

Student Language Writing Scoring Guide: Grades 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>  
 Informative/Explanatory and Opinion Writing and Research Projects

	<b>6/5: STRONG</b> The writing is thorough and demonstrates strong writing skills.	<b>4: MEETS</b> The writing is complete and demonstrates adequate writing skills.	<b>3: ALMOST MEETS</b> The writing demonstrates progress toward meeting grade level writing skills.	<b>2/1: NEEDS WORK</b> The writing is limited, confusing, or too short to demonstrate grade level writing skills.
<b>IDEAS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writer’s purpose and main ideas are interesting and easy to understand.</li> <li>• For opinion writing, an opinion and reasons are clearly stated.</li> <li>• The writer elaborates with many accurate facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</li> <li>• Many strong, specific details are on-topic and support main ideas.</li> <li>• Details are good choices for the purpose and the reader.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writer’s purpose and main ideas are easy to understand.</li> <li>• For opinion writing, an opinion is clearly stated and reasons are given.</li> <li>• The writer includes accurate facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples about the topic.</li> <li>• Specific details support main ideas.</li> <li>• Details are on-topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writer’s purpose and main ideas are easy to understand.</li> <li>• For opinion writing, an opinion is stated and a reason is given.</li> <li>• The writer includes some facts, definitions, concrete details, or other information about the topic.</li> <li>• Details may be too general. They are not specific.</li> <li>• Details may be inaccurate or off-topic.</li> <li>• Details may be listed, but not explained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writer’s purpose and main ideas are not easy to understand; the reader may have to guess at what they are.</li> <li>• For opinion writing, no opinion may be stated or no reasons are given.</li> <li>• The writing may be much too short with few details.</li> <li>• Details are general.</li> <li>• Details are inaccurate or off-topic.</li> <li>• Details may be repeated.</li> </ul>
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writing is very easy to follow. Information is grouped to make sense.</li> <li>• The introduction identifies the topic, is interesting, and makes the reader want to keep reading.</li> <li>• The concluding section is about the opinion or information presented.</li> <li>• Transition words and phrases (especially, specifically, in contrast, etc.) make the writing easy to follow all the way through.</li> <li>• Paragraph breaks are in places that make sense.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information is grouped to make sense.</li> <li>• The introduction is developed and identifies the topic.</li> <li>• The concluding statement or section is about the opinion or information presented.</li> <li>• Transition words and phrases (also, because, for example, in addition, etc.) connect ideas and make the writing easy to follow.</li> <li>• Paragraph breaks help the reader.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parts of the writing are not easy to follow.</li> <li>• The introduction is underdeveloped.</li> <li>• The concluding statement or section may not be about the opinion or information presented, or it may be too short.</li> <li>• The same transition words may be used too often (and, so, but, then, etc.).</li> <li>• There may be some paragraph breaks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writing is difficult to follow and confusing. Information and details are not in an order that makes sense.</li> <li>• The introduction may be missing.</li> <li>• The concluding statement may be missing.</li> <li>• Transition words may be missing or the same one is used over and over.</li> <li>• Paragraph breaks may be missing.</li> <li>• The paper may be much too short to show organization.</li> </ul>
<b>VOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writing is lively, sincere, exciting, or honest.</li> <li>• The writing allows the reader to engage and pay attention to the information and ideas.</li> <li>• The writer is very interested in the topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parts may be lively, sincere, exciting, or honest.</li> <li>• The writing helps the reader to engage and pay attention to the information and ideas.</li> <li>• The writer seems interested in the topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writing may not be lively, sincere, exciting, or honest.</li> <li>• The writer shows little interest in the topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writing seems flat or lifeless.</li> <li>• The writer shows no interest in the topic.</li> </ul>

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<b>WORD CHOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The words are interesting and precise.</li> <li>Many different words are used.</li> <li>The writing includes many rich content vocabulary words about the topic.</li> <li>Just the right words have been chosen for the purpose and audience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words get the message across.</li> <li>Words have variety. Many different words are used.</li> <li>The writing includes many content vocabulary words about the topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many words are not specific.</li> <li>Little variety. Some words may be repeated too often.</li> <li>The writing includes some content vocabulary words about the topic.</li> <li>Sometimes the wrong word may be used.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most words are too general.</li> <li>Words may be repeated over and over.</li> <li>The writing includes few content vocabulary words about the topic.</li> <li>It may be hard to tell what the writing means because so many wrong words are used.</li> </ul>
<b>SENTENCE FLUENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing is smooth and very easy to read out loud.</li> <li>Sentences begin in many different ways.</li> <li>Sentences are different lengths.</li> <li>Sentences have many different patterns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing is easy to read out loud. It sounds natural.</li> <li>Sentences begin in different ways.</li> <li>Some sentences are shorter and some sentences are longer.</li> <li>Sentences have different patterns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parts of the writing are easy to read out loud, but other parts are difficult.</li> <li>Some sentence beginnings are the same; some are different.</li> <li>Many sentences are about the same length.</li> <li>Many sentence patterns are the same. Some are different.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing is difficult to read out loud. The reader has to slow down or re-read.</li> <li>Many sentences begin in the same way.</li> <li>Sentences may be short and choppy or long and rambling.</li> <li>Sentence patterns may be repeated over and over.</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences end where they should with the correct punctuation mark.</li> <li>Higher-level punctuation is used (such as parentheses, hyphen, etc.) and is correct.</li> <li>Even difficult words are spelled correctly.</li> <li>Grammar is correct.</li> <li>Capital letters are correct.</li> <li>Few errors. Little need for editing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences end where they should with the correct punctuation mark.</li> <li>Grade-level punctuation is used (commas in dates, commas in a series, etc.) and is correct.</li> <li>Common words are spelled correctly.</li> <li>Grammar is usually correct.</li> <li>Capital letters are usually correct.</li> <li>Errors require some editing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most sentences end where they should with the correct punctuation mark, but some do not.</li> <li>Some errors in punctuation.</li> <li>Some words are spelled incorrectly.</li> <li>Grammar is incorrect in places.</li> <li>Few capital letter errors.</li> <li>Errors distract the reader. Much editing is needed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many sentences do not end where they should with the correct punctuation mark.</li> <li>Many errors in punctuation.</li> <li>Many words are spelled incorrectly.</li> <li>Incorrect grammar.</li> <li>Many capital letter errors.</li> <li>There are so many errors that the reader has a hard time figuring out what the writer is trying to say.</li> </ul>

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<b>USE OF SOURCES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer uses specific information about the topic from several sources.</li> <li>• Sources are accurately cited.</li> <li>• The writer uses quotations and/or paraphrases information from sources.</li> <li>• When required, the writer provides a complete list of sources using correct formatting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer uses information about the topic from several sources.</li> <li>• Sources are accurately identified.</li> <li>• The writer summarizes or paraphrases information from sources.</li> <li>• When required, the writer provides a list of sources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer uses some information about the topic from mainly one source.</li> <li>• Sources may be incorrectly identified.</li> <li>• The writer may copy some text exactly from a source without paraphrasing.</li> <li>• When required, the writer provides a partial list of sources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer uses little information about the topic from mainly one source.</li> <li>• Sources are not identified, are not correct, or are not used.</li> <li>• Chunks of text may be copied from a source.</li> <li>• When required, the writer does not provide a list of sources.</li> </ul>