Explanatory Performance Task
Writing Rubric (Grades 6 – 11)

Organization/Purpose

Score	4	3	2	1	NS
Organization/Purpose	The response has a clear and effective organizational structure, creating a sense of unity and completeness. The organization is fully sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is consistently and purposefully focused:	The response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness. Though there may be minor flaws, they do not interfere with the overall coherence. The organization is adequately sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is generally focused:	The response has an inconsistent organizational structure. Some flaws are evident, and some ideas may be loosely connected. The organization is somewhat sustained between and within paragraphs. The response may have a minor drift in focus:	The response has little or no discernible organizational structure. The response may be related to the topic but may provide little or no focus:	• Insufficient (includes copied text) • In a language other than English • Off-topic • Off-purpose
	• thesis/controlling idea of a topic is clearly communicated, and the focus is strongly maintained for the purpose and audience	• thesis/controlling idea of a topic is clear, and the focus is mostly maintained for the purpose and audience	• thesis/controlling idea of a topic may be somewhat unclear, or the focus may be insufficiently sustained for the purpose and/or audience	• thesis/controlling idea may be confusing or ambiguous; response may be too brief or the focus may drift from the purpose and/or audience	
	• consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas	• adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety to clarify the relationships between and among ideas	• inconsistent use of transitional strategies and/or little variety	• few or no transitional strategies are evident	
	• effective introduction and conclusion	• adequate introduction and conclusion	• introduction or conclusion, if present, may be weak	• introduction and/or conclusion may be missing	
	• logical progression of ideas from beginning to end; strong connections between and among ideas with some syntactic variety	• adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end; adequate connections between and among ideas	• uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end; and/or formulaic; inconsistent or unclear connections between and among ideas	• frequent extraneous ideas maybe evident; ideas may be randomly ordered or have an unclear progression	

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Evidence/Elaboration

Score	4	3	2	1	NS
Evidence/Elaboration	The response provides thorough elaboration of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes the effective use of source material. The response clearly and effectively develops ideas, using precise language:	The response provides adequate elaboration of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes the use of source material. The response adequately develops ideas, employing a mix of precise and more general language:	The response provides uneven, cursory elaboration of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes uneven or limited use of source material. The response develops ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:	The response provides minimal elaboration of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes little or no use of source material. The response is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:	• Insufficient (includes copied text) • In a language other than English • Off-topic • Off-purpose
	• comprehensive evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated, relevant, and specific	• adequate evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated and relevant, yet may be general	• some evidence (facts and details) from the source material may be weakly integrated, imprecise, repetitive, vague, and/or copied	• evidence (facts and details) from the source material is minimal, irrelevant, absent, incorrectly used, or predominantly copied	
	• clear citations or attribution to source material	• adequate use of citations or attribution to source material	• weak use of citations or attribution to source material	• insufficient use of citations or attribution to source material	
	• effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques*	• adequate use of some elaborative techniques*	• weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques*; development may consist primarily of source summary	• minimal, if any, use of elaborative techniques*	
	• vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose	• vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose	• vocabulary use is uneven or somewhat ineffective for the audience and purpose	• vocabulary is limited or ineffective for the audience and purpose	
	• effective, appropriate style enhances content	• generally appropriate style is evident	• inconsistent or weak attempt to create appropriate style	• little or no evidence of appropriate style	

*Elaborative techniques may include the use of personal experiences that support the controlling idea.

Conventions

Score	2	1	0	NS
Conventions	**The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:** • adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling	**The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:** • limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling	**The response demonstrates little or no command of conventions:** • infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling	• Insufficient (includes copied text) • In a language other than English • Off-topic

Holistic Scoring:
- **Variety:** A range of errors includes sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling.
- **Severity:** Basic errors are more heavily weighted than higher-level errors.
- **Density:** The proportion of errors to the amount of writing done well. This includes the ratio of errors to the length of the piece.