

## Evergreen Thinking Rubric

Product ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

*1 = Nascent*

*2 = Emerging*

*3 = Ripening*

*4 = Ready*

<div style="background-color: #FFDAB9; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid #FFDAB9;">Divergent Thinking</div>	<div style="background-color: #FFC0CB; padding: 10px; border: 2px solid #8B0000;"> <p><b>COMMUNICATION</b></p> <p><i>Emotion, Tone, Engagement, Beauty, Play, Empathic Connection</i></p> <p><b>1      2      3      4</b></p> <p><b>Relation &amp; Expression</b></p> </div>	<div style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid #90EE90;">Venturing</div>
<div style="background-color: #FFFF00; padding: 10px; border: 2px solid #FFD700;"> <p><b>APPRECIATION</b></p> <p><i>Other Views, Connections, Resourcefulness, Inclusiveness</i></p> <p><b>1      2      3      4</b></p> <p><b>Richness &amp; Diversity</b></p> </div>	<div style="background-color: #FFFFFF; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid #000000;"> <p><b>PRESENCE</b></p> <p><i>Awareness, Authenticity</i></p> <p><b>1      2      3      4</b></p> <p><b>Accommodation</b></p> </div>	<div style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid #000000;"> <p><b>METHOD</b></p> <p><i>Genre, Language, Media, Metaphor, Effectiveness</i></p> <p><b>1      2      3      4</b></p> <p><b>Action &amp; Accomplishment</b></p> </div>
<div style="background-color: #ADD8E6; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid #ADD8E6;">Abiding</div>	<div style="background-color: #ADD8E6; padding: 10px; border: 2px solid #00008B;"> <p><b>VIEW</b></p> <p><i>Position, Evidence, Assumptions, Implications, Context, Insight</i></p> <p><b>1      2      3      4</b></p> <p><b>Clarity &amp; Intellect</b></p> </div>	<div style="background-color: #ADD8E6; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid #ADD8E6;">Convergent Thinking</div>

*... it is dangerous for everyone to have the same story. The same things do not happen to everyone. – Barry Holstun Lopez, Winter Count*

## User's Guide to the Rubric

This rubric promotes a definition of thinking that includes perception, feeling, and the arising of thoughts and images. Thinking (or 'perfinking') is distributed throughout all five of the rubric domains. These domains are meant to indicate general qualities of a wide variety of student works, such as nonfiction essays, critiques, poetry, fiction, plays, and works of the expressive arts. The elements within each domain listed below are meant as *suggestions* (or examples, alternative definitions, or synonyms) for how to articulate or recognize these domains in specific works, *not* as a necessary and complete list of items to be scored separately or summed together. Because of my own areas of expertise, the elements and examples are predominantly for writing as a mode of expression, and I invite experts in other areas to explore how this rubric may help in considering other modes of expression. What an effective 'Method' will look like will depend upon the medium and the intended purpose. The characteristics of an appropriate style of 'Communication' could be quite different for a survey paper of scientific articles compared to a personal reflective essay. While a comprehensive and respectful incorporation of multiple views will be a critically important element of 'Appreciation' in a paper dealing with a political or social issue, multiple views may not be particularly relevant for a poem, lab report, or brief response paper. The qualities I have indicated in the intersections (venturing, abiding, convergent and divergent thinking) are speculative on my part.

The domains draw from the Buddhist system of 'five wisdom energies,' which are styles of thinking, feeling, and relating to one's world. Most individuals will tend to be stronger or more dominant in one or more of these domains, and weaker in others. The labels for the points on the scale (Nascent, Emerging, Ripening and Ready) reflect the Buddhist view that manifestations of student performance typically characterized as 'weak,' 'unsatisfactory,' etc. contain within themselves the seeds of more desirable qualities, and should be seen as places to work from, energetic styles that contain possibilities of transformation, not qualities to be rejected or suppressed.

The four outer domains have some correspondence with Jung's theory of mental functions, which are the basis of the Meyers-Briggs test. These four mental functions are thinking, sensation, feeling and intuition (corresponding roughly to view, appreciation, communication, and method, respectively; but with different aspects of intuition also present in communication and view).<sup>1</sup> 'Thinking' in Jung's terms is the ability to make analytical distinctions, organize complex structures, and draw logical connections. Part of what this rubric is promoting is a broader view of thinking that adds feeling, perception and intuition to conceptual cognition. The four outer domains as defined in the Buddhist system also have a close correspondence with the Merrill and Reid 'color system' of personal styles that is currently seeing broad use in business and management (view ~ green, appreciation ~ blue, communication ~ red, and method ~ brown).

Regardless of which particular system one feels the most affiliation, the fundamental approach taken by this rubric is to subdivide elements of student product into areas that relate to different underlying modes of mental functioning, rather than subdivisions based on concrete elements of various types of student products. If the elements are grouped by modes or styles of mental function, then it will be more likely that stronger and weaker elements of a particular student's work will also be grouped together. This in turn should provide a way for teachers to discuss work with students that has greater coherence, power and understandability. By organizing the elements in this way, I have hoped to produce a tool that will have general utility for assessing student work and for providing a

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<sup>1</sup> My thanks to Thad Curtz for drawing this correspondence to my attention. For the sake of consistency, the grouping of elements more closely follows the Buddhist rather than the Jungian system, but Thad's suggestion of grouping the domain qualities by mental functions lended clarity to my efforts.

framework for teachers and students to consider aspects of learning and demonstrations of learning. In this, I share the perspective of one of my faculty advisors on this project:

“I see rubrics as more than tools to assure similar assessments of product. In fact, I’ve never used one that way in teaching. Rubrics can also be teaching tools employed to communicate desired components of process, which may or may not result in a product. They can also be used to establish a common language and expectations within a learning community, especially when developed together.” - Joli Sandoz

## **The Major Domains**

### **View**

The domain of View relates to the ability to see (perceive) clearly. This includes the ability to make logical distinctions, draw inferences, and perceive complex structures and interrelationships between ideas, as well as having a ‘big picture’ sense of context. Older, culturally restricted definitions of thinking and intellect are contained in this domain, and if the work contains some form of logical analysis, this domain also includes the ability to identify the assumptions and implications of reasoning. Cognitive aspects of intuition are also an element of View. The qualities of mind that are evaluated in conventional IQ tests are contained in this domain. A clear view allows the student to state clearly the purpose, position, theme, or stance of their work. If appropriate, the central problem or question of the work is plainly evident. The appropriate choice of Method and style of Communication depends on the View or purpose of the work. Clarity of perception includes the cognitive ability to see and state clearly the position, theme, or stance of others. While this quality is sometimes defined as empathy (cf. Gallo 1994), there is some confusion with the vernacular understanding of empathy, and I have therefore chosen to designate the vernacular aspect of this element ‘empathic connection’ and place it in the domain of Communication.

Student work that is nascent or emerging for this domain can leave the reader or audience confused and uncertain about the purpose of the work or the logical arguments the author is trying to make. The work can seem overly analytical, critical or self-righteous. An authoritative stance is taken without convincing support for the author’s views. Ripening evidence for this domain includes, for example, a well structured and organized piece of work where the reader can readily ascertain the author’s perspective and can follow the development of the author’s ideas. Evidence for readiness in this domain are principled but unbiased works that may also include moments of insight (understanding and illumination).

### **Appreciation**

The domain of appreciation relates to a sense of openness to and appreciation for the richness of diversity: diverse evidence, conclusions, points of view, attitudes, motivations, experiences, values, and cultures. This appreciation is demonstrated by the inclusion of other views and the drawing of connections between those views and the view of the author. (While the desire to make connection with others is an element of Communication, the appreciation for and gathering together of things to be connected belongs in this domain.) These elements may be appropriate to varying degrees depending on the purpose or View of the work.

Nascent evidence for this domain may, for example, be a superficial presentation of other views that seems poorly integrated with the author’s views. The author can seem either needy or self-important, somewhat bloated, or ostentatious in their presentation of ideas or jumble of images. Emerging or

ripening skills in this domain may include a resourceful inclusion of other views and the drawing of some interesting connections between these views. Readiness in this domain produces in the reader a feeling that difference and other views are valued and appreciated beyond being merely included: that these other views have enriched the author's own view. The work evokes a sense of satisfaction and expansiveness.

### **Communication**

(I use a broader meaning of communication here as *the desire to connect*, related more closely to the Latin origin of communicate: *communicare*, to share or have in common.) The domain of communication relates to styles and tones of voice and expression such as analytical, lyrical, critical, or emotive. Those with a poorly developed or conflicted ability to communicate do not express themselves clearly, and do not show signs of wanting to connect with the audience. This does not mean that effective communicators do so monolithically: a given work may include multiple voices, but if so, each one is clear and distinct. The reader or audience has a good, consistent sense of who is communicating. If the work varies in tone, this variation adds to the feeling of quality. Elements of emotional intelligence or 'EQ' are most clearly contained in this domain, as are energetic/emotional aspects of intuition.

Nascent or emerging development in this domain may include an expression of emotion that does not seem justified by the context or content of the work or topic, or an inconsistent and inappropriate style of expression in writing. The author uses emotion in a manipulative rather than a persuasive or convincing way. Ripening skill in this domain may include a use of emotion appropriate to the purpose of the work, and the personal approach of the author is apparent and engaging. In work that shows readiness in the style of this domain, the author uses a style that is rich, idiosyncratic, and moving.

### **Method**

The domain of method relates to action and accomplishment: the 'nuts and bolts' of how a piece of work is carried forward and completed, as well as the skillful application of various modes of expression, including the use of effective metaphors. These modes will differ depending upon the purpose of the work, thus, the Method can be descriptive, didactic, reflective, or persuasive, depending upon the type of work such as critical essays, response papers, paintings, or poetry. Method also deals with the appropriate use of genre, language and the particular rhetoric of the discipline. The qualities of mind that support creativity are found throughout the domains, but are most strongly present in this domain. Method contains the somatic ('gut feeling') aspect of intuition. Synthesis or effectiveness of the work also arises from a skilled expression of the above domain qualities, and may also be related to effectiveness of the person in the world (theory to practice).

Nascent or emerging evidence for this domain includes a sense of incoherence or inappropriateness such as the use of a lyrical style in a critical, comparative essay, as well as works that seem an incomplete hodgepodge; or the author can attempt to use rhetoric in a way that seems controlling or dominating. While some of the components of the work may be interesting and engaging, the reader or audience is left feeling unsatisfied or imposed upon. Evidence for ripening skill in this domain includes an appropriate and efficient use of method, though the overall effect on the reader may seem merely workmanlike. In uses of method demonstrating readiness in this domain, the reader is left with a sense that the author's purpose has been completely and convincingly accomplished, through the author's confidence and practicality, insightful use of data, and/or imaginative use of metaphor.

## **Presence**

This central domain relates to a sense of wholeness based on the accommodation of the qualities of the four peripheral domains. Authenticity also derives from this accommodation of the other domains, and in this sense is an emergent quality. The self-awareness that is a hallmark of reflexivity is also contained in this domain. While reflexivity is not always visible in a work since it is more related to process than product, in some types of work, the unfolding of the author's thinking can be evident in some circumstances.

Nascent or emerging skills in this domain are evidenced by works that seem dull and uninspired, or points of view that are insensitive or stubbornly ignorant of other views. The author comes across as humorless or lazy in their grappling with ideas and perspectives. Ripening skill in this domain is demonstrated by an accommodation of other views and a direct, simple approach. Readiness in this domain is work that demonstrates a high degree of receptivity, and a relaxed approach.

## **Anchor Points and Developmental Views**

I have tried to indicate above what examples or 'anchor points' might look like for the four peripheral domains. For this rubric to be used as a reliable (statistically consistent) assessment tool, more specific examples of nascent, emerging, ripening and ready evidence need to be developed and tested for particular types of disciplinary products. I leave this task to the experts in those disciplines. Currently, applications of this rubric to academic writing and quantitative research methods are being developed and field tested.

Some of the above domain qualities can have developmental implications, but the numerical scores are presently designed to reflect strength of evidence for the domains. I am not trying to impose or imply any particular developmental schema through the spatial arrangement of the domains, numerical scale values, and elements within domains. I prefer not to explicitly 'anchor' developmental points given the proliferation of developmental schemes, lack of common definitions, and the fundamental slipperiness of language. From my perspective, many of the higher-order qualities of Appreciation and Method, and clearer expressions of View and Communication, tend to develop later in most individuals and are associated with the transition from Perry stages 2 or 3 to stages 4 or 5 and higher. They are also associated with the shift from 'surface' to 'deep' learning, the development of King and Kitchener's reflective stance towards the multiplicity of knowledge and positions, and a corresponding movement from a monocultural to a multicultural perspective. Users of this rubric are invited to apply their own developmental interpretations if they wish. We have all known many people who do not fit into these or any other schemes, or who can seem highly 'developed' in some aspects and not in others. As William Perry said, the person is always greater than any theory.

## **The Domains in the Creative Process**

There is a natural progression through the mental activities represented by the domains in the course of the creative process. While there is no clear temporal separation, the act of creation typically begins from the accommodating space of Presence shaped by one's particular View. One then tends to move from this initial creative impulse or idea to the gathering of resources and materials characteristic of the energy of Appreciation (Richness and Diversity). Once elements are gathered, one chooses a style of Communication and accomplishes the creative work via the application of Method. The work, if successful, begins and ends with a sense of Presence (Authenticity).

## Explanations and Examples

Following are definitions of some of the domain elements. ‘CT’ indicates those elements adapted from the WSU Critical Thinking rubric, and ‘MT’ those from the “Teaching Thinking” article by Minnich. ‘Author’ is here understood as writer, visual or performance artist, musician, etc.

### View

**Assumptions** [CT]: Identifies and assesses the key assumptions and ethical dimensions that underlie the issue; questions the validity of the assumptions.

**Context** [CT]: Identifies and considers the influence of context on the issue; demonstrates a clear sense of scope including audience; considers other pertinent contexts.

**Evidence** [CT]: Identifies and assesses the quality (accuracy, precision, relevance and completeness) of data/evidence; observes cause and effect and addresses existing or potential consequences.

**Implications** [CT]: Identifies and assesses conclusions, implications, and consequences, considering context, assumptions, data, and evidence; objectively reflects on their own assertions.

**Insight** [MT, ‘Revelation’]: The work points to moments of understanding: there is a sense of illumination.

**Position** [CT]: Identifies and presents the author’s own perspective and position as it is important to the analysis of the issue, drawing support from experience, and information not from assigned sources.

### Appreciation

**Connections** [MT]: The author tracks the often odd affiliations among ideas and feelings, other perspectives, audiences, and purposes. The author has wandered and explored: seen metaphorical connections, respects and enjoys differences, and wanders across and around them without an anxious desire to reduce them to sameness. Diverse views are not just rhetorically addressed, but clearly an integrated part of the author’s own thinking.

**Inclusiveness** [MT]: Anticipates, accounts for, and has been enriched by other perspectives rather than simply compares or refutes; the work may reach a conclusion or central statement, or simply leave the responder with a more complex picture.

**Other Views** [CT]: Identifies and considers other salient perspectives and positions that are important to the analysis of the issue; addresses diverse perspectives.

**Resourcefulness**: The author is not content with the obvious sources of material, but seeks out and explores the unconventional, and is not stymied by minor obstacles in obtaining or creating material.

### Communication

**Beauty** [MT]: “a sense of wholeness or informing integrity;” (according to Dewey) the responder has an experience that has intensity, during which something has happened, and that gives satisfaction. The best have a sense of unconscious joy.

**Emotion** [MT]: The author is present to the responder as a feeling person – one who cares, gets frustrated, feels anger, remembers hurt, becomes excited in ways that press thinking farther and deeper: the medium of the work is therefore rich, often rather idiosyncratic, and moving.

**Empathic Connection:** An ability that derives from a broadening of the range of emotional experience, empathy in this context is defined as the cognitive and emotional ability to exchange oneself with others; not necessarily to agree with their position, but from a desire to understand and connect.

**Engagement** [MT, 'Rhetoric']: Reaches out to communicate with many people, engaging them through understanding of their languages, ways of thinking, knowledge, and emotions: not to manipulate but to acknowledge that responders will assent only if moved to do so as independent thinkers themselves.

**Play** [MT]: Moments or elements where the work 'takes off' and explores imaginatively, even if by the usual criteria it 'goes nowhere' or 'off track.' Markers that the author was caught up in imaginative moments.

**Tone:** The style of the work, whether analytical, lyrical, critical, or emotive, is consistent with its purpose.

## Method

**Effectiveness:** There is a sense that the author has achieved her or his purpose.

**Genre:** Genre pertains here to mode of discourse or communication, in a broad sense.

**Language:** The language feels appropriate for the purpose of the work, and is consistent (or inconsistent, if that also seems appropriate and effective). This includes level of diction.

**Media:** The material elements of the work are skillfully chosen and applied.

**Metaphor:** The author makes connections and draws analogies that aid communication or understanding.

## Presence

**Authenticity:** The author stands forth as a strong, vivid, and unmistakable presence in or through the work.

**Awareness:** There is a sense of spaciousness in the work: that the author is consciously choosing from a wide array of materials and techniques to compose and present the work, rather than being limited to a particular mode of expression or method of accomplishment.

**Reflexivity** [MT]: The responder can see the author thinking about his/her own thinking as it unfolds.

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