

The Illusion of Accuracy in Grading¹

Categories	Grading Weights	Student 1	Final Avg.		Student 2	Final Avg.
Tests, Projects, and Quizzes	50%	60%	30%		95%	48%
Classwork	20%	95%	19%		60%	12%
Homework	20%	80%	16%		50%	10%
Participation	10%	100%	10%		50%	5%
			75%			75%

Student 1: This student enjoys school, enjoys working with others, and is eager to please. Teachers enjoy working with students like Student 1, because they know Student 1 will be willing to contribute during class sessions and even do some nice extra things, like helping to put away materials or organize supplies. Student 1 does well with supervision, like when working on homework with Mom or Dad or with others during class. Unfortunately, Student 1 has a poor record of transferring learning to a summative assessment setting.

Student 2: This student shows great aptitude and often does well on summative assessments, often without studying or having to do homework or classwork. Student 2 demonstrates mastery of content but struggles with working with others, so in-class assignments are not always completed or turned in. Relatedly, Student 2 has low class participation and homework is a hit or miss.

Discussion Questions:

- What reflections do you have on your own grading policies based on these scenarios?
- What would a more accurate and equitable approach to grading look like?
- What questions are you left with?

¹ This example is based on an idea by Joe Feldman (2019) in his book, *Grading for Equity*. Check out *A Tale of Two Students: Tangela and Isabel* in chapter four of that book for further examples.