NATIONAL GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

NOTE: General rules and regulations apply to all national competitive events and are in addition to each event's specific guidelines. Guidelines are subject to change. Please refer to the EdRising Membership Portal for the latest version.
Failure to follow the stated guidelines will result in disqualification of the student competing.

Students intending to compete at the Educators Rising National Conference must complete 3 required steps:

1. **Be an Active-level paid national member** of Educators Rising for the current school year. State-level membership must be paid, if applicable. Click here to join.
2. **Complete the online application** and upload all required materials in their final form by the stated deadline on the National Competition page located in the Student Resources section in the EdRising Membership Portal. **This is NOT done automatically if you competed at a state or regional conference**.
3. **Register to attend** the Educators Rising National Conference.

Eligibility

- Students must be paid Active-level student members of Educators Rising by **February 1st** of the year in which they are competing. **Check or credit card payment must be received in the National Office by February 15th to be considered an Active-level member.**
- Students may only compete in one competitive event.
- **For contests:** Teacher leaders may enter up to two entries (individual or dual) per school in each event per division.
    - Dual means two students participating.
    - For dual entries consisting of students of varying grade levels, the entry will be placed in the division for the grade level of the most senior member.
- **For competitions:** Teacher leaders may enter up to two entries per school in each individual event per division and one team for team events per division. Competitions/contests that are marked as individual or dual will be considered individual events for this purpose.
    - All team events must have at least two students (and no more than four) per school to qualify.
    - For teams consisting of students of varying grade levels, the team will be placed in the division for the grade level of the most senior member.
- If a competitor is from a state that holds state competitions/contests, they must first qualify in that given event at their state conference before competing in that event at the Educators Rising National Conference. Contact your state/regional coordinator to see if your state offers competitive events. Visit our state program page on the Educators Rising national website to contact your state/regional coordinator.
- For states that offer state-level competitive events, the top ten places in each competition for each division offered by the state will be eligible to compete at the Educators Rising National Conference.
- For contests, you must compete in a state-level event in order to be eligible to compete at the Educators Rising National Conference. Only entries scoring 97-100 will be eligible to advance to nationals. No other entrants from states that offer the competitive events at the state level will be eligible for those state-level-offered competitive events.
- For national team competitions, schools are permitted to replace up to fifty percent of the original team members who qualified at the state-level. Substitutions are not permitted in Individual or Dual competitions or contests. **Replacements can be made up to 7 days prior to the conference. No replacements can be made after this time or onsite.**
- For states that do not offer state-level competitive events, students may register to compete in those events at the Educators Rising National Conference. This applies to all Educators Rising national competitions. This does not apply to contests since you must qualify at state first before moving to nationals.
    - For example, if you want to compete in Public Speaking but place eleventh or lower in your state-level Public Speaking competition or don't compete in the state-level competitions at all — you cannot compete in Public Speaking at the National Conference this year. If you live in a state that didn't hold a Public Speaking state-level competition, you may register to compete in that event at the Educators Rising National

GENERAL COMPETITION INFORMATION CONT.

Conference.

Division of Competition

- The breakdown of grades noted below indicates levels for competition entries. Not all competitions are open to all divisions.
    - Middle School — Grades 7, 8
    - High School Junior Varsity— Grades 9, 10
    - High School Varsity level — Grades 11, 12
    - Collegiate level – Undergraduates only
- Registering in the incorrect division will result in disqualification.
- Teams of students from varying grade levels will be placed in the division for the grade level of the most senior member.

Application and Submission

- All submitted materials must reflect original work from the 2026-2027 school year. Material that may have been created or submitted in previous years is ineligible.
- **To be scheduled to compete in a national competition, all competitor applications, national dues, and required materials must be submitted online by the deadline stated on the National Competitions page in the Student Resources Section of the EdRising Membership Portal. Deadline extensions will NOT be granted.**
    - **All competitions and contests require an online application submission, even if no additional items need to be submitted.** Students who have won state-level competitive events must also submit their entries on the national website by the deadline to compete at the national conference. Your state does not do this for you.
    - **Only one application can be submitted for team competitions** which lists all team members in all places indicated on the application form.
    - Each competition guideline will identify the materials are required for submission before the competition. Failure to submit the required materials by the submission deadline will result in disqualification. All submitted materials must be in their final form.
- All video files submitted in advance must be uploaded to YouTube and be linked to the application form. Videos will not be accepted by mail. All videos and presentations must be brought to the conference on a USB drive and files must be accessible without internet access. If students plan to use their own devices for presentation, students must be able to connect their device via HDMI to an external projector without assistance.
- Laptops and projectors will be provided. Students should bring their own pointing device if needed. Except when explicitly specified, the Internet may not be used during a competition presentation at the Educators Rising National Conference.

Conference Registration, Attendance, and Participation in Events

- **All competitors must attend the Educators Rising National Conference. Plan to arrive no later than 11 am on the first day of the conference and stay through the awards ceremony on the final day.** Conference dates and locations will be posted on the Educators Rising website and Membership Portal.
- Competitors must report to their assigned areas on time. Failure to report at their scheduled time can result in disqualification. ***Competition schedules will be posted in the Educators Rising Membership Portal one month before the conference.*** Be sure to check these schedules before planning your travel.
- Competitors are expected to dress in business-casual attire. (See the section Competition Dress Code for details on what is acceptable.) Points may be deducted from the entrant's score for failing to follow the dress code.
- Spectators are only permitted in the competitions marked "Open to Spectators." This includes parents, chaperones, teacher leaders, and other attendees. Spectators may not coach or offer any verbal or nonverbal assistance to a contestant during that contestant's assigned time slot with the judges. A breach of this guideline may result in the disqualification of the contestant.
- Teacher Leaders, Chaperones, and Parents are prohibited from approaching judges to discuss scoring or feedback. All questions or concerns should be brought to the attention of a national office staff member.

Judging and Scoring

- Scoring is based on the posted individual competition rubric.
- Final scores will be based on a scaled score. Scaled scores are calculated using several methods, including judges tie breakers and room normalizations.
- Judges will break ties in all competitive events.
- To accommodate a large number of competitors, we use multiple rooms, each with its own set of judges. We employ a well-established mathematical method to normalize scores to ensure fairness across these rooms. This method helps balance judge subjectivity and ensures all competitors have a fair shot, regardless of their assigned room.
    - In each competitive event, each competitor gets an average score from the judges which is averaged with the partner judge. If there is a deviation of more than one standard

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deviation between rooms, the two rooms are normed against one another to that deviation. The final scores used for ranking are the normalized scores (also known as scaled scores).

- Perfect scores will be excluded from the normalization process when scoring is normalized. If more than one student in the same division in the same competition receives a perfect score, a second set of judges will review the recorded presentations for those students to make a final decision.

Awards

- **For Competitions:** Medals and certificates will be presented to the top three entries in each division for individual competitions. Trophies and certificates will be presented to the top three entries in each division for team competitions. All places will receive electronic certificates after the conference.
- **For Contests:** Ribbons will be awarded to students in each category in each division with scores as follows:
  - Blue-Scores 97-100
  - Red-Scores 93-96
  - White-Scores 90-92

Inquiry Process

- The student scores will be released directly to the participating student(s) after the conference. The scores will provide individual judges' scores, the average score for the two judges, and the normalized score (if necessary).
- Students will have 3 business days to file an inquiry regarding the validity of their score. They must complete the online inquiry request form and submit all required documentation for consideration. **No appeal will be accepted after the 3-day period.**
- Staff will review the scoring and respond to the inquiry within 30 days. **All decisions are final.**

Competition Dress Code

All competitors are expected to dress in business casual attire when competing. Refer to the guidelines below for a detailed explanation of what is and is not permissible as business casual.

- **Slacks, Pants, and Suit Pants**
  Slacks similar to Dockers and other makers of cotton or synthetic material pants, wool pants, flannel pants, dressy capris, nice-looking dress synthetic pants and jeans without holes are acceptable. Inappropriate slacks or pants include jeans with holes, sweatpants, exercise pants, Bermuda shorts, short shorts, shorts, bib overalls, leggings, and any spandex or other form-fitting pants that people wear for biking.
- **Skirts, Dresses, and Skirted Suits**
  Casual dresses, skirts, and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. The length of the dress and skirt should be comfortable for sitting in public. Mini skirts, skorts, sundresses, and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate.
- **Shirts, Tops, Blouses, and Jackets**
  Casual shirts, dress shirts, sweaters, tops, and polo shirts are acceptable. Educators Rising polo shirts are encouraged. Inappropriate attire includes tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with political messaging and/or potentially offensive terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans; halter tops; tops with bare shoulders; sweatshirts; and t-shirts unless worn under another blouse, shirt, jacket, or dress.
- **Shoes and Footwear**
  Conservative athletic or walking shoes, loafers, clogs, sneakers, boots, flats, dress heels, and leather deck-type shoes are acceptable. Flashy athletic shoes, thongs, flip-flops, and slippers are not acceptable.
- **Hats and Head Coverings**
  Hats are not appropriate inside the building. Head covers required for religious purposes or to honor cultural traditions are allowed.

Citations, References, and Copyrighted Material

- In competition submissions, all ideas, text, images, and sound from other sources used for the competition must be cited.
- Competitors are strongly discouraged from using copyrighted material in their competition entries. If copyrighted material is used, written permission must be obtained to display and present media-related materials at the Educators Rising National Conference and post-media-related materials on the Educators Rising website. All permissions obtained to use copyrighted material must be included with the entry submission. (Note: This requirement applies to music used in videos, graphics taken from the internet, and other media-related materials. It does not apply to artifacts collected for a project.)
- Plagiarism is strictly prohibited in all documents submitted. Judges can disqualify students from competing if they determined that any part of their documents have been plagiarized.

Use of AI

- Unless specifically stated in the guideline, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) software and programs is strictly prohibited in creating and preparing all materials submitted for Educators Rising competitions. This includes but is not limited to, documents, graphics, speeches, videos, and presentations. All submitted work must be the original and independent creation of the participant. Use of spelling and grammar check is allowed.

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- Students competing will attest that they did not use AI in the development and delivery of their competition. Students found in violation will be disqualified from the competition.

Electronic Devices

- Recording devices are not allowed in competitive events.
- All electronic devices, including but not limited to, cell phones, iPads/tablets, electronic readers, smart watches, etc.—must be turned off unless otherwise noted in specific event regulations.
- No electronic communication devices of any kind are permitted during competition.

Student Responsibilities for Competitions

- Students who participate in any Educators Rising competitive event are responsible for knowing all deadlines, updates, changes, and clarifications related to that event. Students and advisors must routinely check the EdRising Membership Portal for updated information.
- Entrants grant Educators Rising the right to use and publish the submission in print, online, or in any media without compensation.
- Entrants grant Educators Rising the right to post photos of students for promotional purposes on the Educators Rising website, Membership Portal, and social media sites.
- Student Privacy and Protection Requirements: Submitters are responsible for ensuring that all competition materials comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and all applicable local district policies regarding student privacy and data protection. Any submission containing identifiable student information—including, but not limited to, names, faces in the video, voice recordings, voices, or student work samples—must have appropriate documented consent from parents/guardians and/or students, as required by applicable laws and district policies. If permission has not been granted, faces should be blurred or only the back of the students should be visible. By submitting materials, the submitter certifies that all necessary permissions have been obtained and maintained.

DEADLINES AND CHECKLIST

Ready to compete at Nationals?

Here is a checklist to help you get prepared, registered, and on the official schedule for nationals!

SUBMISSIONS OPEN: **FEBRUARY 1, 2027, 8:00 A.M.** EASTERN TIME
DEADLINE TO SUBMIT COMPETITION APPLICATIONS: **APRIL 1, 2027, 5:00 P.M.** EASTERN TIME
DEADLINE FOR COMPETITORS TO REGISTER FOR CONFERENCE: **APRIL 1, 2027, 5:00 P.M.** EASTERN TIME

- ☐ **Review the full national competition guidelines and rubric.** Check the Resources Section in the EdRising Membership Portal. ***Some processes may be different from your state/regional conference.***
- ☐ **Update your contact information in the EdRising Membership Portal for the summer.** It is recommended that students use a personal mail address where they can receive Educators Rising email communication. Confirmations and reminder emails will be sent to the email listed on the competition application. Often school emails do not allow for Educators Rising emails to be received.
- ☐ **Step one:** Go to the National Competition page in the EdRising Membership Portal. **Step two:** Click on the title of the competition for which you are signing up to compete. **Step three:** Read the guidelines and rubrics. **Step four:** Click Apply, which will take you to the national competition online application platform. All competitors must submit the online competition application even if no additional documents need to be submitted. Only one application is to be submitted for Dual or Team competitions. ***This only registers you for the competitions, you will still need to register for the conference separately.***
- ☐ **Complete the online application, upload any required documents/video links, and submit by the stated deadline for the Educators Rising National Conference.** Depending on your competition, some of these items are judged before the conference so make sure they are in their final form. Recommendation: Have someone proofread your documents before submitting them. Only competitors who register by the deadline will be scheduled to compete.

  For competitions that have multiple students participating only one application should be submitted and all students need to be listed as team members in all places indicated on the application form.
- ☐ **Print and save your confirmation email and application number.** You will need the application number when you register for the conference.
- ☐ **Register as a competitor for the Educators Rising National Conference**. All national conference information, including how to register, can be found on the Educators Rising National website.
- ☐ **Find out when you are scheduled to compete onsite.** Competition schedules will be posted in the EdRising Membership Portal one month prior to the conference. Go to the Resources section to find the posted schedules. Be sure to check these schedules prior to planning your travel. Competitors should plan to be available for competitions from 1 PM (conference time zone) on opening day through the awards celebration on the afternoon of the last day.
- ☐ **Practice, practice, practice!** The best way to prepare for your on-site competition is to practice in front of your peers. Recommendation: Reread the National Competition Guidelines and Rubric for your competition.
- ☐ **Head to Nationals!** National placers will be announced at the National Conference Awards Celebration on the final day of the conference. Don't miss your chance to be recognized! Be sure that when you plan your transportation for the conference you can attend this final celebration.

INSIDE OUR SCHOOLS PRESENTATION COMPETITION

COMPETITION TYPE: Team - Closed to spectators
ELIGIBILITY LEVELS: Middle School
EDUCATORS RISING STANDARDS:

- Standard I: Understanding the Profession
- Standard II: Learning About Students
- Standard VII: Engaging in Reflective Practice

Contest Purpose

The purpose of the Inside Our Schools Presentation Competition is to allow Educators Rising students to showcase one innovative strategy that their school or school district employs to enhance teaching and learning. Innovative strategies do not necessarily mean new technology. An innovative strategy is a deviation from the standard practice that results in greater engagement and learning outcomes for students. The strategy must be something that the school or school district has begun to implement no earlier than 2025. The creative presentation, which will involve a live presentation and a video, should appeal to anyone looking for smart ways to take teaching and learning to a higher level.

Preparation Tips

- Collaborate as a team to brainstorm innovative strategies in use in your school or district.
- Do some real legwork in learning about your selected innovative strategy by talking to local leaders and conducting Internet research.
- Observe the innovative strategy in action in at least three settings.
- Use creativity and original ideas when creating your video and crafting your live presentation.
- Work collaboratively as a team, with each team member filling a specific role (ex. director, lead researcher, etc.). Highlight your experiences during observations, as well as personal opinions on best practices used by teachers, in your video.
- Have a video credits page citing any source media or permissions acquired for the use of any copyrighted material. (Educators Rising recommends avoiding copyrighted material.)
- Have a title screen including the title of your project, competition name, school name, city, and state.
- Obtain the necessary permission from all students and teachers who appear in the video.
- Preview your final video to ensure that the sound quality is good, and that video playback is smooth.

Research

The following are research resources that may be helpful concerning your topic:

- Your school or district website, to give any background or supporting details on your school/district
- Online articles regarding research-proven best practices to support the best practices you choose
- Interviews with local education leaders (teachers, principals, superintendent, district academic officers, etc.)

Competition Guidelines

VIDEO

A. The video must be no shorter than three minutes and no longer than five minutes. Points will be deducted for videos that are shorter than the minimum length or longer than the maximum.

B. The video must showcase one innovative strategy that the participating team's school or school district employs to enhance teaching and learning.

C. The video must include the competition name and title of project. It must also include name of the school, city, and state in the opening credits (Example: This message was brought to you by Kirkwood High School's Educators Rising program in Bloomington, IN).

D. In the video, all source media (music, images or video clips not originally filmed by the student competitors) must be cited in video credits and may not violate any copyright.

E. By submitting a video for this Educators Rising national competition, the competitor assumes full responsibility for securing all required, documented consent from persons appearing in the video, or their legal parents/guardians if they are under the age of 18.

F. Competitors must upload a YouTube or Vimeo link to their video to the competition site and bring it on a USB drive to the conference.

ORAL PRESENTATION

A. At the Educators Rising National Conference, no less than two and no more than four representatives from each participating school program will make an oral presentation to a panel of judges. During the presentation, team members will have up to three minutes to introduce their video and provide a description and context. Students will then play the video (3-5 minutes) for the judges. The entire presentation to judges (oral presentation and video) will last no more than 8 minutes. The presentation will be stopped at exactly 8 minutes.

B. High-quality, clear presentation skills are encouraged.

C. Following the presentation and the video, the judges will have up to five minutes to ask questions to team members.

INSIDE OUR SCHOOLS PRESENTATION COMPETITION

LEVEL (MIDDLE SCHOOL)

DETAILED SCORING RUBRIC

Judges should use this rubric as a guide to assigning points on the Feedback & Tally Sheet.

PRE-SCORED COMPONENTS

Video

Points Available	15-13 Accomplished	12-9 Commendable	8-5 Developing	4-1 Needs Improvement
Clarity	Throughout the running time, the video is entirely clear, specific, and compelling in its expert-level storytelling and message delivery about an innovative strategy to support great teaching and learning.	The video is mostly clear and specific in conveying its message. More or clearer information at one or two points in the video would increase the understanding and impact for the viewer.	The video makes an attempt to deliver a message related to the assigned task but is inconsistent in its storytelling or message delivery. There may be more than two points in the video that are confusing or do not support understanding or impact for the viewer.	The video is consistently confusing or unclear in how it delivers a message directly related to the assigned task.
Creativity	The video conveys its message in creative, inventive ways that expertly maximize the engagement and impact for the audience.	The video employs creative ideas to convey its message, though the stylistic or thematic choices do not entirely maximize impact for the audience.	The video would benefit from more inventive or distinctive stylistic choices. Clichés may be present.	The video needs significant improvement in order to engage the audience or deliver meaningful impact related to its intended message.
Video Quality	Video, audio, lighting, graphics, and editing are professional and flawless, with no technical issues that distract from the message.	Good quality with minor technical issues that do not distract from viewing.	Adequate quality with multiple technical issues that distract from viewing.	Significant technical problems that interfere with understanding.
Video Production	Production choices such as shot selection, framing, sequencing, pacing, titles, graphics, and visual storytelling strongly enhance the message and demonstrate professional-caliber production planning.	Production choices support the message and reflect thoughtful planning and execution.	Production choices are inconsistent or only partially support the message; evidence of developing production skills.	Production choices appear unplanned or ineffective and frequently detract from the message or viewer experience.

Guideline Adherence

Points Available	5	0
Video Length	Video is between three and five minutes in running time.	Video is shorter than three minutes or longer than five minutes in running time.
Video Titles & Credits	Video includes the competition name and title of project. It also includes name of the school, city, and state in the opening credits.	Video does not include, in the opening credits, one or more of the following: the competition name, title of project, name of the school, city, and state.
New Strategy	Video or presentation makes clear strategy was implemented no earlier than 2025.	Video or presentation does not make clear strategy was implemented no earlier than 2025.

COMPONENTS SCORED ON-SITE

Presentation Guideline Adherence

Points Available	5	0
On Screen Facilitation	Competitors were able to facilitate presentation on screen via USB or by connecting their device without assistance.	Competitors were unable to facilitate presentation on screen due to not having video on a USB or inability to connect their device without assistance.

Presentation and Q&A

Points Available	10–9 Accomplished	8–6 Commendable	5–3 Developing	2–1 Needs Improvement
Content	The live presentation is complete, deeply detailed, and well-organized. The team shares high-quality information that addresses all core contest guidelines.	The presentation is mostly complete and organized. The team shares clear information that covers the main guidelines, with only minor details left out.	The presentation is on-topic but feels disorganized or rushed. Several key guidelines are missing or unclear.	The presentation struggles to stay on topic or fails to address the basic guidelines in a meaningful way.
Vocal Delivery	Voices are entirely clear, perfectly paced, and full of great expression. Speakers project well and use enthusiastic energy to keep the audience listening.	Voices are clear and the pacing is good. The listener can easily hear, follow, and understand what the speakers are saying throughout the presentation.	Voices are basic and straightforward. The presentation is understandable, but would benefit from more energy, better volume, or a more natural pace.	Speaking is frequently too fast, too quiet, or inconsistent. Vocal delivery choices from team members distract from the content.

Presentation and Q&A Cont.

Points Available	10–9 Accomplished	8–6 Commendable	5–3 Developing	2–1 Needs Improvement
Presence	Competitors maintain strong eye contact, great posture, and a confident, respectful attitude. All team members actively support the group whether they are speaking or waiting their turn.	Competitors maintain good eye contact and positive posture. One or more presenters may briefly lose focus or step out of their presenter character for a brief moment.	Competitors use inconsistent eye contact or stiff, nervous posture, making the presentation feel like a memorized script rather than a confident talk.	Competitors show effort, but body language, distracting movements, or a total lack of eye contact show that the team needs significantly more practice.
Q&A Discussion	Team responses show excellent preparation and thoughtful insight rooted directly in their research and school observations. Students show impressive pride and specific knowledge of their topic.	Team responses are thoughtful and successfully answer most questions using real examples from their school observations or video-making process.	Team responses are a mix of strong and weak answers. Students struggle to expand on their thoughts or provide specific details about what they observed.	Team responses are off-topic, overly brief, or show a lack of basic understanding of their chosen school strategy when questioned.
Overall Impact	The overall presentation delivers a powerful, undeniable message. The visuals, live speech, and video perfectly complement each other to create an inspiring audience experience.	The visuals, live speech, and video work well together to deliver a strong project. With just a few minor delivery tweaks, the experience would be completely seamless.	The presentation shows effort. At multiple moments, the live speaking and the video content do not match up well, limiting how much the audience connects with the message.	The presentation feels disconnected, off-topic, or unprepared. Visuals or live delivery choices frequently distract the audience from the main message.

Time of Presentation

Points Available	5	3	1
Length	Presentation is between 6 and 8 minutes.	Presentation is between 4 and 5 minutes.	Presentation is shorter than 4 minutes or had to be stopped at 8 minutes.

INSIDE OUR SCHOOLS PRESENTATION COMPETITION

LEVEL (MIDDLE SCHOOL)

Students' Names:_____

_____

Students' School, City, State:_____

- Judges will use the Detailed Scoring Rubric as their guide to score students' competition entries.
- Points and feedback will be emailed to the student competitors no later than two weeks after the conference.

PRE-SCORED COMPONENTS

Video

	Accomplished	Commendable	Developing	Needs Improvement	Score
Clarity	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	
Creativity	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	
Quality	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	
Production	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	

Guideline Adherence

	Adheres	Does not adhere	Score
Video Length	5	0	
Video Titles & Credits	5	0	
New Strategy	5	0	

PRE-SCORE_____/75

Continued

COMPONENTS SCORED ON-SITE

Presentation Guideline Adherence

	Adheres	Does not adhere	Score
On Screen Facilitation	5	0	

Presentation and Q&A

	Accomplished	Commendable	Developing	Needs Improvement	Score
Content	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	
Vocal Delivery	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	
Presence	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	
Q&A Discussion	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	
Overall Impact	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	

Presentation Length

	7-10 Minutes	3-6 Minutes	Presentation is shorter than 4 minutes or had to be stopped at 8 minutes.	Score
Length	5	3	1	

PRESENTATION ON-SITE SCORE_____/60

**Did any source media (music, images, or video clips not originally filmed, created, or officially licensed by the student competitors) appear un-cited in the video credits or violate any copyright? If yes, deduct 15 points from the total score.

TOTAL SCORE_____/135

FEEDBACK FOR STUDENTS: Write two or more sentences.