BUILDING ESSENTIAL SKILLS TODAY (BEST)

Communication Toolkit

Version 1.0 | best-future.org

BEST Revised Work Study Practices COMMUNICATION Rubrics

Based on a 2021 Alignment Review Using the Essential Skills and Dispositions Developmental Framework for Communication Recommended Revisions to the NH 2019 version include:

1. Replace the original narrative in far-left column with a focus question to help explain how each criterion addresses different aspects of communication.

2. Revise rubric to explicitly include all communication modes: speaking/presenting, listening, responding, and writing.

3. Almost every rubric bullet is new to increase alignment with the Essential Skills and Dispositions Framework - alignment coding is in red for each corresponding criterion: 1=Beginner to 4 =Emerging Expert with letters (a-b-c-etc.) for each descriptor in the Framework at that performance level

4. Rubric indicators are now written as "I can/I can also …" statements.

5. A single indicator bullet is used at each performance level.

6. All performance levels indicators are stated in the positive – describing how a student might typically demonstrate performance at each performance level.

7. Scoring numbers for each level are replaced with performance level descriptors to generally describe how learning typically develops over time: Emerging - Developing- Applying – Extending.

8. Eliminate indicators that simply repeated the same description at the same grade span with different degrees of support and those stated in the negative (e.g., "not yet able").

9. Used phrases "with prompting" (direct interventions and reminders) versus "with guidance" (e.g., conferencing, self-assessment tools) consistent with other BEST rubrics.

[1] Essential Skills and Dispositions Developmental Framework. (2015). National Center for Innovation in Education. https://www.inflexion.org/essential-skills-and-dispositions-development-frameworks/

10. Rubric descriptors were reviewed to ensure expectations are compatible with wording in other BEST rubrics (Self-Direction, Collaboration, Creativity) at the same grade spans.

11. The phrase "cultural norms" is used in the Essential Skills and Dispositions Framework at the Emergent Expert level of Establishing Meaning. While there are potentially many cultural norms that can influence how meaning might be interpreted, the following are suggested as a starting point for interpreting implicit meanings of communication: symbolism, values/beliefs, customs, language use, social status, emotional display, and ways of behaving that might be appropriate in one context or culture, but not appropriate in another.

12. The Essential Skills and Dispositions Framework does not address use of multimedia communication tools. An appropriate criterion to include the use of digital tools is suggested under the Delivery and Expression criterion (e.g., using a tool to organize and display information or emphasize tone or meaning).

13. Self-Awareness and Reflection is primarily intended for self-assessment and conferencing activities.

Alignment with the Essential Skills and Dispositions Developmental Framework

	Self-Awareness	Context & Message	Establishing Meaning	Delivery & Expression	Monitoring & Adapting
Essential Skills and Dispositions Developmental Framework Criteria	Reflecting on strengths and challenges with regard to conveying and interpreting meaning. Understanding how communication choices affect others.	Analyzing context as the basis for interpreting and planning messages, content, and framing that enhance clarity and effect.	Evaluating sources, using examples, and choosing effective formats. Receiving information and perspectives drawing on one's own experience and knowledge to effectively interpret.	Choosing the best mode for purpose, conveying clearly, and affecting audience through style. Using and interpreting tone, emphasis, or verbal or nonverbal signals as a means of expression.	Initiating and maintaining engagement, regulating emotional response, and adjusting approach or perspective to enhance meaning.
Communication Focus Questions	How am I using my past learning and my strengths to clearly communicate or interpret meaning when I listen, respond, speak, or write?	How do I use my knowledge of language and context to interpret a message or to help me plan my communications?	How do I decide which sources, examples, or format to use when I'm developing and sharing ideas and interpreting ideas of others?	How do tone, emphasis, and nonverbal cues (e.g., gestures, props, visuals, auditory) help to convey or interpret a message and engage others?	How do I use verbal/nonverbal feedback to keep my audience engaged, monitor my emotional responses, and make changes when needed?

BEST Communication Rubric

grades K-2

	Self-awareness & Reflection	Context & Message	Establishing Meaning	Delivery & Expression	Monitoring & Adapting
	How am I using my past learning and my strengths to clearly communicate or interpret meaning when I listen, respond, speak, or write?	How do I use my knowledge of language and context to interpret a message or to help me plan my communications?	How do I decide which sources, examples, or format to use when I'm developing and sharing ideas and interpreting ideas of others?	How do tone, emphasis, and nonverbal cues help to convey or interpret a message and engage others?	How do I use verbal/nonverbal feedback to keep my audience engaged, monitor my emotional responses, and make changes when needed?
Emerging	**I can...** work with others to identify how tone, delivery, or expression can affect how audiences interpret a message.	**I can...** interpret the main message of oral and written communications modeled by others *(with guidance)*.	**I can...** use a source provided by others to support my message *(with guidance)*.	**I can...** convey a message using basic speaking or writing conventions.	**I can...** describe how I was feeling when I was listening, speaking, or responding *(with prompting)*.
Developing	**I can also...** explain how I try to use my tone and expression to make my message clear and interesting when I speak or write *(With guidance)*	**I can also...** use guidelines provided to communicate formally (presentation, writing) and informally *(conversation, responding)*	**I can also...** explain how the meaning of an idea in a message is supported by a specific source or example *(With guidance)*	**I can also...** describe the tone or non-verbal cues (e.g., gestures, props, visuals) used by others and explain why they were used *(with prompting)*	**I can also...** use suggestions from others to make my speaking more interesting *(with guidance, such as peer conferencing)*
Applying	**I can also...** use examples of my work to show how my tone, delivery, or expression changes in different situations: informal, formal, audience.	**I can also...** use feedback from others to improve the clarity of written and oral communications *(with guidance, such as peer conferencing)*	**I can also...** use familiar sources and personal examples to describe what I know about a topic.	**I can also...** use different tones and non-verbal cues (e.g., gestures, props, visuals) to figure out what helps to make my meaning clear.	**I can also...** work with others to figure out different ways to keep the audience involved.
Extending	**I can also...** describe what I do well when I listen, speak, or write and identify ways I'd like to improve *(with guidance, such as a self-reflection checklist)*	**I can also...** use descriptive and content-specific words to develop and elaborate on ideas in informal and formal communications.	**I can also...** select from sources and examples provided to make the meaning of my message clearer *(with guidance, such as a self-reflection checklist)*	**I can also...** explain how the audience reacted to my use of tone or non-verbal cues and decide if that's what I wanted them to do *(with guidance, such as peer feedback)*	**I can also...** describe why I tried a new strategy and how well it worked.

BEST Communication Rubric

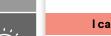|	Self-awareness & Reflection	Context & Message	Establishing Meaning	Delivery & Expression	Monitoring & Adapting
	How am I using my past learning and my strengths to clearly communicate or interpret meaning when I listen, respond, speak, or write?	How do I use my knowledge of language and context to interpret a message or to help me plan my communications?	How do I decide which sources, examples, or format to use when I'm developing and sharing ideas and interpreting ideas of others?	How do tone, emphasis, and nonverbal cues help to convey or interpret a message and engage others?	How do I use verbal/nonverbal feedback to keep my audience engaged, monitor my emotional responses, and make changes when needed?
Emerging	**I can...** use specific examples to describe how tone, delivery, or expression change in different situations: context, formal, informal, audience *(with guidance)*.	**I can...** answer questions and communicate informal messages using descriptive and content-specific vocabulary *(with prompting)*.	**I can...** explain whether the meaning of a message is/is not supported by a specific source or example *(with guidance)*.	**I can...** describe the tone or non-verbal cues *(e.g., gestures, props, visuals, auditory)* used by others and explain why they were used.	**I can...** use suggestions from others to make my speaking, writing, or responding clearer and more interesting *(with guidance)*.
Developing	**I can also...** explain how I use my tone and verbal/non-verbal expression to make my message clear and interesting when I respond, speak, or write.	**I can also...** show my understanding of content using descriptive and content-specific vocabulary to communicate formal written and oral messages.	**I can also...** select relevant sources and personal examples to describe what I know about a topic *(With guidance)*	**I can also...** use tone and nonverbal cues *(e.g., gestures, props, visuals, auditory)* to support my meaning in formal and informal situations.	**I can also...** describe why I tried a new strategy for speaking, writing, or responding and how others reacted *(e.g., non-verbal cues, follow-up questions)*.
Applying	**I can also...** use feedback from others to reflect on my communication strengths and set goals for improvement *(with guidance)*.	**I can also...** use feedback from others to improve the clarity of formal written and oral communications *(with guidance, such as peer conferencing)*	**I can also...** use feedback to select sources and examples that will make the meaning of my message clearer *(with guidance, such as peer-conferencing)*.	**I can also...** plan and give a presentation using tone and nonverbal cues *(e.g., gestures, props, visuals, auditory)* to support my meaning.	**I can also...** identify strategies I've used to increase my participation and be more actively engaged when listening and responding *(with guidance, such as conferencing)*.
Extending	**I can also...** describe what I do well when I listen, respond, speak, or write and identify strategies to help me improve *(with guidance, such as a self-reflection checklist)*.	**I can also...** use language skills that show my understanding of the content to create or respond to informal and formal communications.	**I can also...** explain how the sources and examples used in a message help to interpret the intended meaning.	**I can also...** explain how I wanted the audience to react to my use of tone or non-verbal cues and describe what actually happened *(with guidance, such as a self-checklist)*.	**I can also...** set a goal for improving my speaking, writing, or active listening, using reflections on my past successes and challenges.

BEST Communication Rubric

	Self-awareness & Reflection	Context & Message	Establishing Meaning	Delivery & Expression	Monitoring & Adapting
	How am I using my past learning and my strengths to clearly communicate or interpret meaning when I listen, respond, speak, or write?	How do I use my knowledge of language and context to interpret a message or to help me plan my communications?	How do I decide which sources, examples, or format to use when I'm developing and sharing ideas and interpreting ideas of others?	How do tone, emphasis, and nonverbal cues help to convey or interpret a message and engage others?	How do I use verbal/nonverbal feedback to keep my audience engaged, monitor my emotional responses, and make changes when needed?
Emerging — I can...	use specific examples to describe how tone, delivery, or expression affected or influenced me in different situations: context, formal, informal, audience, cultural *(with guidance)*.	identify similarities and differences in language use, framing, and conventions applied across different venues and forms of communication *(with guidance)*.	analyze how the sources and examples used in a communication help to interpret explicit and implicit meanings *(with guidance)*.	express ideas using tone or nonverbal cues *(e.g., gestures, props, visuals, auditory)* to emphasize meaning.	use suggestions from others to make my speaking, writing, or responding more engaging and inclusive of differing viewpoints *(with guidance)*.
Developing — I can also...	explain how I use tone, delivery, or expression to affect or influence my audience in different situations: context, formal, informal, cultural.	show my understanding of context using descriptive, technical, and content-specific language to communicate or interpret formal and informal messages.	evaluate the relevance and quality of potential sources and examples for specific purposes, audiences, and contexts.	analyze how effectively others use tone, nonverbal cues (e.g., gestures, props, visuals, auditory) or digital tools to emphasize meaning *(with guidance)*.	identify and evaluate strategies I've used to increase my participation and be more actively engaged when speaking and responding.
Applying — I can also...	analyze how my communication strengths and challenges relate to purpose, planning, familiarity with context, or my chosen approach *(with guidance, such as peer feedback or conferencing)*.	choose language and an approach that matches purpose, audience, and formality of context to plan and deliver communications.	choose an effective format and supporting sources/examples to enhance explicit and implicit meanings for a specific audience.	plan and deliver presentations integrating tone, nonverbal cues, and digital tools *(e.g., auditory, visual)* to emphasize meaning and engage the audience.	analyze my past successes and challenges when speaking, writing, or responding and set a goal for improvement using reflections on my past work *(with guidance, such as self-assessment checklist)*.
Extending — I can also...	draw upon my past experience to identify which forms of communication best complement my personal preferences and strengths.	choose language and an approach that matches purpose, audience, cultural norms, and formality of context to plan and deliver communications.	tailor the format and supporting sources/examples to engage different audience member perspectives.	evaluate the effectiveness of my use tone, nonverbal cues, or digital tools *(e.g., auditory, visual)* to emphasize meaning and engage the audience *(with guidance, such as self-assessment checklist)*.	describe how my personal speaking and writing styles and techniques have been modified over time to improve my message and engage my audience.

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	Self-awareness & Reflection	Context & Message	Establishing Meaning	Delivery & Expression	Monitoring & Adapting
	How am I using my past learning and my strengths to clearly communicate or interpret meaning when I listen, respond, speak, or write?	How do I use my knowledge of language and context to interpret a message or to help me plan my communications?	How do I decide which sources, examples, or format to use when I'm developing and sharing ideas and interpreting ideas of others?	How do tone, emphasis, and nonverbal cues help to convey or interpret a message and engage others?	How do I use verbal/nonverbal feedback to keep my audience engaged, monitor my emotional responses, and make changes when needed?
Emerging — I can…	identify how strategies used or observed in prior speaking and writing experiences help to create different modes of communication.	show my understanding of context using descriptive, technical, and content-specific language to communicate or interpret formal and informal messages.	evaluate the relevance and quality of potential sources and examples for specific purposes, audiences, and contexts.	analyze how effectively others use tone and nonverbal cues (e.g., gestures, props, visuals, auditory) to emphasize meaning and engage an audience (with guidance).	use suggestions from others to make my speaking, writing, or responding more engaging and inclusive of differing viewpoints (with guidance).
Developing — I can also…	analyze how my communication strengths and challenges relate to purpose, planning, familiarity with context, or my chosen approach (with guidance, such as peer feedback or conferencing).	analyze context-based language and approaches used by others for different purposes/audiences and interpret their messages (with guidance).	analyze how the sources and examples used in a communication help to interpret implicit meanings, varying perspectives, or cultural norms (with guidance).	speak, write, or perform expressively applying my understanding of different purposes and communication tools and modes.	identify and evaluate strategies I've used to increase my participation and be more actively engaged when speaking and responding.
Applying — I can also…	use analyses of past communications to plan more effective approaches related to different audiences or communication modes	choose language and an approach that matches purpose, audience, cultural norms, and formality of context to plan and deliver communications.	choose an effective format and supporting sources/examples to elicit a desired response from the intended audience.	plan and deliver presentations integrating tone with the use of nonverbal cues and digital tools to emphasize meaning and maintain audience engagement.	analyze my past successes and challenges when speaking, writing, or responding and set a goal for improvement using reflections on my past work (with guidance, such as self-assessment checklist).
Extending — I can also…	identify communication skills that best complement my personal preferences and strengths and apply them to new tasks.	integrate prior learning and context-based language to create an interpretive lens for formal and informal communications.	tailor the format and supporting sources/examples to enhance clarity and engage different audience member perspectives or raise awareness of cultural norms.	evaluate the effectiveness of my use tone, nonverbal cues, or digital tools to emphasize meaning and fluidly deliver a message (with guidance, such as self-assessment checklist).	describe how my personal speaking and writing styles and techniques have been modified over time to improve my message and engage my audience.