This evaluation rubric was used in an introductory earth science/astronomy class.

I had my students use a variation of the evaluation rubric to evaluate the characteristics of our solar system. Rather than telling my students (through lecture) the planets are grouped by similar characteristics, they were able to discover this themselves (with the rubric).

First they gathered information on each of the planets independently, and then they answered the questions on the evaluation rubric by *checking* the appropriate column.

The finished product made it clear that the first 4 planets had similar characteristics, as did the next 4. It also showed the last planet as the "odd" planet since it did not follow the trend.

It initiated a great discussion! It was extremely successful and I plan on using this permanently.

The students also had better exam scores compared to last year's class.

- Marea Spentzos
Chicago State University Team

EVALUATION RUBRIC
CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM

PLANET	DIAMETER		# OF MOONS		RINGS		COMPOSITION		DURATION ROTATION	DURATION REVOLUTION	TEMP ALWAYS BELOW ZERO?	
	> 10,000 MI	< 10,000 MI	> 4	< 4	YES	NO	ROCK	GAS			YES	NO
MERCURY												
VENUS												
EARTH												
MARS												
JUPITER												
SATURN												
URANUS												
NEPTUNE												
PLUTO												

As we travel further away from the sun, what trends do you notice in each category?