

Peer Evaluation in TBL

In peer evaluation, each student is responsible for grading the other members of their team. Sometimes, they are also asked to assign a grade to themselves. This runs the risk that students will preferentially reward themselves (see student #3 in example 2), though not all will (see student 4 in example 2). Therefore, some grading schemes only have students evaluate other team members.

There are many different ways to expedite peer evaluation. There is no benefit to grading if students simply split the available points (example 1). Forcing unequal grading (example 2) is often a way to allow the teacher to recognize those students perceived to be stronger. Alternatively, selecting a total number of points not divisible by the number of team members (and no fractions permitted) has the possible advantage of students not perceiving that they are forced to identify a peer as inferior.

As an example, if you ask students to split 10 points among the students in their team, several different outcomes are possible, not all useful for grading.

Example 1: Students “share” their grades evenly. This doesn’t differentiate students.

Evaluator	Student evaluated					total points
	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	
student1	2	2	2	2	2	10
student2	2	2	2	2	2	10
student3	2	2	2	2	2	10
student4	2	2	2	2	2	10
student5	2	2	2	2	2	10
GRADE	10	10	10	10	10	

Example 2: One way to prevent equal points is to mandate that at least one student get a 3 and at least one get a 1.

Evaluator	Student evaluated					total points
	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	
student1	2	1	2	3	2	10
student2	1	3	2	2	2	10
student3	2	1	3	2	2	10
student4	2	2	2	1	3	10
student5	2	2	3	2	1	10
GRADE	9	9	12	10	10	

Example 3: As an alternative, you could make the available points not divisible by number of students.

Evaluator	Student evaluated					total points
	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	
student1	3	2	3	2	2	12
student2	2	3	3	2	2	12
student3	2	3	3	2	2	12
student4	2	2	2	3	3	12
student5	2	3	3	2	2	12
GRADE*	11	13	14	11	11	

* May need to adjust total possible points.