

USING EXEMPLARS

Exemplars are examples of work on a specific assignment that illustrate what student work looks like along a continuum of quality. The work may be real student work or teacher constructed. Exemplars can range from images of artwork or paragraphs of writing.

Exemplars are typically used in one of two ways. The first is for student co-construction of criteria, and the second is for peer feedback. First, students may use the exemplars to identify and define criteria. What makes the good work good? What makes the poor work poor? What are the names of those qualities, and why are they important for this particular assignment and this particular learning goal? Then, with the criteria for quality top-of-mind, students can proceed to do their own work.

In addition, or alternatively, you can give students exemplars to compare a peer's work against in a peer feedback exercise. Students can provide feedback in the form of "This part of your work is more like exemplar X because ..." Depending on the age and skill level of students they can be provide more or fewer exemplars for comparison, up to a maximum of four.

Recommended for English Learners, Students with Disabilities, and all students grades K-12.

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