

Parent Guide: Understanding Proficiency Scales

Why no number grades (like 85%)?

We use **Proficiency Scales** instead of percentages—an incoming BC Ministry of Education requirement. The goal: shift from “getting marks” to “improving learning.”

A number grade tells you *where* your child stands but not *how* to improve. A proficiency scale describes what your child can currently do and exactly what they need to do to reach the next level.

What do the levels mean?

Emerging — Just starting. Has initial understanding but needs help.

“I am just learning this.”

Developing — Understands some parts but is still inconsistent.

“I get it, but I still make mistakes.”

Proficient — Fully meets grade-level expectations. **This is the goal.**

“I can do this on my own reliably.”

Extending — Goes beyond requirements with deep thinking.

“I can use this in new and creative ways.”

How does this compare to letter grades?

- **Extending:** A range
- **Proficient/Proficient+:** B to A range (goal for all students)
- **Developing/Developing+:** C to C+ range
- **Emerging/Emerging+:** Passing (C-)
- **Pre-Emerging:** Not yet passing (Incomplete)

Note: A “+” sign means your child is very close to the next level.

Scales used in this class

- **Homework/Responsibility:** Organization, meeting deadlines, following submission rules
- **Written Work:** Logical thinking, showing steps clearly, using units correctly
- **Lab Documentation:** Recording experiments, data quality, photos, experimental notes
- **Programming:** Coding skills, from basic syntax to solving complex problems independently
- **Verbal Assessment:** Explaining concepts orally, using correct vocabulary
- **Video Analysis:** Applying physics concepts (Newton’s Laws) to real-world videos

Example: To move from **Developing** to **Proficient** in **Verbal Assessment**, a student needs to go from “answering with occasional teacher guidance” to “providing complete explanations without prompting.”

How can I help my child improve?

Ask your child to look at the scale with you:

1. Identify where they are right now (e.g., Developing)
2. Look at the description for the next level up (e.g., Proficient)
3. Ask: “What is the one specific thing you need to change in your next assignment to reach that level?”