Dear Students,

Welcome to your TESOL course here at Anaheim University. This guide will help you to develop your Online Discussion Forum responses in accordance with the Anaheim University grading criteria. Each week, you will respond to **two** task responses and **two** discussion responses (minimum). All **four** of these responses must adhere to the grading criteria.

Let's begin with the grading criteria:

1. Actively contributes to the Online Discussion Forum discussions
2. Provides evidence of having completed the required reading
3. Understands key concepts and ideas introduced in the course
4. Relates ideas to own experience
5. Demonstrates originality of thought

By simply responding in the Online Discussion Forum with your required 4 responses on time, you have fulfilled Criteria #1. The *quality* of your responses, however, will determine the majority of your score. Let's take a look at a few different **task** responses and review the score each would receive.

This response would earn a score of an A.

Task Question: What is the difference between close-ended and open-ended assessments?

Sample Task Response: According to Dr. Byrnes in the textbook, there are certain types of questions which are more appropriate for certain areas of assessment. In this regard there are two distinct types of assessment items: close-ended and open-ended.

Close-ended assessment refers to items which allow only one correct answer or a very limited number of correct answers. Close-ended tasks allow teachers to know the correct answers even before students perform the task; however, close-ended questions have a very limited approach due to the fact they test learners' ability to recognize specific language usages and their ability to produce language. When dealing with open-ended tasks, on the other hand, teachers have little prior knowledge of learners' answers before they actually take the test. For teachers, the process of scoring open-ended tasks can be quite demanding and involves some thinking and a more profound analysis.

For my classroom, I use close-ended assessments like fill-in-the-blank test for their vocabulary quizzes, but I use open-ended short-answer response assessments to test their ability to *use* the vocabulary.

Comments: Grading Criteria #1 and 2 are fulfilled in the first paragraph. Grading Criteria #2 and 3 are fulfilled in the second section. Grading Criteria #4 and 5 are fulfilled in this last section.

This response would earn a score of a B.

Task Question: What is the difference between close-ended and open-ended assessments?

Sample Task Response: A close-ended assessment response will have only one correct answer or a partial correct answer. The assessment might include true/false questions, ordering/sequencing, matching, or multiple choice. In grading there isn't much judgment needed which makes this kind of assessment good for computers. The reading stated that one of the major drawbacks to using a close-ended assessment is that "they test ability to recognize specific language, but not the ability to produce language." Close-ended assessments tend to be higher in reliability and lower in validity.

An open-ended assessment will have more than one possible correct answer, and thus requires more judgment. The assessment might include essays, oral presentations, or information gaps. Since learners tend to have a bit more freedom in answers, clear instructions and expectations need to be understood. Open-ended assessments tend to be higher in validity rather the reliability.

Comments: Grading Criteria # 1, 2, 3, and 5 are fulfilled throughout this response. This response is *missing* Grading Criteria #4 ("Relates ideas to own experience"), but it is overall fairly strong.

This response would earn a score of a C.

Task Question: What is the difference between close-ended and open-ended assessments?

Sample Task Response: The difference between close-ended and open-ended assessments is reliability and validity. Close-ended assessments have only correct answer or a limited number of correct answers. Open-ended assessments are not less correct or have less appropriate answers. Open items are high on validity, but low in reliability.

Comments: Grading Criteria # 1, 2, and some of 3 are shown here. This response does **not** relate the reading to the author's experience, nor does it demonstrate any originality of thought. Instead, it paraphrases the reading without providing additional thoughts or information. This response does **not** represent a passing score.

Points to Remember:

- The Online Discussion Forum is worth **40%** of your overall score.

- In order to receive a Pass and complete your course satisfactorily, you need to meet an overall score of **80%** for your course.

- **All** responses (discussion *and* task responses) must adhere to the Grading Criteria. Reference the reading, textbook, study guide, video lecture, and/or other shared resources in the course in your response. Remember to include Criteria #4 and 5.

- Criteria #5 is *easiest* to meet when you fulfill Criteria #4. That is, if you relate the learning to your own experiences (#4), this *automatically* fulfills Criteria #5.

- You are **not** required to post multiple paragraphs as a response. As long as your response covers all of the Grading Criteria, your response can be as long or as short as you like.

- Your instructor can provide detailed feedback to you at any time that you request.

- The Grading Criteria and the Rubric are both available in your course. Check the News Forum, the first unit of your course, and the main page of your course. The Rubric is also included in the Welcome document sent to you at the beginning of your course.