



# Scoring Rubrics: Six Traits of Writing

## DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS

Development centers on the presentation of additional supportive details and information pertinent to the topic. It is enhanced by specificity of word choice and a clear organizational structure. Development is addressed in writing standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9.

- 5** The response is strongly focused and complete, with a wealth of appropriate information and details.
- The writer provides sufficient specific support to fully develop the composition, **using strategies and techniques appropriate to the task, purpose and audience.**
  - All main ideas in the response are uniformly developed.
  - Support strongly enhances cohesion.
  - The writer may take creative approaches that enhance the response.
- 4** The response is focused and reasonably complete, with appropriate information and details.
- The writer provides sufficient specific support to develop the composition, **using strategies and techniques appropriate to the task, purpose and audience.**
  - All main ideas are supported but development may be uneven.
  - Support enhances cohesion.
- 3** The response is focused and somewhat complete, with sufficient appropriate information and details to support the topic.
- Development is uneven, with a mix of general and specific details.
  - Some main ideas may lack support.
  - Support somewhat enhances cohesion.
- 2** The response is weakly focused and lacks development.
- Details may be general, vague, or inappropriate.
  - The response has very little or no support and may display minimal writing.
  - Cohesion may be lacking.
- 1** The response lacks focus and development.
- Details are minimal.
  - The response may be confusing and may display minimal writing.
  - Ideas may be presented randomly.

## ORGANIZATION

Organization is characterized by an overall plan (coherence) and internal weaving together of ideas (cohesion). Organization is enhanced when a student pauses to develop ideas and is strengthened by the use of varied sentence structures and transitional techniques. Organization is addressed in writing standards 1, 2, 3, and 4.

- 5** The response has a strong vertical and horizontal structure.
- **The organization is specific to task, purpose and audience.**
  - The response moves smoothly from purposeful introduction to effective conclusion.
  - Effective transitions contribute to unity.
  - Transitions may be transparent and do not interfere with the flow of ideas.
  - There is a strong progression of ideas from sentence to sentence and **introduction to conclusion.**
- 4** The response has a reasonably strong vertical and horizontal structure.
- **The response is generally appropriate to task, purpose and audience.**
  - The response moves somewhat smoothly from beginning to conclusion.
  - Some effective transitions are evident that contribute to unity.
  - Transitions may be obvious but they do not interfere with the flow of ideas.
  - There is a progression of ideas from sentence to sentence and **introduction to conclusion.**
- 3** The response has a basic vertical and horizontal structure.
- **The response is somewhat appropriate to task, purpose and audience.**
  - The response moves from introduction to conclusion but may have some interruptions.
  - Some transitions are evident, but they may be artificial and interfere somewhat with the flow of ideas.
  - There is a progression of ideas from **introduction to conclusion**, but sentence-to-sentence cohesion may be lacking.
- 2** The response is flawed structurally and disorganized.
- **The response lacks specificity as to task, purpose and/or audience.**
  - The response may have insufficient writing to organize.
  - Transitions may be missing or inappropriate.
  - The progression of ideas from beginning to end is disrupted by repetition, gaps, or random ideas.
- 1** The response is seriously disorganized.
- The response may have insufficient writing to organize.
  - Transitions may be confusing.
  - The progression of ideas from introduction to conclusion is seriously disrupted by repetition, gaps, or random ideas.

## STYLE

Style includes the student's ownership of the topic and connection with the audience. Style is enhanced through strong word choice and varied sentence constructions that contribute to the writer's unique voice. Style is addressed in writing standards 1, 2, 3, and 4.

- 5** The writer personalizes the topic and forms a strong connection with the audience by demonstrating a strong sense of purpose and **appropriateness to task and audience**.
- The writer's voice comes through the composition and strengthens the connection with the **audience**.
  - Compositional risks are successful and enhance the response.
  - The communication with the audience is strong without seeming forced.
  - **The writer establishes and maintains a formal style.**
- 4** The writer forms a reasonably successful connection with the audience and has awareness of purpose.
- There is evidence of voice and awareness of the **audience**.
  - Compositional risks, if evident, are reasonably successful.
  - The communication with the audience is evident and does not seem forced.
  - **The writer establishes and maintains a generally formal style.**
- 3** The writer's connection with the audience and purpose is uneven.
- The response may be mundane and lack voice.
  - Compositional risks, if evident, are only partially successful.
  - The writer may not demonstrate awareness of the audience or **the writing may seem somewhat artificial.**
  - **The writing may show an uneven use of formal style.**
- 2** The writer's connection with the audience and purpose is weak.
- The response has a weak awareness of the audience and lacks voice.
  - The response is pedestrian and may be formulaic.
  - Any reaching out to the audience is disruptive to the flow of the response.
  - The response may have insufficient writing to develop a connection with the audience.
  - The writing lacks a formal style.
- 1** The writer demonstrates little to no sense of the audience or the purpose of the topic.
- The response is disconnected from the topic and may have vague or random ideas.
  - The response may be difficult for the audience to understand.
  - The response may have insufficient writing to develop a connection with the **audience**.

## WORD CHOICE

Word choice is enhanced through appropriate use of advanced vocabulary, precision and application. Word choice is addressed in standards 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

- 5** Words are used in a **precise and** sophisticated way to enhance the development of the topic.
- The response has evidence of precise vocabulary that is beyond grade level.
  - Word selection strongly enhances specificity of support and elaboration.
  - Words have impact and are used with efficiency.
  - The writer's choice of words effectively brings the response to life.
- 4** Words enhance the development of the topic.
- The response may have evidence of vocabulary that is beyond grade level.
  - Word selection enhances specificity of support and elaboration.
  - Words are well chosen and are used somewhat efficiently.
  - The writer's choice of words brings the response to life.
- 3** Words are adequate to develop the topic.
- There are few words that are beyond grade level.
  - Word selection is a mix of general and specific and may not enhance support and elaboration.
  - Wordiness may be evident as the writer tries to relate ideas.
  - The writer's choice of words may be mundane.
- 2** Words are not adequate to develop the topic.
- Vocabulary is basic and may be inaccurate.
  - Word selection is primarily general.
  - Wordiness and repetition disrupt the flow of ideas..
  - The response may have insufficient writing to indicate adequate word choice.
- 1** Words are not adequate to develop the topic and may be incorrect.
- Vocabulary is basic and may be confusing to the audience.
  - Word selection is general and vague.
  - Wordiness and repetition disrupt the flow of ideas.
  - The response may have insufficient writing to indicate adequate word choice.

## SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Sentence structure is enhanced through sentence complexity and variety and through skilled weaving together of different sentence formats to promote a smooth flow of ideas. Sentence structure is addressed in writing standards 1, 2, 3, and 5.

- 5 Sentences are complex and varied
  - Sentence construction contributes to a strong sense of fluency.
  - Attempts at sophistication are successful.
  - Combinations of sentence structures enhance cohesion and promote strong expression.
  - There are no errors in sentence construction.
- 4 Sentences are varied
  - Sentence construction contributes to fluency.
  - Attempts at sophistication are for the most part successful.
  - Combinations of sentence structures are evident and ease reading.
  - There are few errors in sentence construction.
- 3 Sentences are only occasionally varied
  - Sentence construction is repetitive and mechanical.
  - Attempts at sophistication are not evident.
  - Combinations of sentence structures are lacking.
  - Awkward sentences create some minor interruptions.
  - There are errors in sentence construction, including run-ons, fragments, and on-and-ons, but they do not seriously disrupt the presentation.
- 2 Sentences are simple and lack variety
  - Sentence construction is elemental.
  - The response consists of simple structures.
  - Awkward sentences create interruptions.
  - There are errors in sentence construction, including run-ons, fragments, and on-and-ons, that seriously disrupt the presentation.
  - The response may have insufficient writing to evaluate sentence structure.
- 1 Sentences are simple and errors create confusion
  - Command of sentences is still emerging.
  - The response consists of simple structures.
  - Awkward sentences create confusion and require deciphering on the part of the audience.
  - There are errors in sentence construction, including run-ons and fragments that seriously disrupt the response.
  - The response may have insufficient writing to evaluate sentence structure.

## CONVENTIONS

Conventions includes grammar, usage, pronoun reference, consistency in number and person, and mechanics (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and paragraphing). Conventions are addressed in writing standards 4 and 5.

- 5** The writer demonstrates a strong command of grammar, usage, and mechanics
- Grammar and usage are correct and demonstrate complexity.
  - There are few, if any, errors in spelling, and the student successfully attempts to spell complex words.
  - There are few, if any, errors in punctuation.
- 4** The writer demonstrates a reasonably strong command of grammar, usage, and mechanics
- Grammar and usage are for the most part correct.
  - There are few, if any, errors in spelling.
  - There are few, if any, errors in punctuation.
- 3** The writer demonstrates a command of grammar, usage, and mechanics but some errors may be evident
- Errors in grammar and usage while evident are not wide spread in proportion to the amount of writing.
  - Simple words are spelled correctly. Incorrect spelling does not disrupt the reading of the response. The same word misspelled multiple times is only counted as one error.
  - There may be errors in mechanics, particularly in comma use.
- 2** Errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics but some errors disrupt the reading of the response
- Errors in grammar and usage while evident are numerous in proportion to the amount of writing and may create interruptions in reading the response.
  - Spelling errors may be prevalent and require some deciphering on the part of the audience.
  - Errors in mechanics may be evident.
  - The response may have insufficient writing to evaluate conventions.
- 1** Numerous errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics create confusion
- Errors in grammar and usage while evident are numerous in proportion to the amount of writing and create confusion for the audience.
  - Spelling errors may be prevalent and require deciphering on the part of the audience.
  - Errors in the basics of mechanics may be evident.
  - The response may have insufficient writing to evaluate conventions.