years?”)
4. Starting with outcomes (ie. “What are you expected to learn in the addition of fractions?”)
5. Beginning with students’ ideas (ie. “What should I notice in your research project?”)

The criteria created by you and your students is not only useful for teacher evaluation, it can be used as a tool for students to set goals, self-assess and eventually self-reflect.

The image shows a student's handwritten criteria for an alternative energy poster on the left and a printed rubric table on the right.

Handwritten Criteria (Left):

- answers question a complete sentence
- no "because"
- it has part of the question in it
- plain response to question
- int

Handwritten Criteria (Right):

- SHOWS How it works
- Pros
- Cons
- easy to read
- factual
- creative
- informative
- colorful
- attractive
- neat
- organized
- alt energy content
- design elements
- poster elements
- facts
- answers to questions

Printed Rubric Table (Right):

Criteria	3	2	1
Alternative Energy Content	Poster includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurate and detailed definition Multiple pros and cons Accurate and detailed description of how it is created Accurate and detailed description of how it works and is used Locations of where it is used in the U.S. and around the world Cost to build, generate, and use the power produced 	Poster includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed definition A couple pros and cons Description of how it is created Description of how it works and is used Locations of where it is used in the U.S. Some mention of costs 	Poster includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief definition One, or two, pros and cons Vague, or unclear, description of how it is created Vague, or unclear, description of how it works and is used One location of where it is used Mention of cost
Poster Elements	Poster is organized with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clearly visible and creative title Subtitled sections Facts and information are listed in detailed, complete sentences At least 4 relevant images 	Poster is organized with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A visible title Sections Facts listed in complete sentences At least 2 to 3 images 	Poster has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title, though may be unclear Listed facts 1 image
Design	Created poster is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Made with noticeable effort Very easy to read Exceptionally neat Colorful Fully and creatively represents the alternative 	Created poster is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Made with some effort Readable Neat Somewhat colorful Represents alternative energy source 	Created poster is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Somewhat readable Plain in design

(Steele, 2016)

What are some ways that teachers can assess?

When both teachers and students have agreed to set criteria, teachers will need to determine how student performance will be assessed in relation to that criteria. As teachers we will shift from comparing students' work with one another, to analysing it in relation to the criteria. It also helps students move beyond their focus on 'grades' or 'numbers' and concentrate more on their learning. Students see what they did well and in what areas they can improve.

One way of assessing student's work is to use assessment sheets that provide specific feedback about their work, and over time can provide them a profile of their progress.

Sample Assessment Sheet

Headings here vary according to the assessment approach

Title of assignment or project

The criteria, or what counts in the project or assignment

Teacher or student may request a conference when they need more information

Date the work was received

Assessment may be made by teacher, student, peer, or someone such as a parent or principal

The teacher or student can record pertinent questions

Criteria	
for _____	
Conference requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Question(s):
Date(s) received:	
Assessed by: <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Self <input type="checkbox"/> Peer <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Assignment: Student:

Graphic can be found on page 13 of:

<https://supporting-assessment.wikispaces.com/file/view/Setting+and+Using+Criteria+with+Students+August+2011+Workbook.pdf>

Criteria for:			
Conference requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Question(s):		
Date(s) received:			
Addressed by: <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Self <input type="checkbox"/> Peer <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Assignment: Student(s):		

(Adapted from Gregory et al., 1997)

Criteria for:		group work		
		Performance Grid		
		3	2	1
-	get along	enjoyed working together as a team	got along well	most got along with other group members
-	Share ideas	everyone contributed	most contributed (some more than others)	some contributed (others needed to be asked)
-	Listen to others	all members felt listened to	most group members listened to others	some members needed reminders to listen
-	Finish the job	completed all work on time (and thoroughly)	got the job done (may have rushed parts)	needed more time to finish
-	use voices that don't bother others	consistently used quiet voices	reasonably quiet most of the time	attempted to use quiet voices (needed reminders)
Conference requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Question(s): what <u>one</u> thing would your group need to do differently next time to get the job done?			
Date(s) received: October 17				
Addressed by <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Self <input type="checkbox"/> Peer <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Assignment:	Group work on poetry unit		
	Student(s):	Deanna L., Lance G., Mary W.		

(Gregory et al., 1997)

Assessment sheets are a simple but effective way of directly including criteria that has been co-created. With this approach, the focus is on providing a range of descriptions of student performance, written in student language. This way, each individual can see where he or she fits in the overall picture and what he or she needs to work on next, providing a frame of reference so students can see where they fit and set realistic goals.

Follow the four step co-creating process while keeping in mind the five scenarios for setting criteria to make realistic assessment guides for both you and your students.

What are some ways that students can self-assess?

In order to engage students in self-assessment, teachers need to give their students time to process their learning. Students also need to give themselves feedback. This will ensure that they are self-monitoring, which will focus their learning.

Acronyms are a great tool in helping students to self-assess. This is a fun and easy way to direct and focus student goals. A possible acronym for the T-chart sample on page five could be: REWELS (**R**espect, **W**ork Ethic, **L**istening & **S**peaking).

original Criteria for Soccer Unit

[P]erform skills
[A]ctively involved in group play
[S]et a personal challenge
[S]how understanding of rules

Acronym is **PASS**

1. Examine the criteria to find key words that can be worked into an acronym.
2. Post the acronym for students to refer to.
3. Assess student performance by recording the letter(s) of the acronym that students have met. Indicate in writing the areas that they still need to work on.

(Gregory et al., 1997)

Criteria for Beginning Reader Response

[B]ring a book
[R]ead for 15 minutes
[O]wn work focus (don't distract others)
[w]rite 5 lines

Acronym is **BROW**

B
W

Assessment

work on keeping your focus and reading a bit longer!

-Y.T.

R
O
W

Assessment

I had to give you a book today; please remember to bring your own tomorrow.

-Y.T.

How do we give feedback?

“The more specific, descriptive feedback students receive while they are learning, the more learning is possible” (Davies, 2000). Davies suggest three ways for teachers to increase student success through possible feedback:

1. Involving students in setting criteria in order to give themselves feedback;
2. Providing model exemplars for students to use to help them reach quality;
3. Asking students to assess their peers in relation to criteria and models.

Why is it important to set goals?

“Brain research is indicating that closing in on a goal triggers a part of the brain linked to motivation” (Davies, 2000). Once students are clear on the criteria, setting goals become more specific and realistic. Goals may be short term or long term, depending on the teacher’s focus for the student. See page 12 in this document for a student worksheet on goal setting.

Why is student reflection important?

In order to complete the process, students can reflect on their goal setting and learning. Conferencing with each student helps to clarify intentions and areas needed for improvement. For more ideas, consider the ALLC’s document on self-reflection:

<http://www.frontiersd.mb.ca/programs/Documents/Final%20Self-ReflectionEXT.pdf>

Conclusion

“When we set criteria for assignments, we establish what counts. When we involve students in setting the criteria, we increase their understanding and ownership. When we assess students’ work in relation to the criteria without using numbers, we keep the focus on learning. Assessing and evaluating in ways that support the learning of all our students is what counts for us” (Davies, 2000).

Goal Setting

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Subject area: _____ Teacher: _____

Goal: _____

Evidence: _____

Subject area: _____ Teacher: _____

Goal: _____

Evidence: _____

Subject area: _____ Teacher: _____

Goal: _____

Evidence: _____

(Davies, 2000)

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Summary of Evidence of Learning

As you review my evidence, please notice...

I am most proud of...

I worked hard on...

One thing I could do to improve is...

One word that describes my work in class is...

(Davies, 2000)

References

Davies, A. (2000) *Making Classroom Assessment Work*. Courtenay B.C.: Classroom Connections International Inc.

Gregory, K., Cameron, C., Davies, A. (1997) *Setting and Using Criteria*. Courtenay B.C.: Classroom Connections International Inc.

Steele, M. (2016) *Co-created Rubric*. Twitter.

https://twitter.com/melonie_steele/status/690213694228140032

Resources

<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php> (create personalized rubrics)

<https://supporting-assessment.wikispaces.com/file/view/Setting+and+Using+Criteria+with+Students+August+2011+Workbook.pdf> (criteria templates as seen in ‘Setting and Using Criteria’ available on pages 13 to 25)