

Topics for discussion 4 Evaluating Writing

1. Holistic or analytic?

- (1) See Liu's paper for the general ideas of analytic evaluation of writing
- (2) See the rubrics provided by ETS
- (3) Establishing the rubrics
- (4) analytic features
 - Proportions of scores
- (5) holistic features
 - Scores or ranking

2. Define benchmarks

Table 1. A comparison of holistic and analytic scales in terms of six qualities of test usefulness (Weigle, 2002, p.121)

Quality	Holistic Scales	Analytic Scales
Reliability	lower than analytic, but still acceptable	higher than holistic
Construct Validity	assume that all relevant aspects of writing ability develop at the same rate and can thus be captured in a single score; correlate with superficial aspects such as length and handwriting	more appropriate for L2 writers as different aspects of writing ability develop at different rates
Practicality	relatively fast and easy	time-consuming; expensive
Impact	single score may mask an uneven writing profile and may lead to misleading placements	more scales provide useful diagnostic information for placement and/or instruction; more useful for rater training
Authenticity	White(1995) argues that reading holistically is a more natural process than reading analytically	Raters may read holistically and adjust analytic scores to match holistic impressions
Interactiveness	n/a	n/a

3. Trial set one/trial set two

4. Real processes of evaluation

5. The inter-rater and intra-rater reliability

6. The washback effect?