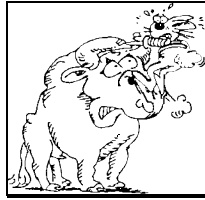


Grading Scenarios



Each of the following is a scenario that describes a decision a teacher has to make about assigning a grade. The teacher is unsure of what to do and has asked you for some advice. What advice would you give? What issues do each choice raise? What questions need to be considered before making a decision? What might be missing in a teacher's grading process for the situation to arise at all?

Scenario 1

In Mr. Nguyen's seventh grade social studies class, report card grades were based on quizzes, tests, and an out-of-class project which counted as 25% of the grade. Terry obtained an A average on his quizzes and tests but has not turned in the project despite frequent reminders. In this situation, Mr. Nguyen should:

- a. Exclude the missing project and give Terry an A.
- b. Assign Terry a 0 for the project and a F on his report card because his average would be 68%.
- c. Assign Terry a C, counting off some for not turning in the project.
- d. Something else...

Scenario 2

Mr. Marlowe's 9th grade class has students with varying ability levels. During this grading period, the students' grades are based on quizzes, tests, and homework assignments which involve working out exercises. Kelly has not turned in any homework assignments despite Mr. Marlowe's frequent reminders. Her grades on the quizzes have ranged from 65% to 75% (C to D), and she received a D on each of the tests. In this situation, Mr. Marlowe should:

- a. Assign Kelly a 0 for the homework assignments and include this in the grade, thus giving her an F for the grading period.
- b. Ignore the missing homework assignments and give Kelly a D.
- c. Ignore the missing homework and give Kelly a C.
- d. Something else...

Scenario 3

Mr. Paderewski is the teacher in a 6th grade heterogeneously grouped class. Chris, one of his students, has high academic ability, as shown by her previous work, test results, reports of other teachers, and his own observation. As he looks over her work for the grading period, he realizes that the quality of her work is above average for the class, but the work does not represent the best that she could do. The effort she has shown has been minimal, but, because of her high ability, her work has been reasonably good. In this situation, Mr. Paderewski should:

- a. Grade Chris on the quality of her work in comparison to preset standards, without being concerned about the amount of work that she could have done.
- b. Lower Chris's grade because she did not make a serious effort in this class; she could have done better.
- c. Assign Chris a higher grade to encourage her to work harder.
- d. Something else...

Scenario 4

Ms. Quantum has a heterogeneously grouped 7th grade science class. Barbara is one of her lower performing students, as measured by previous performance and the observations of her former science teachers. Throughout this grading period Barbara has worked very hard. She has turned in her assignments on time and has often gone to Ms. Quantum for extra help before tests. Her average for this grading period is 2 points below what is needed for a D on Ms. Quantum's grading scale. In this situation, Ms. Quantum should:

- a. Give Barbara a D for the effort she has shown.
- b. Grade Barbara according to the work she has done and assign her an F.
- c. Something else...

Scenario 5

Ms. Yohansen has a heterogeneously grouped 5th grade class. Sandy, a student in her class, appears to have average ability to do the required work. In evaluating her work for this grading period, Ms. Yohansen observed that Sandy did not do the work she is capable of—she could have done better. Sandy, however, managed to meet what is required for her to get a C. In this situation, Ms. Yohansen should:

- a. Assign Sandy a lower grade because she could have put more effort into the class and could have done better.
- b. Assign Sandy a grade based on the quality of her work, without taking into account the amount of work that she could have possibly put in.
- c. Assign Sandy a higher grade to encourage her to try harder.
- d. Something else...

Handout A4.9,H1, p. 2

Scenario 6

Ms. Exponent is teaching high school algebra. In her class of general and academic track students, she gives two tests each grading period. David got an F on the first test and a low B on the second. In this situation, Ms. Exponent should:

- a. Assign David an overall grade of D based on the average of his performance on the two exams.
- b. Assign David an overall grade of C because he showed improvement in his performance.
- c. Assign David an overall grade of B because that was his level of performance at the end of the term.
- d. Something else...

Scenario 7

Mr. Phylum is a high school introductory biology teacher. In this class he gives two exams each term. In calculating Bernie's grade for this term, he notices that on the first exam, Bernie obtained a score equivalent to a A and on the second exam, a low C. In this situation, Mr. Phylum should:

- a. Assign Bernie an overall grade of A, giving him the benefit of the doubt.
- b. Assign Bernie an overall grade of B which is the average of his scores on the two exams.
- c. Assign Bernie an overall grade of C, noting that there was decline in his performance.
- d. Something else...

Handout A4.9,H1, p. 3

 **Reference Box:**

Adapted from: Susan M. Brookhart, 1993. "Teacher's Grading Practices: Meaning and Values." *Journal of Educational Measurement* 30, pp. 123-142.

