

Postteaching

Grading Options

In-class productivity can be reinforced using a variety of grading options. The principal options include an Olympic scoring system (throw out the worst score), weighted grades (including grades for effort and product), and contractual grades. Table 5 shows a three-column matrix of such options, along with practical comments for implementation.

TABLE 5
Matrix of Grading Options

Type of Grading Option	Example	Practical Comments
Olympic Scoring System	The worst score in a series of scores earned over the semester is thrown out.	If a student starts slowly (i.e., performs poorly), knowing that his worst score is going to be tossed out may provide the incentive for the student to continue to try.
Weighted Grades	Suppose that a student has a multiple-part assignment (e.g., reading a book, taking notes, and writing a book report); different aspects of the report would be assigned relative weights.	The student could earn maximum points for those components of the report that are relative strengths, and lose minimum points for components that are not as strong.
Contractual Grades	Similar to weighted grades, except that the student recognizes when the assignment is presented just what the tasks and the associated reinforcers are. The student "strikes a deal" with the teacher to complete the assignment for an agreed-upon grade (the reinforcer).	Students enjoy contracts; they are flexible and they allow for active student responding.