How to Design Proficiency Scale

After the prioritization process, educators should have a list of essential topics with theirs associated learning targets. They should then organize this information into proficiency scales. Proficiency scales form the basis for measuring students progress and providing them with feedback.

1. Unpack the standard(s) you'd like to address. (Contact your Department Head or Grade Level Team to see what work they have done to support you with this. **It is still essential that you unpack the standards yourself to really understand what the students need to know and do to show proficiency of the content.)**

2. Create a well-crafted learning goal based on the standard(s).

3. Identify complex causal relationships and the goal's simpler and more complex content. Look at Depth of Knowledge and determine the sequence of instruction. Use the *Marzano* or *Webb's DOK* Taxonomy to identify the learning targets for levels 2.0 and 3.0. **NOTE:** Verbs such as, identify, describe, determine, or compare and contrast may appear in different categories of complexity. The cognitive complexity should be based on the overall thinking that is required.

4. Place the content for the learning goal in **Level 3.0**. This is the knowledge and skills needed to show mastery of the standard. It is the same cognitive complexity level of the standard (3.0).

5. Place the foundational content in **Level 2.0**. This is the knowledge and skills that build to the standard. It is a level of cognitive complexity below the standard (3.0).

6. The Score 4.0 level should state the following phrase, "In addition to score 3.0 performance, the student demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond what was taught." You do have the option of placing the more complex content in **Level 4.0**. This is designed for cognitively complex tasks. It is the knowledge and skills that go above and beyond the standard (3.0).

7. The Score 1.0 level should state the following phrase, "With help, partial success at score 2.0 content and score 3.0 content." You do have the option of placing the prerequisite knowledge and skills in **Level 1.0**, but it isn't required.

8. Articulate and teach the scale to your students. Make sure you post what students are to learn that day and how they will demonstrate they know the content. Remind students what they are to know by the end of the time frame, throughout the class period.

9. Monitor for understanding.

10. Use it along with the students to track their progress.

Resources:

Canvas Page with Resources and Videos – (Use Granite Log In to Log into canvas to access resources)

Marzano's Taxonomy Blooms Taxonomy

Web's Taxonomy

Level	Type of Target	Description of Target
4.0	Cognitively Complex Target	Target that reaches above the cognitive level of the standard that involves making in-depth inferences or applications
3.0	Learning Goal Target(s)	Target that aligns with the cognitive level of the standard *Students will be able to:*
2.0	Foundational Target(s)	Target that builds to the standard (critical processes, necessary background information, essential vocabulary) underpinning the learning goal at cognitive levels below the standard *Students will recognize or recall specific vocabulary:* *Student will be able to:*
1.0	With help, partial success at level 2.0 content and level 3.0 content **Optional: If needed, prerequisite skills for 2.0 may be listed in 1.0.*	

Helpful Books for Resources:

The New Art and Science of Teaching by Robert J. Marzano
A Handbook for Personalized Competency Based Education – Robert J. Marzano
Visible Learning into Action – John Hattie
Unwrapping the Common Core – Larry Ainsworth
Proficiency Scales for the New Science Standards – Robert J. Jarzano

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between a Scale and a Rubric? A scale is used to determine what the student understands in regards to the learning goal. A rubric is used to assess a student's progress on a particular assignment or activity related to the learning goal. Please note that the district supports the use of scales for monitoring progress and success, not grading. A scale should be used by both the student and the teacher to monitor their progress and success towards the learning goal(s).

Why do I need to use a scale when I have other ways to assess my students' progress? Even though you might use assessments along the way to the unit test, the scale provides a way for the student to see at any point where extra help may be needed. This provides the chance for feedback while a student is still learning new material. The scale is meant to be a device to track student progress and celebrate success.

Are scales required for every lesson/subject? Scales should be over-arching and created for each unit of instruction. They need to be created with attainable goals.

Should the scale be posted up on the wall in the classroom? Please consult your school-site as the requirements for posting a learning goal and scale are determined by the school site administrators. Remember, simply having the scale is not enough. It should be referred to at the beginning, throughout, and at the end of a unit. No matter where the scale is, the teacher and student must always refer to it with regularity.

Should students keep a copy of the scale in their notebooks, portfolios, or calendars? It is not required, however it may be helpful in making sure that the students know what is required of them for success. Please note that simply having the student keep a copy is not enough. The teacher and student must always refer to the scales to monitor progress. No matter where the scale is, the teacher and student must always refer to it with regularity.

How often should the scale be referenced to in class? The scale should be referred to at the beginning and the end of a unit. It should also be used in between activities and assignments to monitor progress and celebrate success.

Where can I find a template for creating a learning goal scale? You can download the Learning Goal Scale Template here.

Where can I find examples of scales that I should be using in the classroom? The Department of Curriculum has been working with the Department of Professional Development and the Marzano Center to provide assistance in designing scales. Please contact them for support on how to design your own scales in your particular area.

What goes on Level 1.0 of the scale? The **Score 1.0 level** should state the following phrase, "*With help, partial success at score 2.0 content and score 3.0 content*." You do have the option of placing the prerequisite knowledge and skills in **Level 1.0**, but it isn't required.

What goes on Level 2.0 of the scale? Place the foundational content in **Level 2.0**. This is the knowledge and skills that build to the standard. It is a level of cognitive complexity below the standard (3.0).

What goes on Level 3.0 of the scale? Place the content for the learning goal in **Level 3.0**. This is the knowledge and skills needed to show mastery of the standard. It is the same cognitive complexity level of the standard (3.0).

What goes on Level 4.0 of the scale? The **Score 4.0 level** should state the following phrase, "*In addition to score 3.0 performance, the student demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond what was taught*." You do have the option of placing the more complex content in **Level 4.0**. This is designed for cognitively complex tasks. It is the knowledge and skills that go above and beyond the standard (3.0).

Questions for Reflection

- What do I typically do to provide students with copies of rigorous learning goals and performance scales?
- Are the learning goals and performance scales posted in the room for all to see and for easy reference?
- How do I know students understand the progression of learning and how each learning target helps them move toward mastery of the standard?
- How will I utilize the scale throughout the lesson?
- What artifacts or work samples do I have that model the expectation of the standard at the 3.0 level?
- How do I know my students can accurately determine their level of progress on the scale?
- How do my students articulate the areas they need support based on the progression of the scale?
- How will I monitor all students for the desired effect?