

Unit Topic: peerScholar

Introduction

peerScholar is a customizable peer assessment tool that helps develop your students' critical and creative thinking skills. The tool allows instructors to set up individual, group or case study assignment submissions for students to peer review. This is done through three phases: creating, assessing, and reflecting. **peerScholar** is designed for peer to peer evaluation and grading as well as self-assessment.

What are the benefits to using peerScholar for your students?

- An opportunity for students to acquire analytical, learning skills and perform critical thinking developed by the critical thinking aspect of peerScholar.
- Students attain continual practice in self-reflection, assessing quality of feedback and a sense of where their own work fits relative to the work of peers.
- Feedback is prompt and timely which maximizes learning impact.
- Students learn to communicate their ideas in an efficient manner.

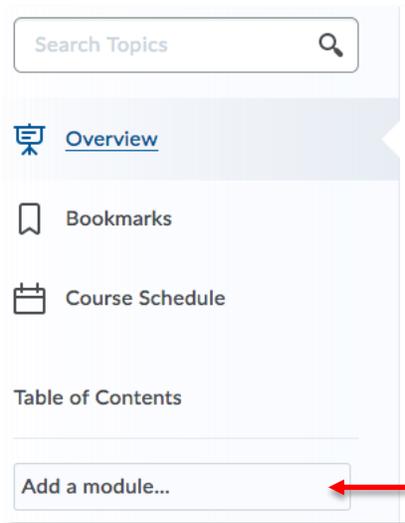
Content

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 - Set Dates Menu
 - Customize Grading Menu
- Grading System
 - Navigating the Grading System
 - Progress and Grading
 - Syncing Grades

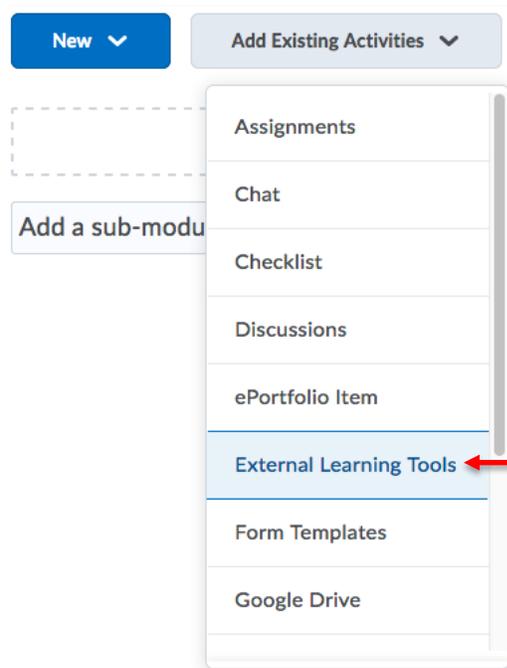
Getting Started

Create a New Module



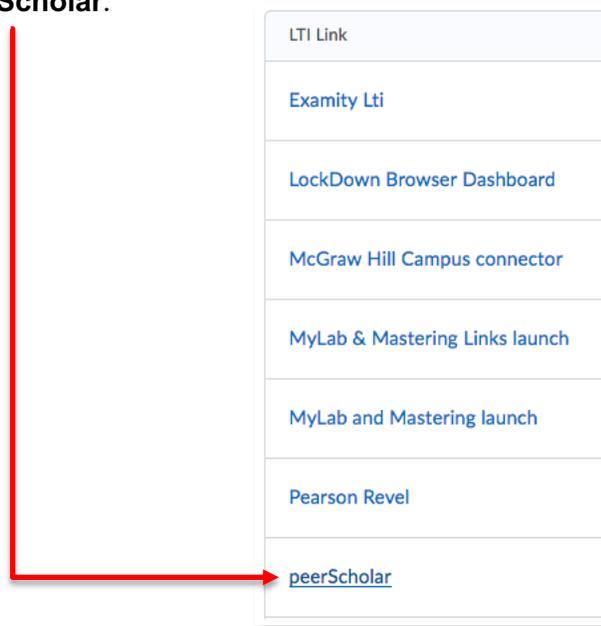
Access the **Content** tab in your DC Connect course. Add a module to the left-hand navigation bar by clicking **Add a module...** and give it a name.

Adding an External Learning Tool

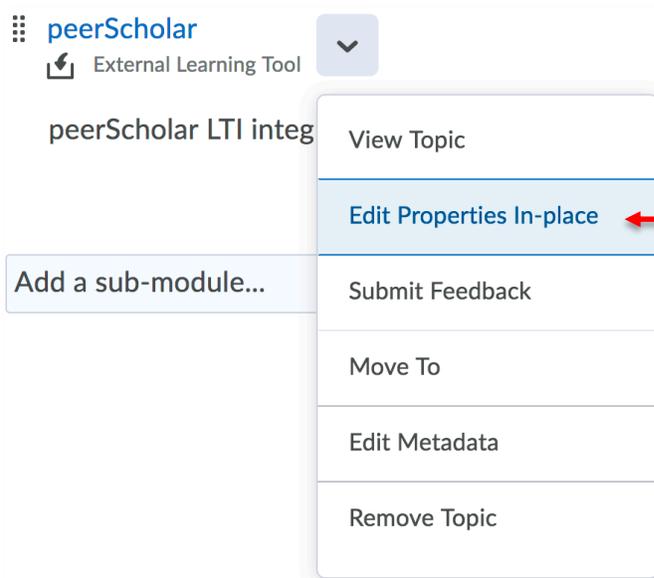


Inside your new module, select **External Learning Tools** from the Existing Activities drop down menu.

Scroll down, and select **peerScholar**.

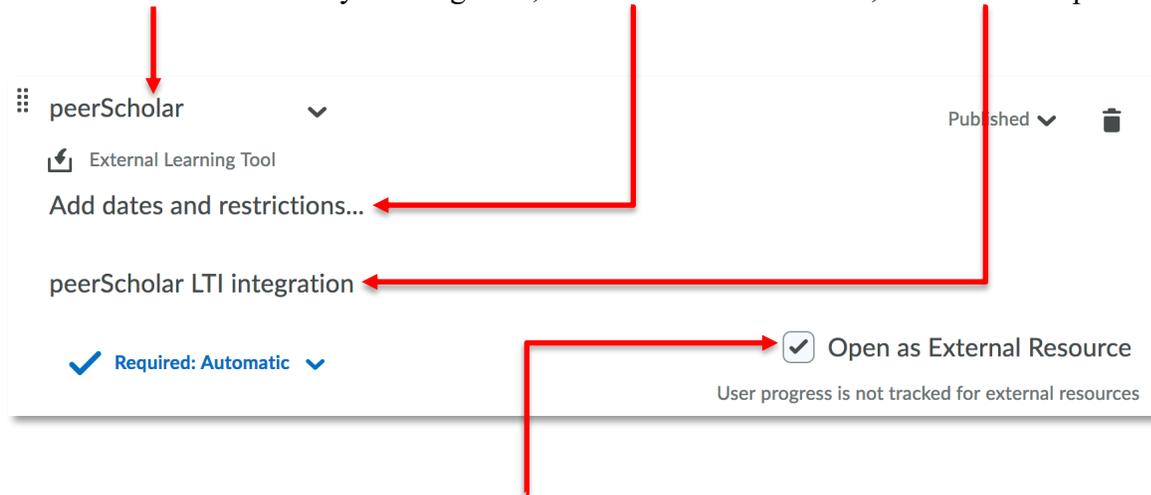


Modifying Tool Properties



Under the arrow to the right of your new peerScholar tool link, click **Edit Properties In-Place**.

You can rename the link by clicking on it, add dates and restrictions, or add a description.



We recommend checking **Open as External Resource** as it will allow you and your students access to view the tool in its own full-screen page.

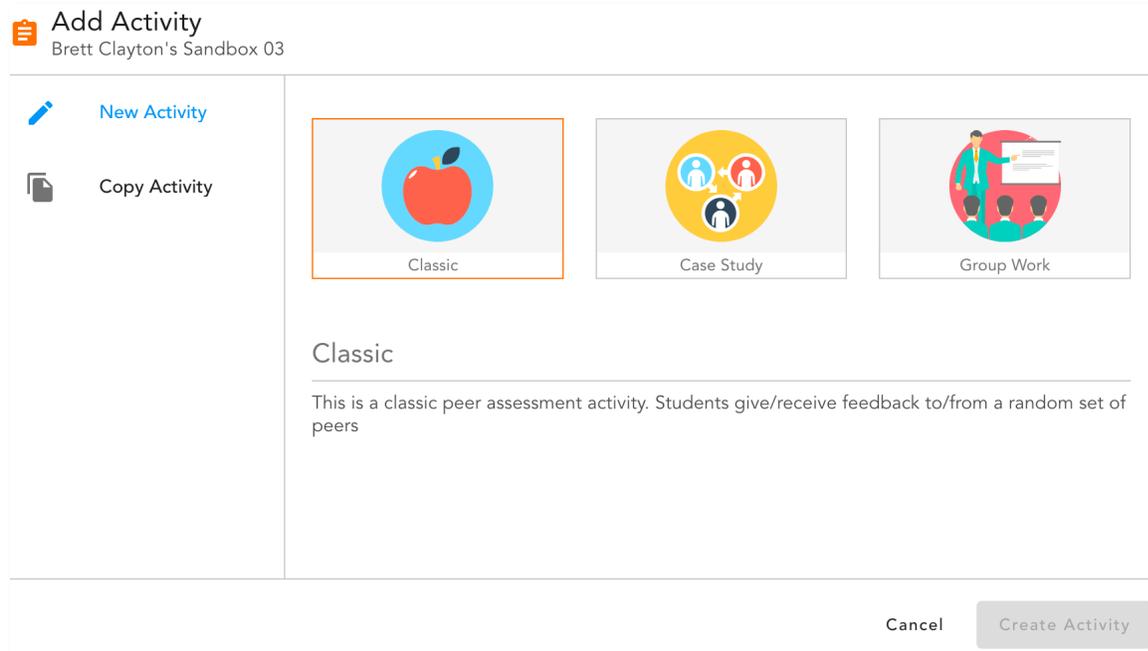
Accessing peerScholar

Access the tool by clicking on the link or by selecting View Topic under the topic action menu. Here you can select whether you're creating a classic (individual), case study or group work assignment.

Adding an Activity

Types of Activities

Once you have launched peerScholar through your DC Connect course, you will be automatically brought to the **Add Activity** menu. There are 3 options to choose from:



Classic allows you to create an assignment and various assessments for your students to complete. This will be done individually and students give/receive feedback to/from a random set of peers.

Case Study allows you to create different cases (topics) to assign to different students. Students can give feedback to peers who did the same case or a different case.

Group Work allows you to create an assignment and various assessments for grouped students. Students will submit as a group & peer assess other groups.

Click the type of activity of your choice and then click the **Create Activity** button. You will be entered into the builder. Click the **Let's Go!** bar to continue.

Create Activity

Please refer to the Appendices of this document for the details of creating each activity type.

[Appendix A: Classic](#)

[Appendix B: Case Study](#)

[Appendix C: Group Work](#)

Additional Tools



On the right-hand side of the builder, there is a menu with 3 icons.

The **Plus Sign** will allow you to access additional assessments that will be prompted to students as a last response at any phase (create, assess and reflect).

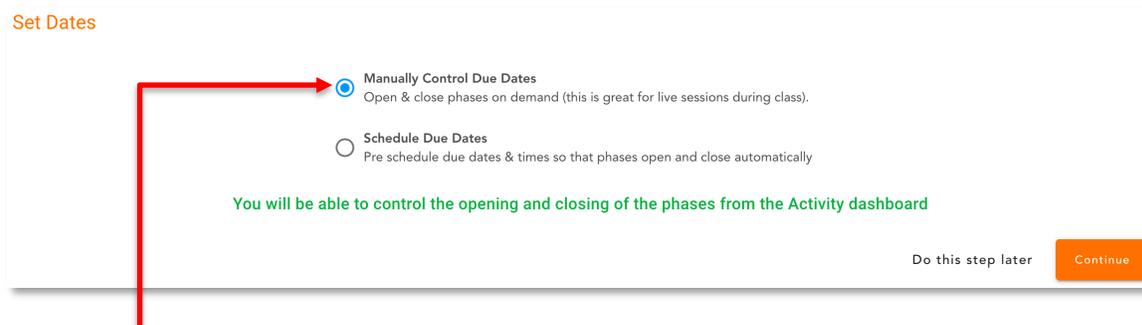
The **Eye Icon** allows you to preview how students will view each phase.

The **Gear Icon** shows advanced phase settings. You are able to set a word limit in this menu. You may also enable require completion of Assess Phase to participate in Reflect Phase in this menu.

Set Dates Menu

Manual Control

Once you have built your activity and performed any additional steps, you must set the dates where your activities will open and close to students.



You may choose the **Manually Control Due Dates** option to control the opening and closing of the phases from the Activity dashboard. This is useful for in class assessments or for instructors that want more manual control.

If you choose to manually control due dates, you can toggle each phase on or off from this panel on your peerScholar dashboard after completing your activity setup.

Automatic Scheduling

You may choose the Schedule Due Dates option to pre-schedule due dates and times so that phases open and close automatically.

Set Dates

Manually Control Due Dates
Open & close phases on demand (this is great for live sessions during class).

Schedule Due Dates
Pre schedule due dates & times so that phases open and close automatically

Dates schedule by clicking on the pencil icons of each phase. You can choose the range in which they run using the calendar provided. **Time** confirms and sets the times as well.

The screenshot shows a three-step process for scheduling phases:

- 1 Create Phase:** Shows two scheduled dates: Tue Sep 24th 2019 at 12:01am and Mon Sep 30th 2019 at 11:59pm. A 'Submit Late' toggle is present.
- 2 Assess Phase:** Includes a 'Select Assess Dates' button.
- 3 Reflect Phase:** Includes a 'Select Reflect Dates' button and a 'Submit Late' toggle.

At the bottom right, there is a 'Do this step later' button and a 'Continue' button.

Submit Late allows for late submissions by toggling on the slider.

NOTE: if there is an overlap in dates and timing, you will not be able to continue to the next stage until it is resolved.

Click the **Continue** button once it has turned orange.

Customize Grading Menu

The grading menu allows you to create grading assessments for yourself or any teaching assistants you've associated with your course. Make sure you complete the Customize Grading Menu before you begin the grading process.

Types of Grading

After you have finished building your activity and setting your dates, grading is the next step. There are 3 types of grading options.

Grading

What will be included in the final grade of this activity?

Instructor/Teaching Team Evaluations

These grades will be provided by the instructor and/or the teaching assistants.

0
Points

Peer Ratings

These grades will be generated by the students.

0
Points

Student Participation

These grades will be generated automatically by the system for student completion.

0
Points

Instructor/Teaching Team Evaluations is a manual grading process. This option allows you to set up grading assessments, similar to the ones created in the Assess phase of the Build Activity Menu. From there, you and your teaching team will undergo a grading process that will display peer evaluations, self-evaluations and revisions of a student's work.

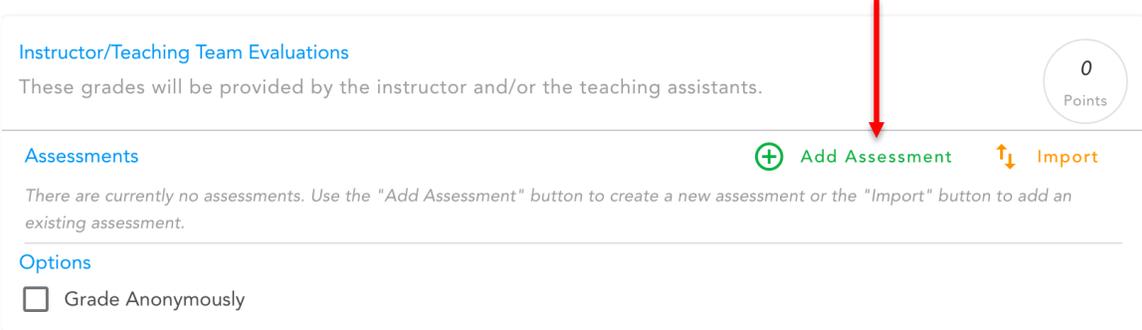
Peer Ratings is an automatic grading process that uses peer assessments to generate or contribute to the student's grade.

Student Participation is an automatic grading process that provides grades based on the completion of each phase.

Select the grading process that is appropriate for the activity and your teaching team.

Instructor/Teaching Team Evaluations

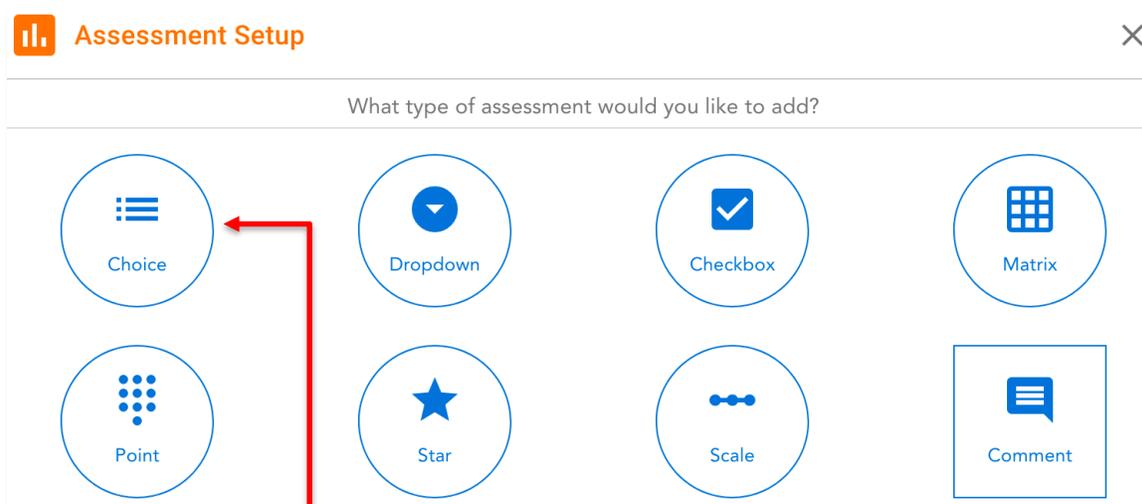
When Instructor/Teaching Team Evaluations is selected, click on the **Add Assessment** link.



The screenshot shows the 'Instructor/Teaching Team Evaluations' section with a '0 Points' indicator. Below this, there is an 'Assessments' section with a green plus icon and the text 'Add Assessment', and an 'Import' button with an orange up-down arrow icon. A red arrow points to the 'Add Assessment' button. Below the 'Assessments' section, there is an 'Options' section with a checkbox labeled 'Grade Anonymously'.

This will allow you to create grading assessments that will be the platform of your marking.

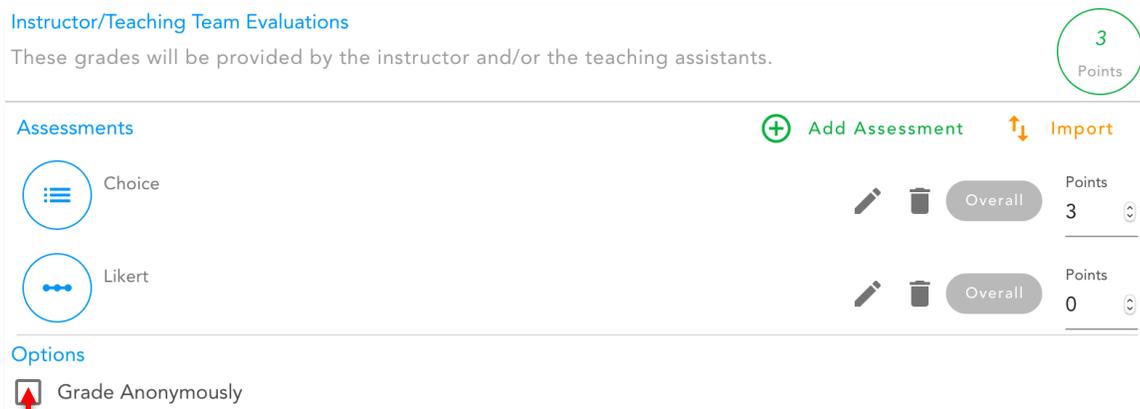
The Assessments Setup menu will pop up. There are currently 8 different types of assessments to choose from.



Add in assessments by clicking on the ones you would like to use and following the prompts.

Keep in mind that these assessments should be catered towards grading the student's work and can include grading based on all revisions (initial and final), grading self-reflections and grading the student's peer assessments.

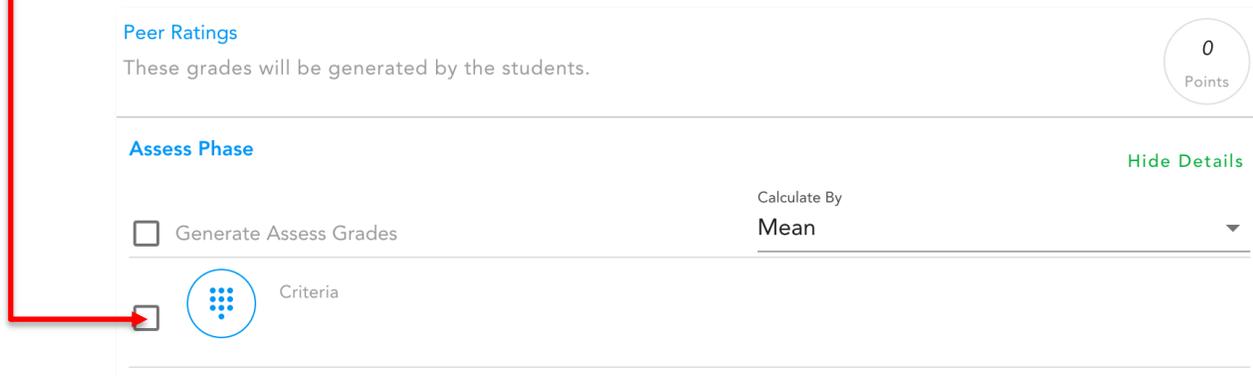
After you have finalized your grading assessments, you must dedicate points to each assessment. Use the up and down arrows in the points box to add a weight to each grading assessment. The sum of all the points for each assessment will equal to a final mark.



You may also choose to select Grade Anonymously which will hide the name of the student from the grader to avoid unconscious bias or preconceived ideas.

Peer Rating

When Peer Rating is selected, the peer assessments that you initially created in the Assess phase of the Build Activity Menu will display. To use the peer assessment gradings, select the check box on the side to allow the assessment given to the student by a peer to be used towards their final grade.



Peer Ratings

These grades will be generated by the students.

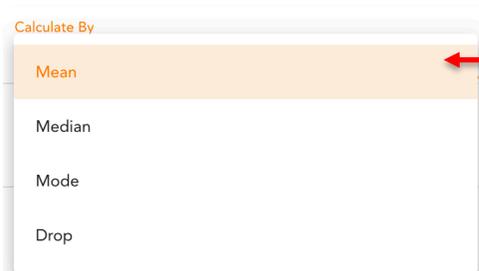
0 Points

Assess Phase Hide Details

Generate Assess Grades Calculate By: Mean

 Criteria

All assessments created in the assess phase have allocated quantitative values to each option except for the Comments assessment and therefore can be used to provide a quantitative grade.



Calculate By

Mean

Median

Mode

Drop

Now select the Calculate By dropdown menu and select the option that fits your activity.

The option Drop simply drops the lowest and highest assessment grades given and then takes the mean of the remaining.

After you have finalized your grading assessments, you must dedicate points to each assessment. Use the up and down arrows in the points box to add a weight to each grading assessment. The sum of all the points for each assessment will equal to a final mark.

It is recommended that points follow the assessment quantitative values in a logical manner. For example, if the highest value in the “choice” assessment option is 3, it is recommended that you dedicate 3 points in the marking scheme.

Student Participation

When Student Participation is selected, the three phases found in the Build Activity Menu will be visible.

Student Participation 0 Points

These grades will be generated automatically by the system for student completion.

- Create Phase
- Assess Phase
- Reflect Phase

To incorporate the student's completion of each phase as a grade, select the check box beside each phase that you want to grade the student on. From there, you may select if you wish to grade the student based on if they completed the entire phase (including any additional questions) and/or if they submitted or assessed work.

Student Participation 0 Points

These grades will be generated automatically by the system for student completion.

- Create Phase
 - Completed Entire Create Phase
 - Submitted Original Composition Points: 0
- Assess Phase
 - Completed Entire Assess Phase Points: 0
- Reflect Phase
 - Completed Entire Reflect Phase Points: 0

After you have finalized your grading assessments, you must dedicate points to each assessment. Use the up and down arrows in the points box to add a weight to each grading assessment. The sum of all the points for each assessment will equal to a final mark.

Assistant Settings

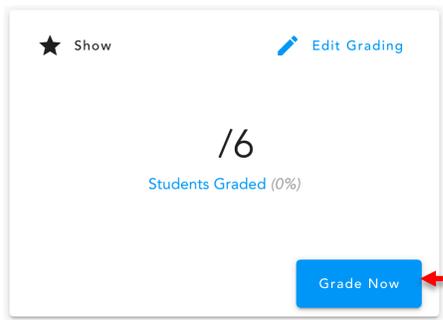
You may skip over the Assistant Settings as Teaching Assistants are not available in your course.

Assistant Settings

Grading System

Navigating the Grading System

Once you have completed the Customize Grading Menu and students have submitted their assignments, assessed their peers' assignments and reflected, it is time to grade their work.

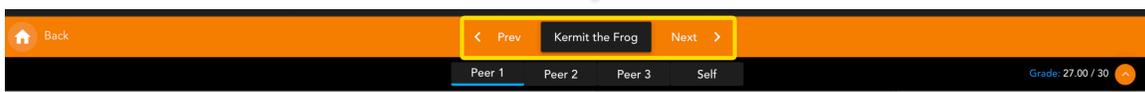


From the dashboard of your course, click on the **Grade Now** button.

The grading system will appear for you.

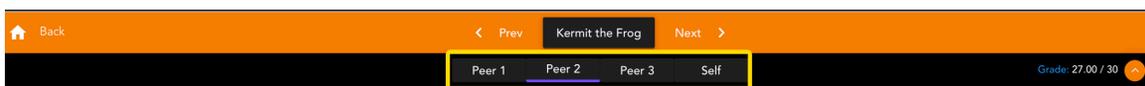
Student Identification

In the center of the grading system, the student's name will appear and you are able to cycle through all the students.



NOTE: If Mark Anonymously was checked in the customized grading menu, the student's name will not appear when grading. However, the student's name will still be accessible next to their grade in DC Connect. peerScholar recommends using the anonymous grading feature as it can remove unconscious bias or preconceived ideas based on the name of the student.

Peers



Underneath the student's name, are the peers that have assessed the student's work. Clicking on each peer will show their assessments. You may also view the self-assessment that the student has completed if that option was toggled on during the Build Activity phase.

Student's Composition

Kermit the Frog Composition

Last Updated: Jun 7th 2019, 2:16pm Words: 357

The Impacts of eLearning

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Draft Revised Changed **Files (0)**

The left-hand panel displays the Student's composition that they have submitted. At the bottom of the composition, there are 3 options:

Draft: shows the initial submitted work.

Revised: shows the revised submitted work after peer edits.

Changed: shows the changes made to the work. Changes will only show if the student edits directly on the peerScholar system.

Attachment Submissions

If your students have submitted an attachment in addition to or instead of a written composition, the files will be downloadable at the bottom of the screen.



Click **Files** to open the file popup menu.

Click on the file names to download each file individually and open separately on your computer in the appropriate software.

Assessment from Peers

The middle grey panel displays the assessments and feedback from each peer conducted in the Assess phase.

Kermit the Frog Composition

Last Updated: Jun 7th 2019, 2:16pm Words: 357

The Impacts of eLearning

Feedback from Peer 2

Assessments

Based on the student's essay, how strong were the arguments?

The essay introduces the implications of eLearning and how it has evolved throughout history. The student did a good job portraying their stance. Very strong arguments overall.

Please provide a grade to this student's essay.

Student Grades

Last Updated By Miss Piggy

Assessments

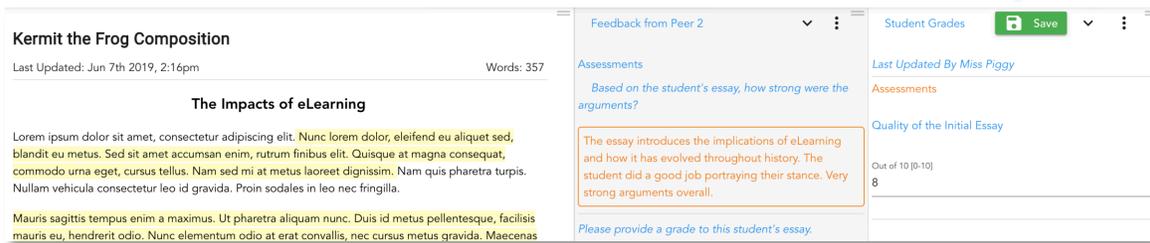
Quality of the Initial Essay

Out of 10 [0-10]

8

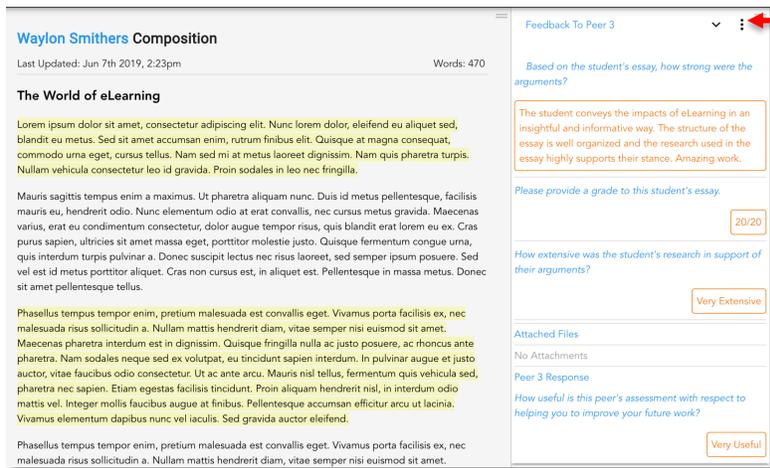
Grader's Assessments

The white panel on the right-hand side is the grading portion of the system.



Instructors will complete the assessment they created in the Customizable Grading menu.

View Feedback given to Peers

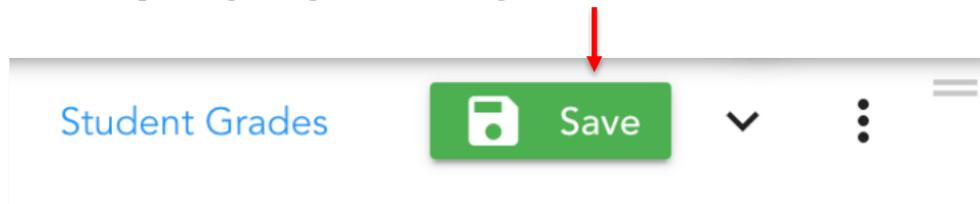


Clicking on the three dots will allow you to view feedback given to peers.

This means that you are able to see the assessments that the student has conducted on their peers. The grading system changes and the left panel now shows the peer's composition and the middle panel shows the student's comments on their peers' work.

Saving

After you have completed grading, click on the green **Save** button and move onto the next student.

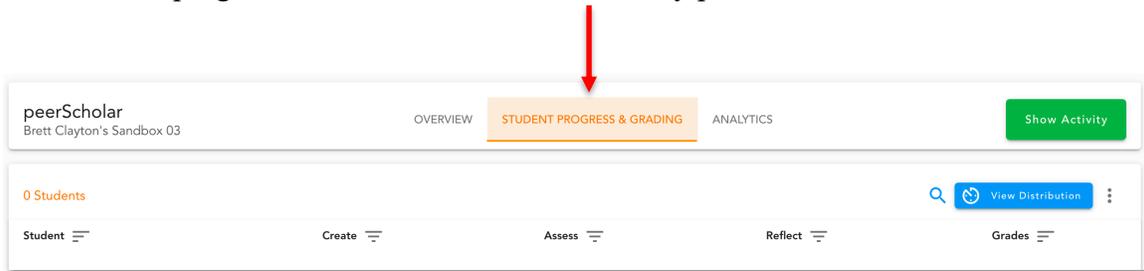


Once all students are graded, the dashboard should indicate that all students have been marked.

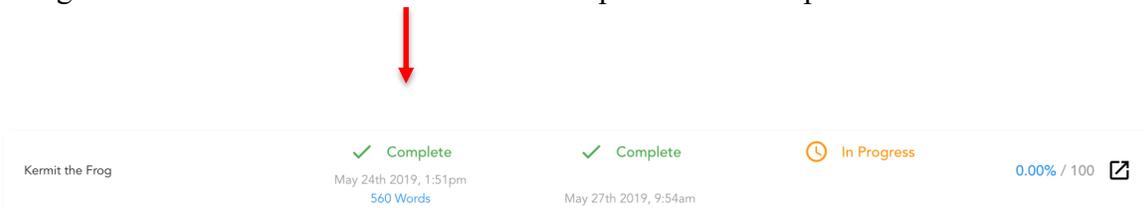
Progress and Grading

peerScholar's dashboard offers many options to view the progress of your student's work.

In the dashboard, locate the tab called **Student Progress & Grading**. Under this menu, you are able to view the progress of each student's work in every phase.



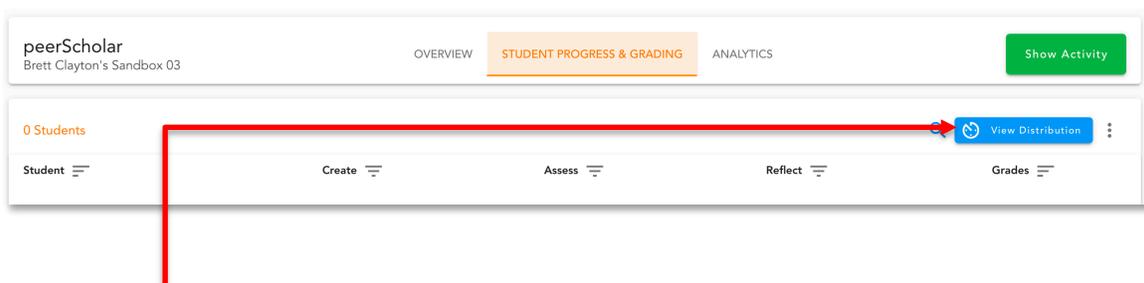
Clicking on the status of the student's work will open a menu of options.



Mark as NOT Submitted: this will change the student's status to "In Progress"

Edit: this option allows you to edit the student's submission in the Create phase and in the Reflect phase. This may also be useful for manual submissions by the instructor in the case that students submit their work to you and not the system.

Allow Late Access: grants the individual student permission to submit late in any phase. It is recommended that in the Assess phase, all students submit their assessments on time to avoid unequal distribution of peer assessments.

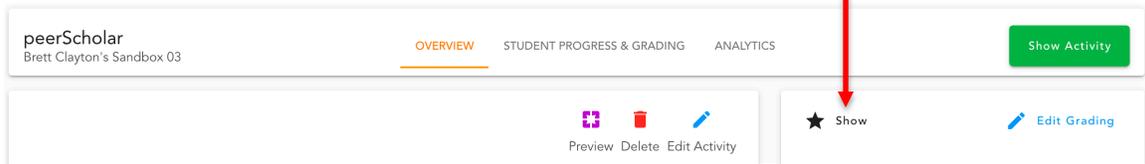


The **View Distribution** button allows you to see the distribution of peer to peer in the Assess phase.

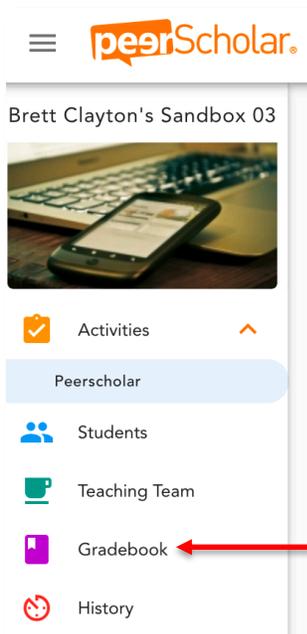
Syncing Grades

After you have completed the grading, you are able to transfer them to DC Connect.

On the peerScholar dashboard, you are able to click **Show** to make your grades visible to students in the peerScholar system.

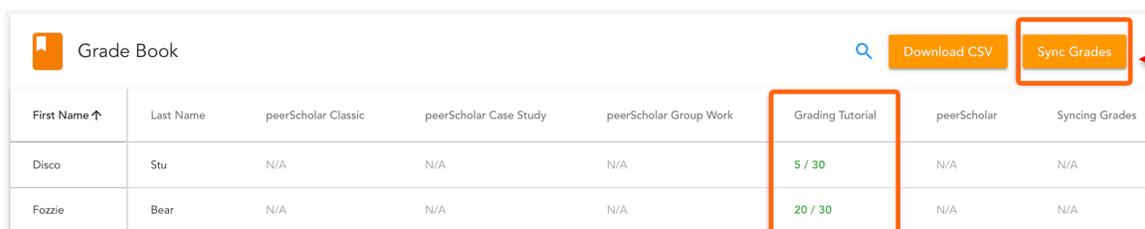


You may also hide grades if you wish to do so after showing them.



Clicking **Gradebook** will take you to the grades that you have submitted into the system.

In the **Gradebook** panel, grades that you have allocated to each student are displayed. This panel shows all the grades of every activity that you have made.



A screenshot of the 'Grade Book' panel. It features a search bar, 'Download CSV', and 'Sync Grades' buttons. Below is a table with columns for student names and various activities. The 'Grading Tutorial' column is highlighted with a red box, and the 'Sync Grades' button is also highlighted with a red box and a red arrow.

First Name ↑	Last Name	peerScholar Classic	peerScholar Case Study	peerScholar Group Work	Grading Tutorial	peerScholar	Syncing Grades
Disco	Stu	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 / 30	N/A	N/A
Fozzie	Bear	N/A	N/A	N/A	20 / 30	N/A	N/A

To sync the grades to DC Connect, simply click on the **Sync Grades** button.

A menu will pop up confirming how you would like the grades to be transferred.

Sync Grades to Institution

How would you like to send your peerScholar activity grades to your institution's learning system's grade book?

Smart Sync - Send only new/updated grades

All Sync - Send/resend all grades

Please note that it may take some time for your activity grades to appear in the learning system's grade book.

Cancel Continue

Smart Sync: this function allows you to send only new/updated grades. This function is useful for syncing grades for later activities, as previous activities would have been completed and resending grades is unfavorable.

All Sync: this function allows you to send all grades. This includes every previous activity that has been completed.

Once you have made your selection, click **Continue**. The grades will take time to process before they enter into DC Connect. Once they are processed, follow the procedures in which you would manage and enter grades.

Appendix A: Classic

Classic Activity Setup

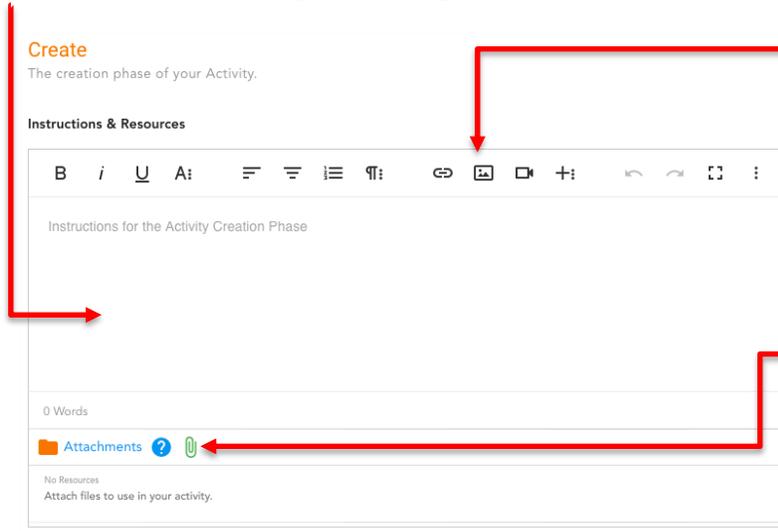
If you have selected the **Classic** activity type, you will be automatically entered into the **Build Activity** tab.



You may click on the drop-down menu of the header, allowing you to edit the name of the activity, the description and add tags.

Create Phase

Provide details of the specific assignment in the text box.



You may attach images, create hyperlinks and tables by accessing the icons in the header above.

Attachments such as an external grading rubric may be included by clicking on the paperclip icon at the bottom.

If your assignment is a written composition, use your instructions to direct students to copy and paste their compositions into the Create Phase text editor instead of uploading a pdf or word document file. This way, the students and instructors evaluating them later can interact directly with the written content within peerScholar and don't have to mark downloaded files separately.

Use your instructions field to set expectations by breaking down the peerScholar process. This can help make the experience more intuitive for your students by specifying steps in the process for your particular assignment.

Assess Phase

Assess

The assessment phase of your Activity.

Number of Peers

5

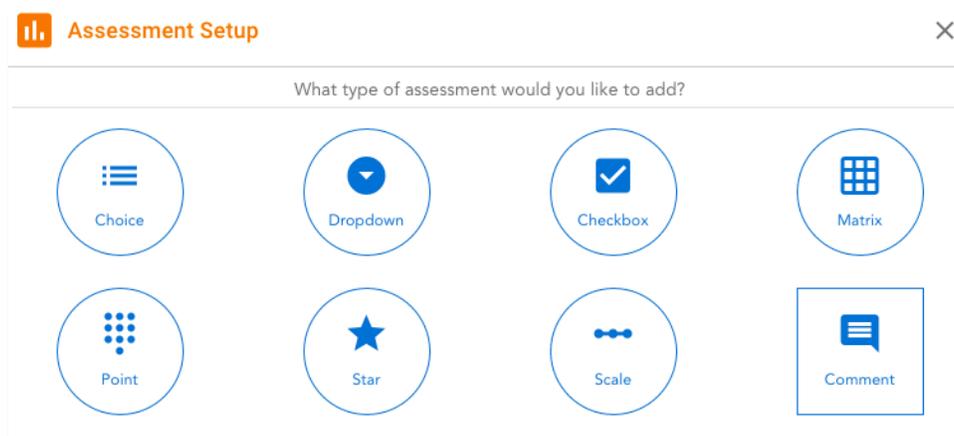
Select the Number of Peers you want each student to assess. For works ranging from 1 - 2 pages, peerScholar recommends that 5-6 peers should be used.

Add in assessments by clicking the orange **Add Peer Assessments** button. Assessments created here are used by students to assess other students.



Add Peer Assessment

The Assessments Setup menu will pop up.



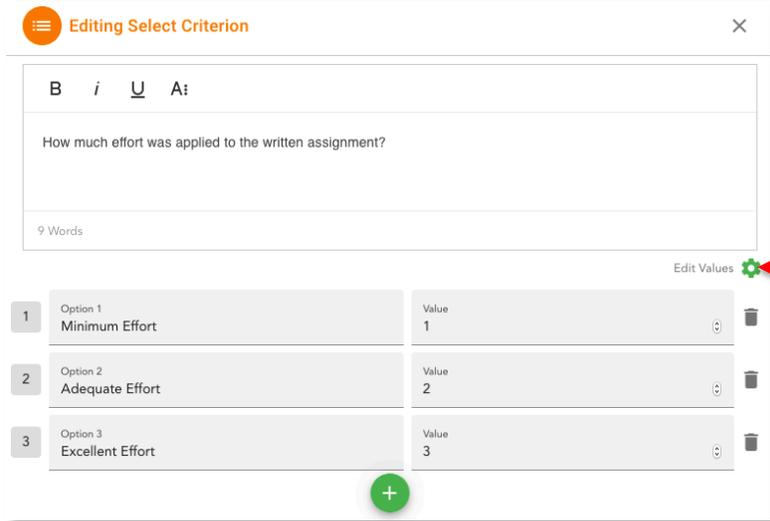
There are currently 8 different types of assessments to choose from. Add in assessments by clicking on the ones you would like to use and following the prompts. You may add multiple assessments to evaluate your students. Some notable ones are:

Point: allows you to ask students to provide a value to their peers' work by setting up minimum and maximum values.

Matrix: allows you to mimic a provided rubric where students score their peers' work in the matrix.

Comment: a qualitative option allowing you to ask students to provide insights and feedback on their peer's work and answer any questions about the work.

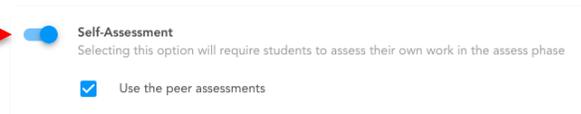
All assessments, excluding **Comment** can be assigned a quantitative value towards each option. This value will be used to quantify qualitative options.



For example, the assessment tool **Choice** allows you to create qualitative options that students can select when assessing their peers' work. By assigning a value to each option, this allows for more **Peer Ratings** grading options in the Customize Grading menu.

To access the quantitative values, click on the gear icon located on the top of the menu.

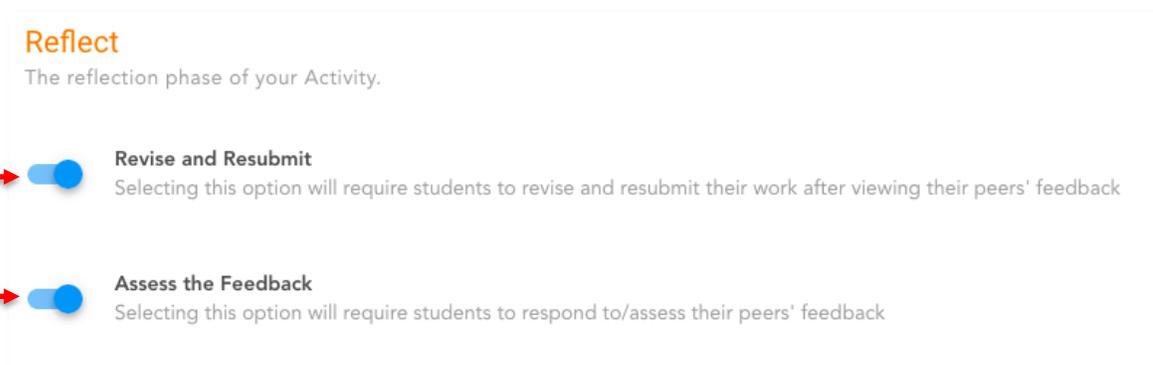
The blue **Self-Assessment** slider can be toggled on and off to determine if you want students to self-assess their own work.



When toggled on - you may choose if they assess themselves using the peer assessment you created above and if not, you may add new assessments that cater to the specific self-evaluation task.

Reflect Phase

You may toggle **Revise and Resubmit** on and off. When on, students may revise their work after peers have assessed it and resubmit it to be marked. When off, students will not have this option.



You may choose to toggle **Assess the Feedback** on and off. When on, you may add feedback assessments using the assessment types found in the assessment section to create questions that will require students to assess the feedback given to them. When off, students will not have this option.

Appendix B: Case Study

Case Study Setup

If you have selected the **Case Study** activity type, this menu will appear before you have built the activity allowing you to setup case parameters.

Cases

How many cases would you like to create?

Select the number of cases you would like to create in the drop-down menu. This will determine the variety of selection your students will have.

Click on the respective pencil icons to add a name to each of the cases and a description to provide more detail to students.

Students will be randomly divided into cases 

▶ Case #1  0 Students

▶ Case #2  0 Students

+ Add Case

 Please save to persist case settings Continue

On the right-hand side, a gear icon is shown. This will give you options to divide students into groups. Select the option that best fits your activity.

Click Continue.

Case Study Activity Setup

Once in the **Build Activity** menu, the create phase will display.

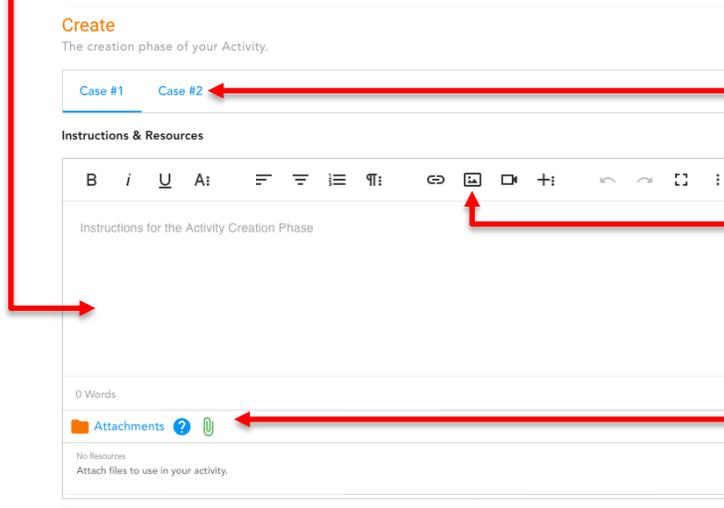
Case Study Activity 

Type	CASE STUDY ACTIVITY
Name	<small>Title</small> Case Study Activity Example
Description	<small>Description</small>
Tags	<small>Activity Keywords/Tags</small>

You may click on the drop-down menu of the header, allowing you to edit the name of the activity, the description and add tags.

Create Phase

For each case, provide details in the text box.



Click on the case nickname tabs to navigate between each case.

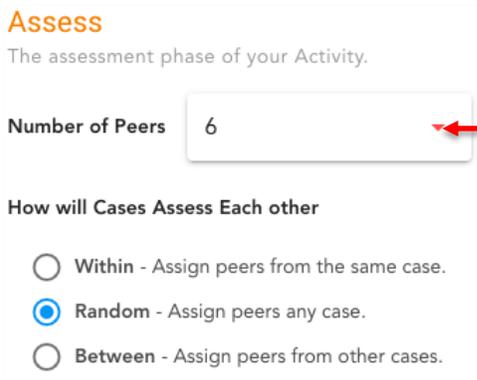
You may attach images, create hyperlinks and tables by accessing the icons in the header.

Attachments such as an external grading rubric may be included by clicking on the paperclip icon at the bottom.

If your assignment is a written composition, use your instructions to direct students to copy and paste their compositions into the Create Phase text editor instead of uploading a pdf or word document file. This way, the students and instructors evaluating them later can interact directly with the written content within peerScholar and don't have to mark downloaded files separately.

Use your instructions field to set expectations by breaking down the peerScholar process. This can help make the experience more intuitive for your students by specifying steps in the process for your particular assignment.

Assess Phase

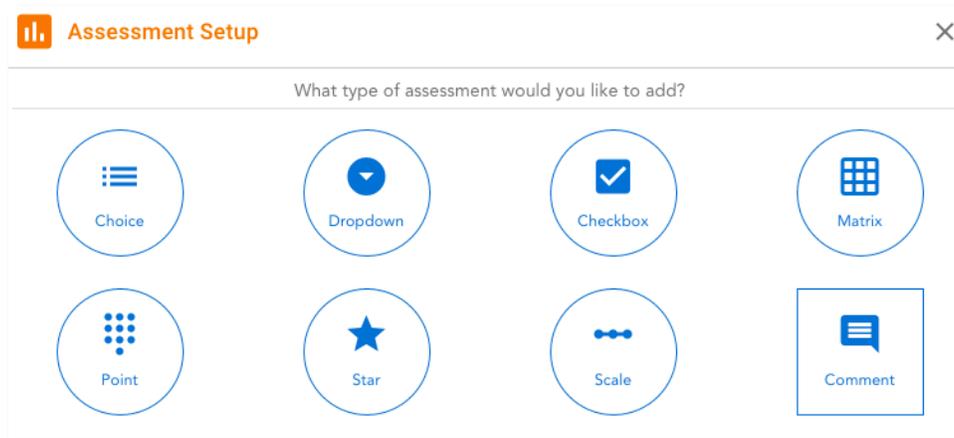


In the **Number of Peers** section, peerScholar recommends that 6 peers should be used to provide an accurate assessment. The **How will Cases Assess Each Other** area will determine the peers that students will be assessing in the assess phase. Select the option that best suits your assignment.

Now, add in assessments by clicking the orange **Add Peer Assessments** button. Assessments created here are used by students to assess other students.



The Assessments Setup menu will pop up.



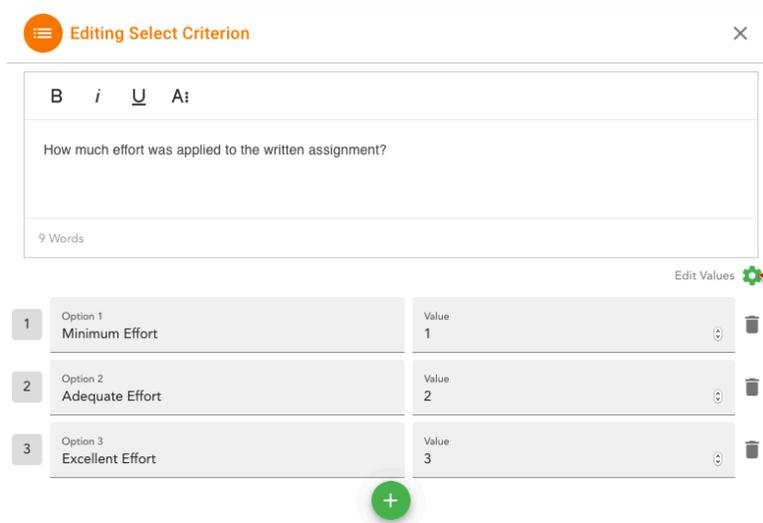
There are currently 8 different types of assessments to choose from. Add in assessments by clicking on the ones you would like to use and following the prompts. You may add multiple assessments to evaluate your students. Some notable ones are:

Point: allows you to ask students to provide a value to their peers' work by setting up minimum and maximum values.

Matrix: allows you to mimic a provided rubric where students score their peers' work in the matrix.

Comment: a qualitative option allowing you to ask students to provide insights and feedback on their peer's work and answer any questions about the work.

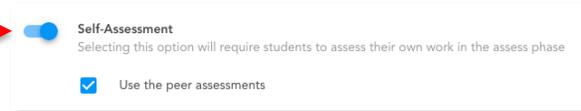
All assessments, excluding **Comment** can be assigned a quantitative value towards each option. This value will be used to quantify qualitative options.



For example, the assessment tool **Choice** allows you to create qualitative options that students can select when assessing their peers' work. By assigning a value to each option, this allows for more **Peer Ratings** grading options in the Customize Grading menu.

To access the quantitative values, click on the gear icon located on the top of the menu.

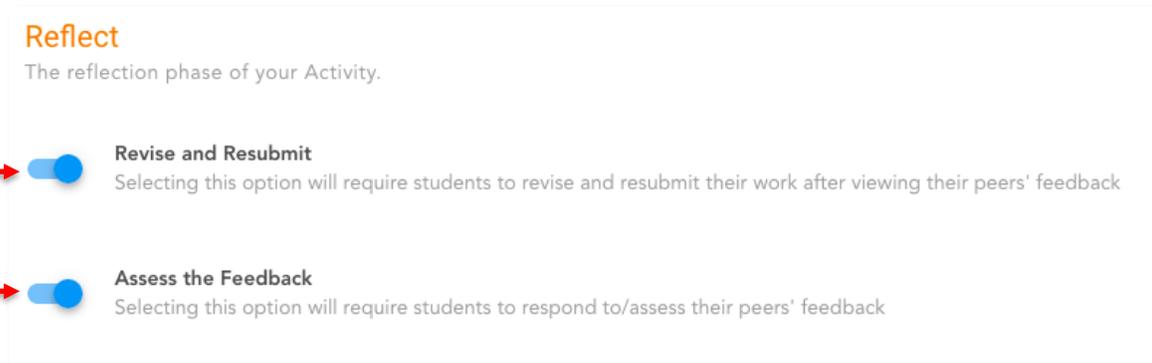
The blue **Self-Assessment** slider can be toggled on and off to determine if you want students to self-assess their own work.



When toggled on - you may choose if they assess themselves using the peer assessment you created above and if not, you may add new assessments that cater to the specific self-evaluation task.

Reflect Phase

You may toggle **Revise and Resubmit** on and off. When on, students may revise their work after peers have assessed it and resubmit it to be marked. When off, students will not have this option.

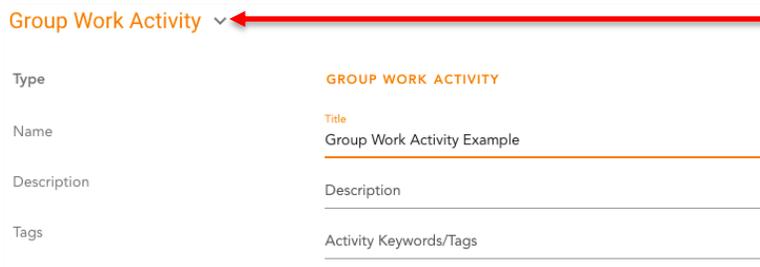


You may choose to toggle **Assess the Feedback** on and off. When on, you may add feedback assessments using the assessment types found in the assessment section to create questions that will require students to assess the feedback given to them. When off, students will not have this option.

Appendix C: Group Work

Group Work Activity Setup

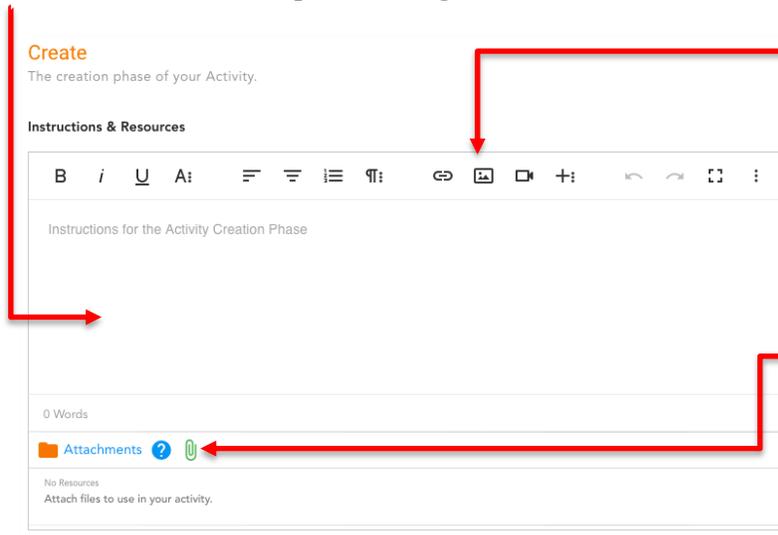
If you have selected the **Group Work** activity type, you will be automatically entered into the **Build Activity** tab.



You may click on the drop-down menu of the header, allowing you to edit the name of the activity, the description and add tags.

Create Phase

Provide details of the specific assignment in the text box.



You may attach images, create hyperlinks and tables by accessing the icons in the header above.

Attachments such as an external grading rubric may be included by clicking on the paperclip icon at the bottom.

If your assignment is a written composition, use your instructions to direct students to copy and paste their compositions into the Create Phase text editor instead of uploading a pdf or word document file. This way, the students and instructors evaluating them later can interact directly with the written content within peerScholar and don't have to mark downloaded files separately.

Use your instructions field to set expectations by breaking down the peerScholar process. This can help make the experience more intuitive for your students by specifying steps in the process for your particular assignment.

Assess Phase

Assess

The assessment phase of your Activity.

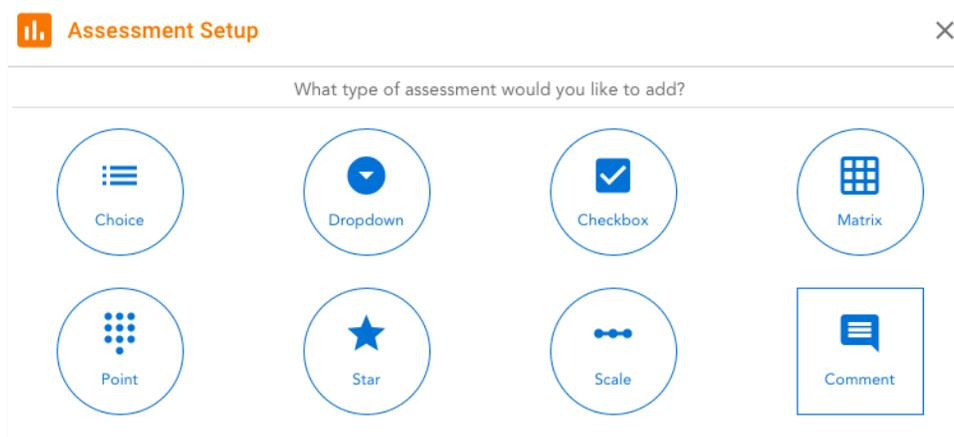
Number of Groups each Group will assess

Next, the **Number of Groups each Group will assess**, will determine how many groups are assigned to one another to peer review. Select a number that best fits your assignment.

Now, add in assessments by clicking the green **Add Group Assessments** button. Assessments created here are used by students to assess other students.

 Add Group Assessment

The Assessments Setup menu will pop up.



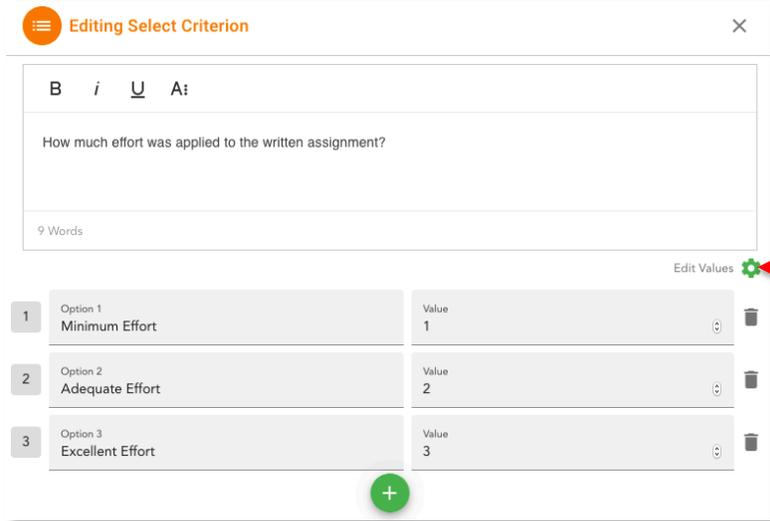
There are currently 8 different types of assessments to choose from. Add in assessments by clicking on the ones you would like to use and following the prompts. You may add multiple assessments to evaluate your students. Some notable ones are:

Point: allows you to ask students to provide a value to their peers' work by setting up minimum and maximum values.

Matrix: allows you to mimic a provided rubric where students score their peers' work in the matrix.

Comment: a qualitative option allowing you to ask students to provide insights and feedback on their peer's work and answer any questions about the work.

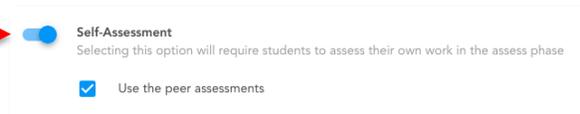
All assessments, excluding **Comment** can be assigned a quantitative value towards each option. This value will be used to quantify qualitative options.



For example, the assessment tool **Choice** allows you to create qualitative options that students can select when assessing their peers' work. By assigning a value to each option, this allows for more **Peer Ratings** grading options in the Customize Grading menu.

To access the quantitative values, click on the gear icon located on the top of the menu.

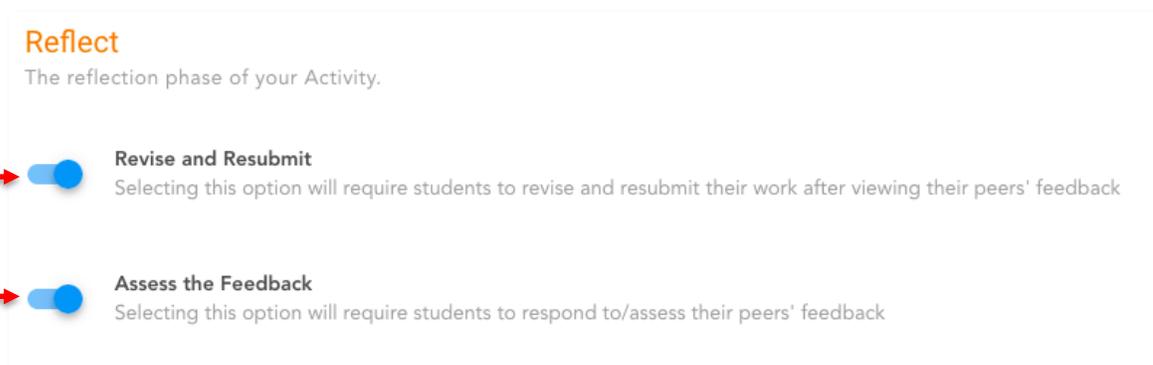
The blue **Self-Assessment** slider can be toggled on and off to determine if you want students to self-assess their own work.



When toggled on - you may choose if they assess themselves using the peer assessment you created above and if not, you may add new assessments that cater to the specific self-evaluation task.

Reflect Phase

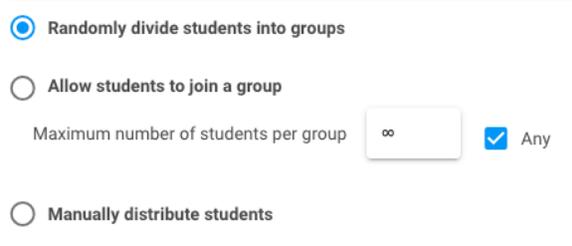
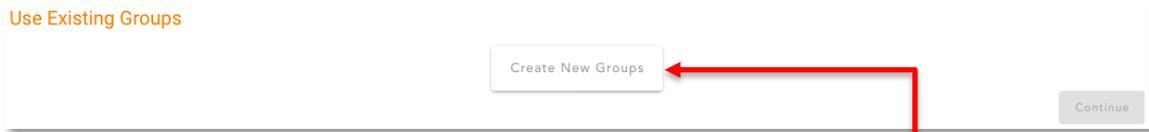
You may toggle **Revise and Resubmit** on and off. When on, students may revise their work after peers have assessed it and resubmit it to be marked. When off, students will not have this option.



You may choose to toggle **Assess the Feedback** on and off. When on, you may add feedback assessments using the assessment types found in the assessment section to create questions that will require students to assess the feedback given to them. When off, students will not have this option.

Manage Groups

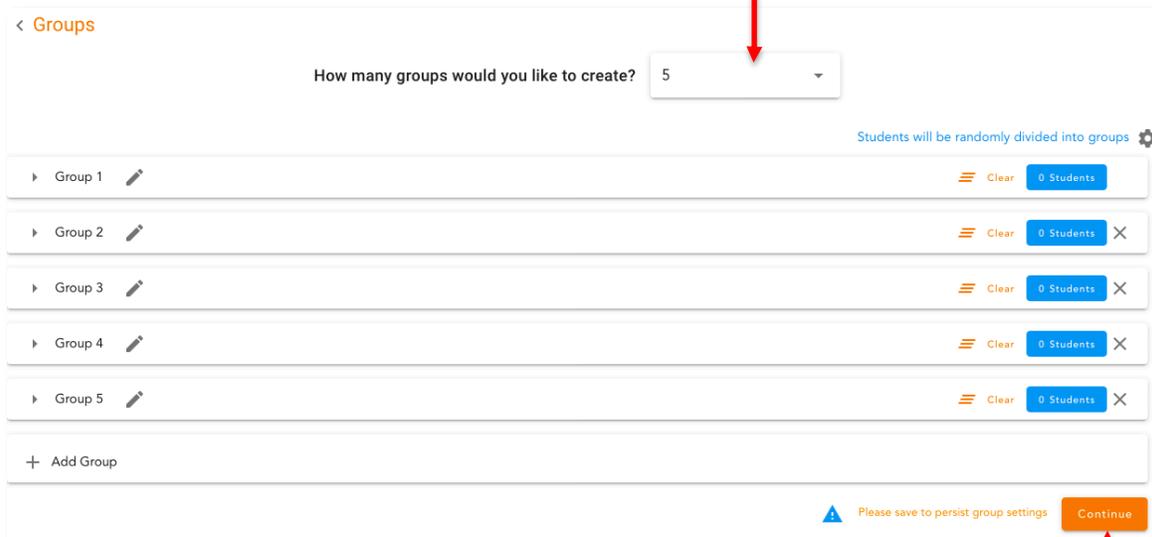
Once you have built your activity, the **Manage Group Menu** will appear. You may create new groups for your activity, or you may use existing groups from previous activities.



After clicking **Create New Groups**, a menu allows you to determine how students will be divided into groups. Students may be:

- Divided randomly by the peerScholar system
- Given the freedom to choose their own groups
- Can be manually distributed with your control

Afterwards, select how many groups you would like to create. Consider the nature of the assignment and the number of students in your course.



Click **Continue** once you are done.