

Sometimes it is easy to overlook something important. Read about how Julio learned how to take care of a loved one. Then answer questions 8–16. Some questions may ask you about certain paragraphs. The numbers are found on the left side of the paragraphs.

Glossary

<p><i>abuelo</i>—grandfather <i>conejos</i>—rabbits <i>m'ijo</i>—my son <i>rancho</i>—ranch <i>y mi familia</i>—and my family</p>

A House for Enrique

by Lowell Owen

- 1 “*Conejos* do not live in people’s houses,” Julio’s father declared with authority. “The last time I checked, rabbits lived outside. In nature.”
- 2 “Well, other people keep their rabbits inside,” Julio said. He knew that this kind of argument never worked with his father, but he felt he had to try.
- 3 “Last time I checked, we weren’t ‘other people,’ either,” his father predictably replied.
- 4 Julio looked hopefully towards his mother for support. Maybe a miracle would happen, and she would take his side. Unfortunately, she just smiled and said, “Your father’s right, *m’ijo*. I can’t even get you to wipe *your* feet before you walk on the carpet. I can only imagine what kind of mess Enrique would make.”
- 5 “I promise I will clean up after him,” Julio pleaded. His mother just shook her head again and returned her attention to the school papers she had been working on.
- 6 Julio had found the rabbit sitting in the backyard of his new house one day after he and his parents had returned from a shopping trip. Julio had immediately fallen in love with the brown and white rabbit and decided to adopt it as his pet. He named it Enrique after his favorite singer and fed it carrots and lettuce.
- 7 Now, however, Julio was worried about his rabbit’s safety. There were dozens of hungry cats that prowled his neighborhood, and poor Enrique had a damaged back leg, which made it difficult for him to hop.

- 8 Julio looked again pleadingly at his father, who tried to ignore Julio by reading the newspaper with great concentration. After a few moments, however, he put the paper down. "Who can read with someone staring at him like that?" he said. "All right, Julio, you win. If it'll make you feel any better, I'll help you build a cage. Although I still think rabbits belong in a stew."
- 9 "César!" Julio's mother said, smiling at her husband. "Don't talk that way!"
- 10 "Can we build a rabbit house too?" Julio asked.
- 11 "Not so fast," his father said. "One thing at a time."
- 12 The next day, Julio's father went to the shed and found an old wooden crate that was once used to haul apples. It was pretty weather-beaten, but Julio's father said they could still use it for a cage. They flipped the crate upside down and attached some wire fencing to the top. They made a hinged door on one side and placed fresh hay on the bottom of the crate.
- 13 For a while, everything was fine. Julio put Enrique in the cage at night or when the family was away. The cage was kept on the patio, where it was protected from the sun by the shadow of the tall cactus that grew in the backyard. But during the monsoons of July, when the rain poured down in heavy sheets from the sky, the cage offered no protection for the rabbit. No matter where Julio moved him, it was impossible for Enrique not to get drenched. Julio knew that it probably was not healthy for rabbits to be wet, but his father would not change his mind about letting Enrique in the house.
- 14 "Enrique's getting drowned out there, Dad," Julio complained one day at breakfast. "Can't we build a rabbit house for him?"
- 15 His father looked at him over his eggs. "*M'ijo*, I'd love to help you, but I have a ton of work to do. In fact, I'm going out of town on a business trip tomorrow. Maybe I can help when I get back next week."
- 16 Julio thought about it for a moment. "Maybe I can just build it myself. I could find some wood or something and try to put it together." He thought of places where he might find enough lumber for the project.
- 17 "Can't he get some wood from Grandfather?" his mother asked, pouring a cup of coffee. "He has a shed full of wood and chicken wire fencing at his *rancho*, and I'm certain he would give Julio some if he asked."

- 18 Julio's grandfather was in a wheelchair now and lived in a retirement home about fifteen miles away. Although he still owned the ranch, Grandfather did not get to visit it very often. Julio's father and his uncle took care of it now. "I don't know," Julio's father said thoughtfully. "Sometimes your *abuelo* doesn't feel very well. But I guess it wouldn't hurt to ask him."
- 19 "We'll go visit him tonight," Julio's mother said brightly. Julio was happy and ran outside to share the good news with Enrique.
- 20 Julio's grandfather was delighted to let Julio use the wood. He also offered to help Julio build the rabbit house. Every day for one week, Julio's mother picked up Grandfather from the nursing home and brought him to the house. Sitting in his wheelchair, he gave Julio step-by-step instructions. He coached him through measuring and cutting, told him how to lay the pieces out on the floor and showed him how to attach the chicken wire to the frame.
- 21 Julio was both a good listener and a hard worker, and the rabbit house quickly began to take shape. Finally, there was only the final painting to do. Dipping his brush in the can, Julio's grandfather said, "Julio, this has been one of the best weeks I've had in a long time."
- 22 "Me too," Julio said. "Enrique's going to love this house. He's going to be safe from all of the cats. Plus, I'm going to put the rabbit house right next to my window so I can talk to him sometimes at night. That way he won't be wet *or* lonely."
- 23 "Which do you think is worse?" Julio's grandfather asked, pausing with his brush in mid-stroke. "Being wet or being lonely?"
- 24 Julio shrugged. "I've never thought about it."
- 25 "Most people don't," his grandfather said, "until they're the ones who are lonely. Your folks are good to visit me," he continued, his voice falling so that Julio had to strain to hear him. "But I miss my home *y mi familia*. This week, I wasn't lonely at all."
- 26 Julio looked at both his grandfather and the rabbit house. He realized that he had a lot more to learn about taking care of loved ones than he'd thought.

1. In paragraph 3, when Julio's father says that they are not "other people," he means
 - A. they are not like any other people that they know.
 - B. other people are happier than they are.
 - C. they do not have to do things the way others do them.
 - D. other people have a different last name.

2. Which of these best describes how Julio and his grandfather work together?
 - A. Julio does most of the physical work while his grandfather gives him instructions.
 - B. Julio's grandfather shows him how to paint the house.
 - C. Julio does most of the cutting while his grandfather measures the wood.
 - D. Julio's grandfather cuts and measures the wood.

3. Julio's mother compares Julio to Enrique by saying that both
 - A. need more room.
 - B. are cute and sweet.
 - C. make his father angry.
 - D. can be messy.

4. How does Julio's father feel about building a rabbit cage?
 - A. Negative, then helpful
 - B. Excited, then hesitant
 - C. Happy, then angry
 - D. Fearful, then content

5. What is the most important thing Julio learns about his grandfather?

- A. He often feels lonely.
- B. He used to sell rabbits.
- C. He cannot express his feelings.
- D. He is a good carpenter.

6. Why does Julio's mother want Enrique to stay outside?

- A. She does not like animals.
- B. She is allergic to rabbits.
- C. She already has an indoor animal.
- D. She knows rabbits can be messy.

7. The author most likely wrote this passage to

- A. explain how to take care of a pet rabbit.
- B. describe how families should help neighbors.
- C. give detailed instructions on making a rabbit house.
- D. teach a lesson about understanding others' feelings.

8. How will Julio's relationship with his grandfather most likely change in the future?

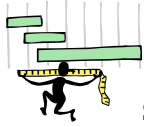
- A. They will see each other at least once a year.
- B. Julio will spend more time with his grandfather.
- C. They will work together on the family ranch.
- D. Julio will ask his grandfather to help him with other pets.

Please write your response to this question on a separate sheet of paper.

“A House for Enrique” has many strong characters. Choose one character—Julio, his father, his mother or his grandfather—and describe that character’s personality. Use at least three details from the passage to support your description.

Create your own scoring rubric for excellence.

Performance Levels	Detailed criteria for each level of performance
4 Advanced	
3 Proficient	
2 Needs Improvement	
1 Failing	



Six Point Rubric

Score	<i>Characteristics of student work at each level of competence.</i>
6	
5	
4	
3	
2	
1	
0	

Using the Rubric Templates in the Classroom

Six Steps to Rubric Development

1. What do you intend students to know, understand, or be able to do?
2. Identify skills that must be demonstrated in order to complete the task.
3. Identify the judging criteria or essential elements that ensure that the outcome will be high in quality. These will become the rows in your rubric.
4. In the cells of the rubric, develop clear descriptions of performance at each achievement level for each essential element of quality.
5. Decide on a rating scheme that fits in with your grading philosophy and build it into the rubric. Be prepared to translate scores received into your scheme.
6. Keep track of all your assessment data in a binder with a section for each student.

You can place the template face down in a copy machine and copy the template onto a transparency so you can develop rubrics with student input.

Project the transparency onto a white board and fill in the squares with the performance assessment measures and criteria you and your students create together.

Some teachers use colored paper 3 x 5 squares for performance levels; yellow for 0 points, blue for 6 points etc. Students write the performance assessment criteria you develop in class on the paper squares. When assessing their own work, they can select the squares that best represent the quality of their work. Their goal is to move up to all blue squares.

Learning to create rubrics is like learning anything valuable. It takes an initial time investment. Once the task becomes second nature, it actually saves time while creating a higher quality student product.

Why should students create their own rubrics? Reading or listening to a teacher's expectations is very different for a student than creating and accomplishing his or her own goals. The purpose of inviting students to develop their own evaluation structure is to improve their motivation, interest and performance in the project. As students' overall participation in school increases, they are invested in the process.