

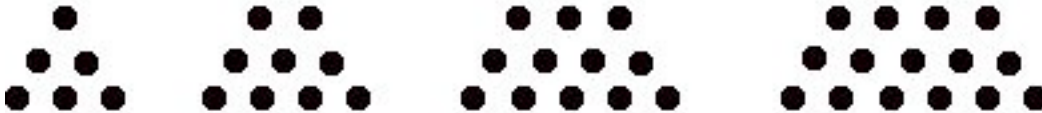
Performance-based assessment and rubrics

Performance-based assessment is especially relevant for assessing complex tasks. This type of assessment involves creating and applying a rubric, a set of statements that describe criteria for determining the level of performance for a student response. There is no "right" number of levels to use. Three to five levels are usually adequate for providing a sufficient degree of discrimination of performance.

A rubric can be specific or general in relation to a complex task. The advantage of a specific rubric is that it allows for a more precise determination of performance. The disadvantage is that a specific rubric requires significant time to create. A general rubric can be too vague, thereby requiring a high degree of subjective judgment when deciding a level of performance. This can easily lead to inconsistent determinations of levels of performance (scoring) for the various student responses. However, a general rubric is faster to create. One solution to the dilemma is to create a rubric that has qualities of a general and a specific rubric (a middle ground between the two). It is less time consuming to create and to apply, and also less likely to lead to inconsistent scoring. An example of a grade 5 complex task, a five-level middle ground rubric, and sample student responses follow.



The grade 5 complex task

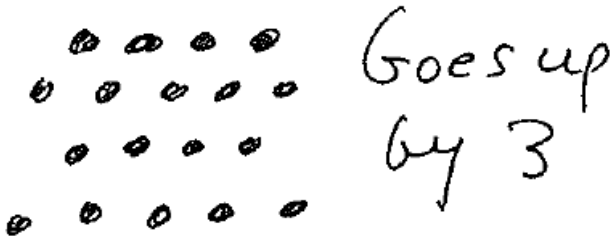
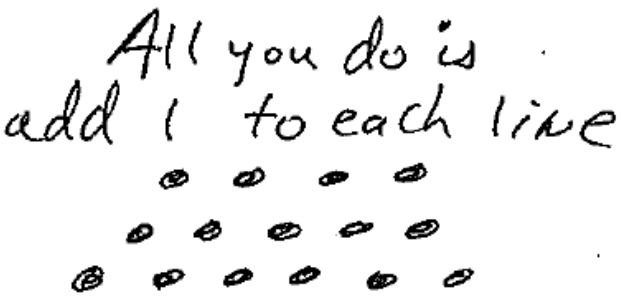
George is placing bowling pins on the floor for a special game. So far he has placed four groups of bowling pins.



George had to leave before the job was finished. There is one more group of bowling pins to place. You decide to help George.

What should the next group of bowling pins look like?
Explain your thinking.

Level	Criteria	Student response
1	<p>General statement: The drawing and the description indicate that the student has no understanding of the pattern.</p> <p>Specific possibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrect drawing and no description • Incorrect description and no drawing • Incorrect description and incorrect drawing. 	 <p>1 on top 2 next 3 below 2 4 next 5 on bottom</p>
2	<p>General statement: The drawing and description indicate that the student has a very limited understanding of the pattern.</p> <p>Specific possibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of pins is correct with incorrect pattern used. Description is incorrect or too vague. • Number of pins is incorrect with incorrect pattern used. Description is incomplete. 	 <p>Counted pins and doubled</p>

Level	Criteria	Student response
3	<p>General statement: The drawing and description indicate that the student has a partial understanding of the pattern.</p> <p>Specific possibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of pins is correct with correct pattern used. Description is incorrect. • Number of pins is correct but pattern is partly correct. Description is incomplete. 	
4	<p>General statement: The drawing and description indicate that the student has a nearly complete understanding of the pattern.</p> <p>Specific possibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of pins is correct with correct pattern used. Description is correct but does not have sufficient clarity. 	<p>All you do is add 1 to each line</p> 
5	<p>General statement: The drawing and description indicate that the student has a complete understanding of the pattern.</p> <p>Specific possibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of pins is correct with correct pattern used. Description is correct with sufficient clarity. 	<p>Add one circle to each row when you make the next group</p> 