# How to improve your grades while shortening the time you spend on assignments!

This short lesson will help you focus your efforts and time to the areas of importance. This will also help you satisfy the requirements of the assignment which will in turn improve your grade. By the end of this lesson you will have learned how to write an assignment within a marking rubric.

Using this method to complete your assignments will allow you break the project down to smaller parts and enable you to ensure that you have met the criteria for each mark on the rubric. Once you have completed this lesson you will be able to grade your own assignment prior to submitting.

At the bottom of this lesson there is an assigned task including a very basic Grading rubric. This rubric is very much similar in style to the majority of these that are used in every level of learning.

By completing the assigned step by step task within the rubric provided you will have demonstrated your understanding of this new technique.

This lesson is available in video format at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gF-bzGLDdvA>

Retrieved from youtube.com April1 2015 Fredericks 2015

There is also a posting on instructables.com with the abbreviated lesson at <http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-improve-your-grades-while-shortening-the-ti/>

Retrieved from instructables.com April 1 2015 Fredericks 2015

## Summary

Our agenda for this lesson will consist of five individual sections. The first section will focus on what we are working with. Rubrics are the main section here so we will define and expand on this. The second part will concentrate on why we are putting our efforts into that area. Mainly why the rubric is so important to our assignment and why we need to satisfy it. Our third section will demonstrate the methods used to complete the task. This will use mostly the copy paste function of your word processor software with a focus on Microsoft word. Now how to work within the rubric is our fourth section. Here is where we learn to insert our work appropriately. Finally the fifth section you will use your new knowledge to demonstrate understanding of this material. This lesson will use a variety of learning techniques such as video demonstration, assigned reading and this lecture.

## The “Rubric”

This thing we call a rubric has become the norm in most learning environments and have been helpful as well as clarifying for most learners. The definition however has been lost to some and never given to many (particularly those just re-entering the learning environment).

The working definition of Rubric for this lesson will be “A detailed grading breakdown showing how a submission will be scored and were the marks are allotted”.

Two other definitions of rubric are available at the links below

<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rubric>

Retrieved from; www.merriam-Webster.com April 1 2015

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rubric_(academic)>

Retrieved from [www.wikipeidia.com](http://www.wikipeidia.com) April 1 2015

Important to note that this does not remove all subjectivity but does go a long way to communicating the weighting importance of the portions assignments by marks. In many cases examples are used to demonstrate what the instructor is looking for in material that can be considered subjective.

## Why The Rubric is so important

With a rubric explaining the grading scheme to us we now can see how the instructor feels about the various sections of the assignment. It would be typical to see a few marks dedicated to citing your work but the rubric would make it clear that this is not (or is) where the instructor wants you to focus.

Since you would now have a detailed breakdown of where the marks come from the possibility of breaking down the project to manageable sections is real. Treating each mark allotment as a paragraph assignment will make the task more manageable.

## How to Copy and paste

All of the word processing software I have ever worked with has had a copy and paste capabilities in it. The process is nearly identical for each of them.

1. Highlight the material.

Place the cursor at the top or bottom of the material to be copied left click and mouse over the material until it is all shown as highlighted.

1. Copy the material

Right click over the highlighted material and select the “copy” option from the drop down menu that appears.

1. Select the placement of the material

Place your cursor on the document you would like to copy the material to (cursor should be placed where you want the top of the material to land not the bottom).

1. Paste the material

Right click the mouse and select the paste option from the drop down menu that appears.

With Microsoft word being commonly used software we will post instruction links to specific instruction pages as well. This process will work similar on a PDF document as well as some imaging formats as well.

Here is a link to a video tutorial on the copy and paste functions using Microsoft word.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCZuybvBCp8>

Retrieved from [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)by SimpleK12 2011

This link to wiki how has a wide ranging assortment of copy and paste functions with very easy to understand instructions.

<http://www.wikihow.com/Copy-and-Paste>

Retrieved from [www.wikihow.com](http://www.wikihow.com) April 1 2015

## Working within the rubric

To start open a new document and copy the rubric onto it so you have a location to begin your work. For each mark allotted on the rubric enter the information required to achieve these marks. You may find that it is helpful to keep your work distinctly different from the copied text by using a different font color or highlighting the copied text (using bolt text or the underline option also work). Beginning with this the process becomes self-explanatory. The project now is broken down and manageable. Just follow through and ensure the requirements are met for each mark.

One of the strategies I use to ensure I’m getting as many marks as possible is to get the simple stuff out of the way first. For example if there are marks for name and date let’s start there, getting a quick two marks can lift the pressure and focus the mind. Often you will find that some areas are more difficult than others so leaving the parts that you have trouble with to concentrate on the easier parts will help maximise the time you spend on an assignment. Having completed parts of an assignment often clarifies and makes the rest of the work simpler.

Once you have completely satisfied the rubric (to best of your ability) you can now grade your assignment. On the more basic rubrics such as the one at the end of this lesson you will know your complete grade before you even submit the final version. With the subjective portions of a rubric you may wish to come up with a minimum and maximum mark in order to have an understanding of the range your project will score.

## Closing

With the entry of this thing we call a rubric gone are the days of not knowing where to start on an assignment. The expectations of the instructor are clearly laid out. Each mark is possible to achieve and it is important that we understand how to do that. Please use this system as a guide and feel free to adjust it to your own personal style even using parts of this system can have a significant impact on your grades.

## Warning

There is substitute for hard work! Your assignment will still need to be polished and submitted as a finished document (This will be addressed in a separate lesson)!

## Citations

Fredericks, Rick 2015 “How to improve your grades while spending less time on assignments” [www.instructables.com](http://www.instructables.com)

Rubric [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com) 2015

Copy and paste [www.wikihow.com](http://www.wikihow.com) 2015

Fredericks, Rick 2015 “How to improve your grades and spend less time on homework” [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

SimpleK12 2011 “Word 2010 - Cut, Copy, and Paste - Microsoft Office 2010 Training” [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

Grading Scheme

There are a total of ten marks to be obtained in this lesson.

1. Successfully copy and paste the rubric onto a new document to become your submission. 4/10 marks
2. Enter a selection for your favorite description of how to copy and paste using Microsoft word within the rubric. 2/10 marks
3. Your name and date of the submission are posted at the top of your assignment. 2/10 marks
4. Entering your self-marked total at the bottom of the submission. 2/10 marks