



Middle Level Forensic Association of Wisconsin

New Rubric Scoring Guidelines

The new rubric allows you to rate each performance using a scale of 1—5 (1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest) Each criteria written on the rubric, describes an ideal (near perfect) performance.

If you think of both scales as a continuum, they would line up as below.

Old scale	1		2		3	
New scale	1	2	3	4	5	

As you can see, some of the scores that were a 1 on the old scale will now be 2, and some will remain 1. Some of the scores that were a 2 now could be a 2, a 3, or a 4 on the new scale. Scores that were a 3 on the old scale will now be a either a 4 or a 5.

Consider the following guidelines to determine your choice:

- 1** The total opposite of an ideal performance. No rule is being broken, but no part of the criteria was met. The material and/or performance needs major revision and the student needs significant coaching in this area. Since such major work is needed in this area, you may need to limit your comments to what you consider most important aspect o work on.
- 2** While at least some attempt is being made to meet the criteria, the student needs definite improvement. Some parts of the criteria may be met, but others are not met at all. A judge needs to make comments and be able to make specific recommendations when giving a 2.
- 3** A good score, typical of an average forensic student. This person/group has the right idea and seems to know what is expected; but isn't quite there yet. Some parts of the description may be met, but not all of them. Try to give comments and/or recommendations for as many items receiving a 3 as you can and at least indicate to what extent, or which part(s) of the criteria needs improvement.
- 4** A very good score, typical of a better than average forensic student. A student receiving all 4's would qualify for state.
- 5** This score should be reserved for students who meet the criteria completely. This is the kind of performance one would expect to see in the power round at state.

Try to aim for a median score of 56. That means that you give as many scores above 56 as you give below 56.

If as a judge, you find yourself consistently giving more scores lower than 56 than scores above 56, please consider whether your expectations for middle school students is set too high.

On the other hand over scoring is as much of a problem as underscoring. If you find you are consistently giving the majority of scores above 56, than consider that you are probably being too generous.

At the beginning of the season, you will probably have a slightly lower set of scores, and by the end of the season, they should be higher. Overall though, they should balance out around 56.



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Sample evaluations with possible comments

Example 1:
Poetry
Criteria 1

Introduction creates an atmosphere, sets the mood, and grasps the attention of the audience.

<p>Speaker does not give the author of one of the poems.</p>	<p>[Violates rule #2] Circle rule #2 on rule side; answer no for “Were all the rules of the category followed?” (You may still give a score of 1—4 depending on how the criteria for this item are followed.) Stop at the infraction table. If the infraction is upheld, 14 points will be deducted from the speaker’s score.</p>
<p>Student only gives basic information. Voice and face are unexpressive and few or no gestures are used. You aren’t even sure the speaker likes their poem(s).</p>	<p>Circle 1. Possible comment. “Your intro needs to give certain information, but it also needs to be interesting and enthusiastic. You need to sound like you really like the poem you chose.”</p>
<p>Student gives enough information and/or background to prepare the audience, but does very little to present it in a way that catches the attention of the audience, set the mood, or create an atmosphere.</p>	<p>Circle 2. Possible comment. “You have given us all the important information but now, work on setting the mood and getting us to believe that you really like the poem you are about to present. Why did you pick this poem? Does it mean anything special to you? Why should we want to listen to it?”</p>
<p>Student gives enough information and background to prepare the audience and attempts to interest the audience in a very basic way, more informative than catchy.</p>	<p>Circle 3. Possible comment. “You have a good basic intro. Now, try to spice it up. Use your voice and facial expression to make us believe that this is a poem that we really want to listen to. Sound like you love this poem, and we should too.”</p>
<p>Student gives enough information and background to prepare the audience; speaker sets the mood and/or creates an atmosphere. The speaker does a good job of drawing the audience in.</p>	<p>Circle 4.</p>
<p>This intro is creative and flows smoothly from beginning to end. All the required information is included plus more. The speakers voice, gestures, and facial expression work together to create an atmosphere and mood, and draw you and the rest of the audience in so you are really looking forward to the rest of the presentation.</p>	<p>Circle 5 and say to yourself, “Oh, Wow!” Possible comment. “As soon as you started, I was with you. I could tell right away that you loved your piece and were anxious to share it with us. The pause at the end and the way you used your face just drew me in, ready to listen.”</p>

Example 2:
 Special Events
 Criteria 13

Rate appropriate. Variations and pauses add interest to the presentation and emphasize important ideas.

<p>Student(s) spoke too fast throughout, used few or no pauses and did not vary the rate at all.</p>	<p>Circle 1. Possible comment. “You both spoke so fast throughout that my brain couldn’t keep up. Slow down and pause occasionally. Any change helps to keep your audience’s attention and interest.”</p>
<p>Students occasionally spoke too fast especially when they went back and forth between speakers, they would jump in so quickly that they became difficult to follow or understand.</p> <p>Or . . .</p> <p>Students spoke at a reasonable rate so they could be understood, but moved the presentation along at a steady, dull pace with no pauses or variation.</p>	<p>Circle 2. Possible comment. “It is ok to speak quickly to add variety, but you need to speak clearly and enunciate when you speed up so we understand every word. When you go so fast back and forth it is really hard to follow and understand. Be careful you don’t speak over top of your partner.”</p> <p>“You need to add some variety to your pace. Pauses can help keep our attention. Use short pauses and medium pauses to add variety. Use a long pause when you point something out on your display or when you want to really emphasize an important point. Anything done the same way for too long becomes boring and loses our attention.”</p>
<p>Rate was good throughout. At times the students sped up but not a lot. A few pauses and a little variety in the presentation helped make it more interesting but more would be better.</p>	<p>Circle 3. Possible comment. “A little fast at times. A bit more variety and a few more pauses could get you to the next level.”</p>
<p>Rate was just right throughout. Students paused each time they wanted to emphasize something. A few subtle variations in the pace.</p>	<p>Circle 4.</p>
<p>Rate was great throughout. Several purposeful changes in pace. The presenters sped up to emphasize the urgency in part of their message, but even though they went faster, every word was clear and understood. As a contrast, they slowed way down to emphasize some especially juicy gossip. Pauses were used effectively to build suspense just before important parts. The variety really enhanced the presentation.</p>	<p>Circle 5. Possible comment. “I really like the variety you put into your presentation. It helped keep my interest throughout.”</p>