

Judge Writing Rubric

	4 Excellence	3 Developing	2 Emerging	1 Not Yet	Score
Focus	Clear, sharp, distinct controlling point and awareness of task. Writer is in control and orchestrates development of the topic and thesis	Apparent point. The focus is adequate. Insights may be superficial and the control is sporadic but present. Writer is beginning to define the topic	There is evidence of a topic but no point. No meaningful definition of topic. Absence of a thesis statement or topic sentence	Minimal evidence of topic; topic is difficult to discern	
Content	Strong development (shows insight, telling details give important information). Main ideas stand out. The writer makes connections that reflect his/her thinking	Sufficient and adequate development. Writer may have difficulty going from general to specific. The writer superficially considers ideas.	Inadequate limited development (lists, repetition, or sequences). Information limited or unclear; details are cliché	Relevant content is absent or confused	
Organization	Compelling order and structure. The organization enhances, showcases the central idea. The organization moves the reader along; details fit. An introduction invites the reader in; there is a satisfying conclusion. Smooth transitions are present.	Reader can follow what's being said, but the overall organization may sometimes be ineffective or obvious. Introduction and conclusion are present; paper moves along at a good pace	Haphazard organization. The paper may get bogged down in trivia or speed along haphazardly. Placement of details leaves the reader confused or impatient.	No clearly identifiable introduction or conclusion. Connections between ideas are fuzzy; details seem to just fill in space. Pacing is awkward. Lack of organization obscures or distorts the main point or purpose.	
Style	Writer speaks to the reader in a way that is individual, expressive and engaging. Words are specific; imagery is strong; powerful words give the piece energy; vocabulary is striking. Fresh, original expression, honest writing.	The writer seems sincere but not fully involved in the topic; pleasant, acceptable, but not compelling. The overall meaning is clear. The paper may have some fine moments. Use of colorful language may seem overdone to impress the reader rather than convey a message. Some clichés and redundancies may be present	Images lack details and often depend on the reader's knowledge to fill in. The writing tends to hide rather than reveal the reader. The writer communicates in a routine manner. Flat language robs the text of power.	The writer struggles with a limited vocabulary, using vague language. Only the most general message comes through. The writer seems wholly indifferent, uninvolved. The writing is flat, lifeless. There is no sense of a writer behind the words.	
Conventions	The writer demonstrates a good grasp of grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, usage and paragraphing. Errors are so few and so minor that the reader can skim right over them. Spelling is generally correct. Grammar and usage contribute to clarity and style. Punctuation is smooth and guides the reader through the text. The writer may manipulate conventions particularly grammar for stylistic effects.	Errors in writing conventions are not overwhelming. Terminal punctuation is correct but internal punctuation may be incorrect or missing. Spelling is correct on common words. Problems in usage are not severe enough to distract the reader.	Errors begin to impair readability. They tend to be distracting. Paragraphing is inconsistent. Spelling is generally correct but sometimes phonetic. Text may be too short to reflect mastery of conventions. Moderate editing is required to polish the text.	Numerous errors in usage, sentence structure, etc., repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. The reader must reread for meaning. Punctuation is omitted, haphazard, or incorrect. Spelling errors are frequent. Paragraphing is irregular or absent.	
				Total	