

# Writing Rubrics

Eighth Grade

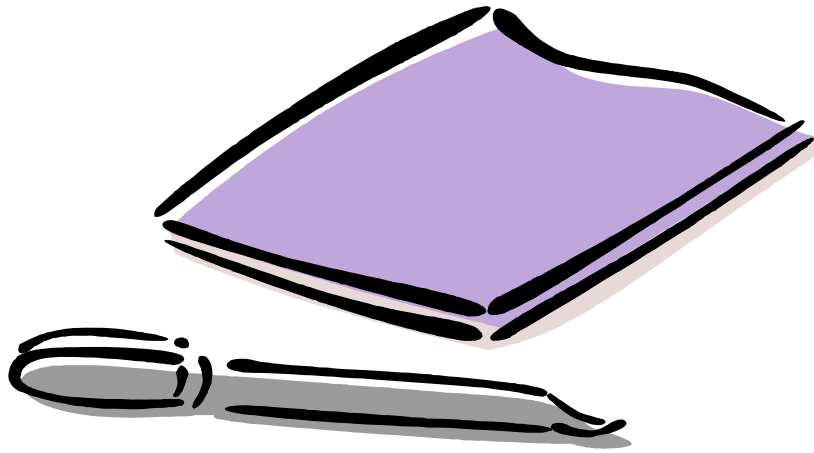


Based on the California State  
Writing Standards

# Table of Contents

Section 1: Student Rubrics	
Six Plus One Traits: Eighth Grade Writing Standards	4
Ideas and Content	6
Organization	7
Voice	8
Sentence Fluency	9
Word Choice	10
Conventions	11
Presentation	12
Section 2: Teacher Rubrics	
Eighth Grade Writing Standards	14
Career	16
Expository	19
Research	22
Response to Literature	25
Persuasive	28
Personal Narrative	31
Summary	34
Section 3: "How-To"	37
Section 4: Appendix	40

# SECTION 1



## Student Rubrics

**Six Plus One**  
**Traits**  
***Eighth Grade***  
***Writing Standards***



**IDEAS & CONTENT**

- ✓ Writing is clear, coherent, and focused.
- ✓ Writing shows awareness of audience.
- ✓ Lead is attention grabbing and states the purpose for writing with sophistication.
- ✓ Main ideas are supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations.
- ✓ Conclusion includes personal summary, reaction, or understanding.

**ORGANIZATION**

- ✓ Extremely well organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance throughout paper.
- ✓ Writing clearly progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.

**VOICE**

- ✓ Distinctive style

- ✓ Reader "hears" author speaking.
- ✓ Engages the reader's interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in the topic

## **SENTENCE FLUENCY**

- ✓ Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures.
- ✓ Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly.

## **WORD CHOICE**

- ✓ Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly.
- ✓ No "dead" words used.
- ✓ Word choice shows awareness of audience.

## **CONVENTIONS**

- ✓ Author always uses pronouns and verb tenses correctly.
- ✓ Punctuation of sentences is correct.
- ✓ All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized.
- ✓ Spelling is correct throughout paper

## **PRESENTATION**

- ✓ Each pages is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean.
- ✓ Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings.
- ✓ Illustrations are carefully drawn.
- ✓ All guidelines are followed.

*"The desire to write grows with writing."*

*Erasmus*

## IDEAS & CONTENT

### **ADVANCED (4)**

- ✓ Writing is clear, coherent, and focused and shows awareness of audience.
- ✓ Lead is attention- grabbing and states the purpose for writing with sophistication.
- ✓ Main ideas are supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations
- ✓ Conclusion includes personal summary, reaction, or understanding.

### **PROFICIENT (3)**

- ✓ Writing is clear, usually focused, and shows awareness of audience.
- ✓ Lead is somewhat attention grabbing; purpose is clear.
- ✓ Main ideas are mostly supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations
- ✓ Fails to conclude with personal summary or understanding.

### **BASIC (2)**

- ✓ Writing is somewhat clear, though unfocused, and shows little awareness of audience.
- ✓ Opening is dull.
- ✓ Main ideas are not well supported
- ✓ Conclusion includes only very general summary/observation.

### **BELOW BASIC (1)**

- ✓ Writing is somewhat incoherent, and unfocused- no awareness of audience. Main ideas are unsupported. No summary or understanding.

## ORGANIZATION

### **ADVANCED (4)**

- ✓ Extremely well organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance throughout paper.
- ✓ Writing clearly progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.

### **PROFICIENT (3)**

- ✓ Well-organized; patterns are mostly effective and used fairly consistently.
- ✓ Writing progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.

### **BASIC (2)**

- ✓ Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear beginning, middle, and ending.

### **BELOW BASIC (1)**

- ✓ Writing is disorganized
- ✓ Hard to notice a pattern

*Education is not filling a pail,  
but the  
lighting of a fire.*

*William Butler Yeats*

## VOICE

### **ADVANCED (4)**

- ✓ Distinctive style
- ✓ Reader “Hears” author speaking
- ✓ Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.

### **PROFICIENT (3)**

- ✓ Some glimpses of a distinctive style
- ✓ Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic

### **BASIC (2)**

- ✓ Not much personal style.
- ✓ Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge

### **BELOW BASIC (1)**

- ✓ Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge

*The role of a writer is not to say  
what we all can say, but what we  
are unable to say.*

*Anais Nin*

## SENTENCE FLUENCY

### **ADVANCED (4)**

- ✓ Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures.
- ✓ Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used

### **PROFICIENT (3)**

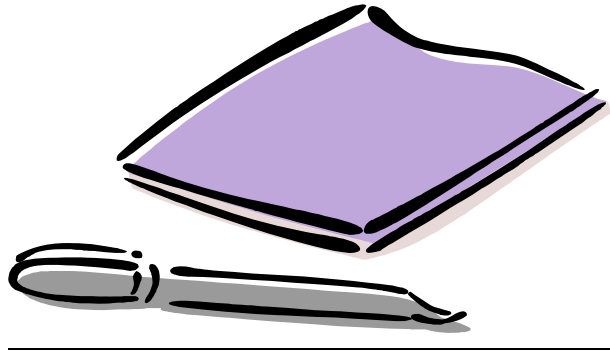
- ✓ Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures.
- ✓ Sentences are used mostly correctly

### **BASIC (2)**

- ✓ Some variety of sentence structures used, but some sentence structures are used incorrectly

### **BELOW BASIC (1)**

- ✓ Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences.



## WORD CHOICE

### **ADVANCED (4)**

- ✓ Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly.
- ✓ No “dead” words used.
- ✓ Word choice shows awareness of audience

### **PROFICIENT (3)**

- ✓ Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words.
- ✓ Limited use of “dead” words.
- ✓ Word choice shows some awareness of audience

### **BASIC (2)**

- ✓ Author tends to choose general rather than precise words.
- ✓ Some incorrect usage.
- ✓ Many “dead” words used.
- ✓ Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.

### **BELOW BASIC (1)**

- ✓ Author has difficulty choosing the proper word.
- ✓ Full of “dead” words.
- ✓ No awareness of audience.

*The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug.*

*Mark Twain*

## CONVENTIONS

### **ADVANCED (4)**

- ✓ Author always uses pronouns and verb tenses correctly.
- ✓ Punctuation of sentences is correct
- ✓ All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized.
- ✓ Spelling is correct throughout paper

### **PROFICIENT (3)**

- ✓ Mostly correct usage of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

### **BASIC (2)**

- ✓ Some difficulty using correct pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

### **BELOW BASIC (1)**

- ✓ Poor use of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

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# PRESENTATION

## **ADVANCED (4)**

- ✓ Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean.
- ✓ Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings
- ✓ Illustrations are carefully drawn.
- ✓ All guidelines are followed

## **PROFICIENT (3)**

- ✓ Neatly and carefully written
- ✓ Straight margins
- ✓ Unwrinkled paper
- ✓ Most guidelines followed

## **BASIC (2)**

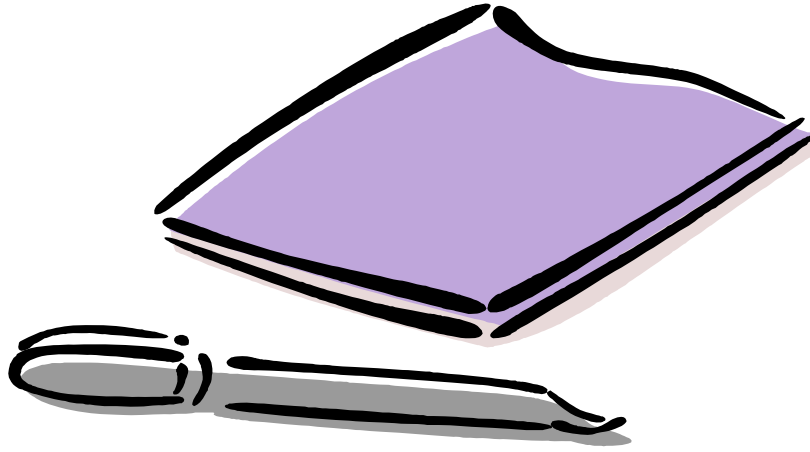
- ✓ Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors.
- ✓ Some guidelines followed.

## **BELOW BASIC (1)**

- ✓ Paper is so wrinkled and mess that reader does not want to touch it.
- ✓ Guidelines not followed.



# SECTION 2



## Teacher Rubrics

## Eighth Grade Standards Writing Rubric

Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation	
Points:					
Writing is clear, coherent, and focused and shows awareness of audience. Lead is attention- grabbing and states the purpose for writing with <u>sophistication</u> . Main ideas are supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations; conclusion includes personal summary, reaction, or understanding.	4	Extremely well-organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance throughout paper. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.	4	Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All guidelines followed.	4
Writing is clear, usually focused, and shows awareness of audience. Lead is somewhat attention grabbing; purpose is clear. Main ideas are mostly supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations; fails to conclude with personal summary or understanding.	3	Well-organized; patterns are mostly effective and used fairly consistently. Writing progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.	3	Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most guidelines followed.	3
Writing is somewhat clear, though unfocused, and shows little awareness of audience. Opening is dull. Main ideas are not well supported; Conclusion includes only very general summary/observation.	2	Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear beginning, middle, and ending.	2	Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Some guidelines followed.	2
Writing is somewhat incoherent, and unfocused; no awareness of audience. Main ideas are unsupported. No summary or understanding.	1	Writing is disorganized; hard to notice a pattern.	1	Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Guidelines not followed.	1

## Eighth Grade Standards Writing Rubric

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly.	4	Author always uses pronouns and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper.	4	Distinctive style; reader “hears” author speaking. Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Sentences are used mostly correctly.	3	Mostly correct usage of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	3	Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience.	3
Some variety of sentence structures used, but some sentence structures are used incorrectly.	2	Some difficulty using correct pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	2	Not much personal style. Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences.	1	Poor use of pronouns, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	1	Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience.	1

Career Writing Rubric  
Career Writing



My aim is to put down on paper what I see  
and what I feel in the best and simplest  
way.

Ernest Hemingway

## Career Writing Rubric

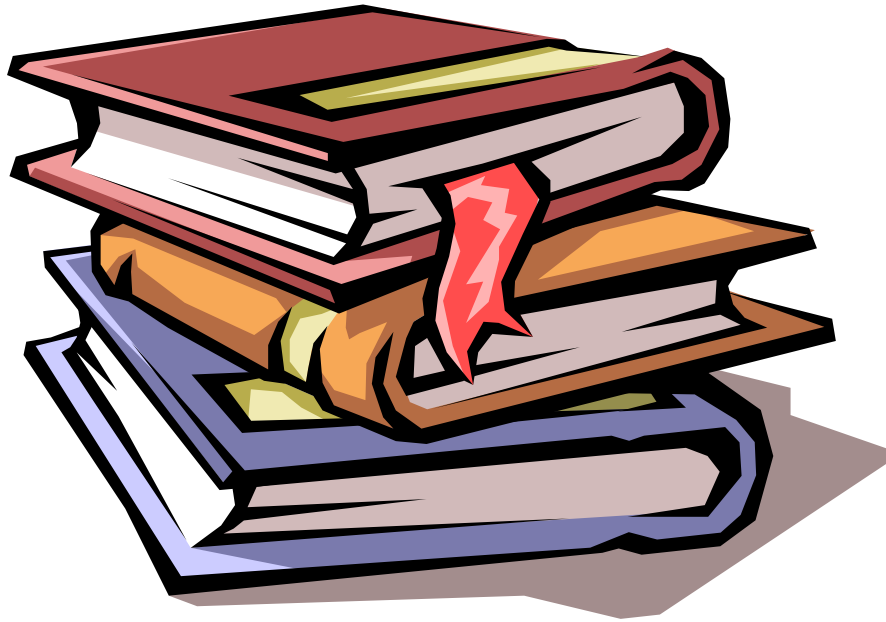
Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation	
Points:					
Writing is clear, coherent, focused and customized for the intended audience. Writing is thorough yet succinct.	4	Writing is organized and sequenced, according to the purpose of the piece. Writing follows the appropriate format.	4	Each document is carefully typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight. Careful use of formatting techniques including font, headings and graphics provide clear understanding of the piece. All guidelines followed.	4
Writing is clear, coherent, usually focused and customized for the intended audience. Writing is succinct.	3	Writing is organized and sequenced according to the purpose of the piece. Writing follows the appropriate format.	3	Each document is typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight. Appropriate use of formatting techniques including font, headings and graphics aide comprehension of the piece. All guidelines followed.	3
Writing is somewhat clear, and coherent though unfocused. Writing is somewhat succinct.	2	Writing is somewhat organized and sequenced according to the purpose of the piece. Writing mostly follows the appropriate format.	2	Each document is typed and generally neat. Margins are straight. Attempts to use formatting techniques including font, headings and graphics to aide comprehension of the piece. Most guidelines are followed.	2
Writing is incoherent, and unfocused. Writing is not succinct.	1	Writing is disorganized with little or no sequencing. Writing does not follow the appropriate format.	1	Each document may or may not be typed. Document is messy. Fails to use formatting techniques to aide comprehension of the piece. Some or no guidelines are followed.	1

## Career Writing Rubric

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly.	4	Writing is free of any errors in punctuation, capitalization, grammar and spelling.	4	Intentional use of language conveys the writer's professional approach to the task and audience.	4	Writer always chooses precise words and uses them correctly. Vocabulary shows an awareness of the specific business task or field. Writer is selective; each word fills a purpose. There are no "wasted" words.	4
Writing is smooth, with a variety of sentences structures. Simple, compound and complex sentences are used correctly.	3	Writing is free of any errors in punctuation, capitalization, grammar and spelling.	3	Use of language conveys the writer's professional approach to the task and audience.	3	Writer chooses to use some precise words and uses them correctly. Vocabulary shows an awareness of the specific business task or field. Writer is selective; most words fill a purpose. There are few "wasted" words.	3
Writing can be segmented. Some variety of sentence structures used, but some sentence structures are used incorrectly.	2	Writing contains some errors in punctuation, capitalization, grammar and spelling.	2	Use of language conveys an inconsistent professional approach to the task and audience.	2	Writer tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Word choice shows limited awareness of the specific business task or field. Writer is somewhat selective; several words fill a purpose. There are several "wasted" words.	2
Writing is not smooth. Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences.	1	Writing contains many errors in punctuation, capitalization, grammar and spelling.	1	Use of language conveys a lack of knowledge or interest in the task and audience.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper words. No awareness the specific business task or field. Writer is not selective; few words fill a purpose. Many "wasted" words are used.	1

Expository Writing Rubric

# Expository Writing



I keep six honest serving men  
They taught me all I knew  
Their names are What and Why and When  
and How and Where and Who.

Rudyard Kipling

## Expository Writing Rubric

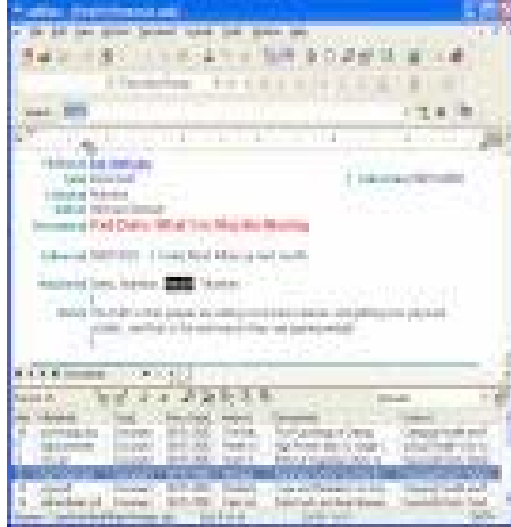
Ideas & Content	Organization	Presentation
Points:		
Writing is clear, coherent, and focused and shows awareness of audience. Thesis is attention-grabbing and states the purpose for writing with <u>sophistication</u> --clearly and thoroughly. Main ideas are supported by relevant facts, details, and thorough explanations, demonstrating deep understanding.	4 Extremely well-organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance throughout paper. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through an introduction, supportive paragraphs, and a conclusion.	4 Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All guidelines are followed.
Writing is clear, usually focused, and shows awareness of audience. Thesis is somewhat attention grabbing; purpose is clear. Main ideas are mostly supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations, demonstrating a general understanding.	3 Well-organized; patterns are mostly effective and used fairly consistently. Writing progresses through an introduction, supportive paragraphs, and conclusion.	3 Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most guidelines are followed.
Writing is somewhat clear, though unfocused, and shows little awareness of audience. Opening is dull. Thesis and purpose are not clear; Explanation is not clear or thorough and demonstrates a limited understanding.	2 Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear introduction, supportive paragraphs, and conclusion.	2 Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Some guidelines are followed.
Writing is somewhat, incoherent, and unfocused; no awareness of audience. No clear thesis or purpose. Main ideas are unsupported. Little or no explanation is provided, demonstrating limited or no understanding.	1 Writing is disorganized; hard to notice a pattern.	1 Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Guidelines not followed.

## Expository Writing Rubric

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly. Always uses active voice through correct placement of modifiers.	4	Author always uses parts of speech and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper. Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets and semicolons are used correctly.	4	Distinctive style; reader “hears” author speaking. Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Sentences are used correctly most of the time. Active voice is used through correct placement of modifiers.	3	Mostly correct usage of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets are used correctly most of the time.	3	Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience.	3
Some variety of sentence structures and openings are used, but are used incorrectly. Placement of modifiers is inconsistent in an attempt to use the active voice.	2	Some difficulty using correct parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Some difficulty with quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	2	Not much personal style. Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences that contain repetitive openings. Incorrect placement of modifiers without use of active voice.	1	Poor use of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Poor use of quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	1	Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience.	1

## Expository Writing Rubric

# Research



### **Samuel Johnson:**

The greatest part of a writer's time is spent in reading, in order to write; a man will turn over half a library to make one book.

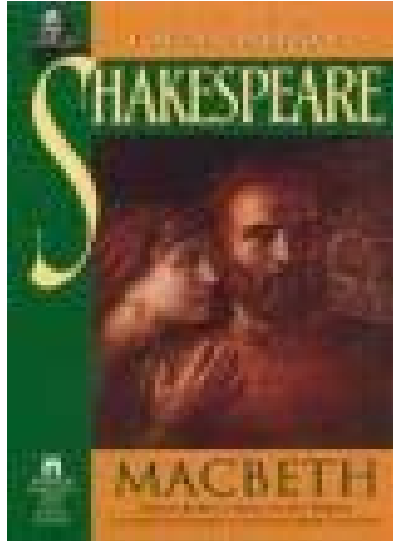
## Research Rubric

Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation	
Points:					
<p>Writer chose a specific (focused) question that is covered <u>thoroughly</u> with the use of a strong thesis statement. Writing is clear, coherent, and focused and shows awareness of audience. Lead is attention- grabbing and states the purpose for writing with <u>sophistication</u>. Author shows reader why finding answer to question is important. Main ideas are supported by relevant facts, data, details, and explanations from <u>multiple sources</u>. Includes both <u>primary</u> and <u>secondary</u> sources, demonstrating deep understanding. All writing, except quotations, is paraphrased in your own words.</p>	4	<p>Extremely well-organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance and parallelism throughout paper. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through an introduction, supporting paragraphs and conclusion. Footnotes and a thorough bibliography, using the correct formats, are included.</p>	4	<p>Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All data, surveys, charts, and graphs are labeled and neatly shown. All guidelines followed.</p>	4
<p>Writer chose a specific (thorough) question that is covered well with the use of a thesis statement. Writing is clear, usually focused and shows awareness of audience. Lead is somewhat attention- grabbing: purpose is clear. Author explains why they want to find the answer to their question. Main ideas are mostly supported by relevant facts, data, details, and explanations. Includes both <u>primary</u> and <u>secondary</u> sources, demonstrating a general understanding. All writing, except quotations, is paraphrased in your own words.</p>	3	<p>Well-organized; patterns are mostly effective and used fairly consistently. Writing progresses through an introduction, supporting paragraphs and conclusion. Footnotes and a bibliography, using the correct formats, are included.</p>	3	<p>Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most data, surveys, charts, and graphs are labeled and neat. Most guidelines followed.</p>	3
<p>Writer chose an unfocused question and attempts to use a thesis statement. Writing is somewhat clear, though unfocused, and shows little awareness of audience. Opening is dull. Main ideas are not well-supported. May not include a primary source, demonstrating a limited understanding. All writing is paraphrased in your own words, except quotations.</p>	2	<p>Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear introduction, supporting paragraphs and conclusion. Footnotes and bibliography are incorrectly formatted.</p>	2	<p>Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Data, surveys, charts, and graphs are labeled and somewhat neat. Some guidelines followed.</p>	2
<p>Writer chose an unfocused/unclear question and does not utilize a thesis statement. Writing is somewhat incoherent and unfocused, no awareness of audience. Main ideas are unsupported. No summary or understanding. Some information seems plagiarized! No quotations used.</p>	1	<p>Writing is disorganized; hard to notice a pattern. Footnotes and bibliography are missing.</p>	1	<p>Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Data, surveys, charts, and graphs are not labeled and messy. Guidelines are not followed.</p>	1

## Research Rubric

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly. Always uses active voice through correct placement of modifiers.	4	Author always uses parts of speech and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper. Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets and semicolons are used correctly.	4	Distinctive style; reader “hears” author speaking. Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Sentences are used correctly most of the time. Active voice is used through correct placement of modifiers.	3	Mostly correct usage of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets are used correctly most of the time.	3	Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience.	3
Some variety of sentence structures and openings are used, but are used incorrectly. Placement of modifiers is inconsistent in an attempt to use the active voice.	2	Some difficulty using correct parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Some difficulty with quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	2	Not much personal style. Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences that contain repetitive openings. Incorrect placement of modifiers without use of active voice.	1	Poor use of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Poor use of quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	1	Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience.	1

# Response to Literature



**Samuel Johnson:**

What is written without effort is in  
general read without pleasure.

## Response to Literature

Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation	
Points:					
Goes beyond summarization of text to clear, coherent, and focused interpretation of character, setting, plot, literary devices, and/or theme. Shows awareness of audience—summarizes and explains concisely. Lead is attention-grabbing and states a <u>sophisticated</u> thesis. Main ideas are supported by relevant examples and quotes from the text; conclusion shows careful reading, understanding, and personal insight.	4	Extremely well-organized, with each body paragraph supporting the thesis statement in a different way. Each paragraph builds on the previous one. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through an introduction, supportive paragraphs, and conclusion.	4	Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All guidelines followed.	4
Sometimes goes beyond summarization of text. Interpretation is clear and usually focused. Shows awareness of audience—summarizes and explains. Lead is somewhat attention-grabbing and states a thesis. Main ideas are mostly supported by examples and quotes from the text; conclusion shows understanding of some big ideas in the literature.	3	Well-organized; body paragraphs mostly support the thesis in different ways. Most paragraphs build on each other. Writing progresses through an introduction, supportive paragraphs, and conclusion.	3	Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most guidelines followed.	3
Mostly a summarization of text. Interpretation is somewhat unclear and/or lacks focus. Shows some awareness of audience—mostly summarizes and explains when necessary. Lead is dull and may not state a thesis. Main ideas are not supported by the chosen examples/quotes from the text; conclusion shows limited understanding of big ideas in the literature.	2	Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear introduction, supportive paragraphs, and conclusion. Some supportive paragraphs are not clearly connected to the thesis statement.	2	Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Some guidelines followed.	2
Only a summarization of text. Incoherent and unfocused. Shows no awareness of audience, does not summarize or explain effectively. Lead is dull and does not state a thesis. Main ideas are not supported; conclusion shows no understanding of big ideas in the literature.	1	Writing is disorganized; hard to notice a pattern. Supportive paragraphs do not support the thesis statement.	1	Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Guidelines not followed.	1

## Response to Literature

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly. Always uses active voice through correct placement of modifiers.	4	Author always uses parts of speech and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper. Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets and semicolons are used correctly.	4	Distinctive style; reader “hears” author speaking. Uses formal language throughout, and does not “talk to” the reader. Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Sentences are used correctly most of the time. Active voice is used through correct placement of modifiers.	3	Mostly correct usage of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets are used correctly most of the time.	3	Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Uses formal language and rarely “talks to” the reader. Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience.	3
Some variety of sentence structures and openings are used, but are used incorrectly. Placement of modifiers is inconsistent in an attempt to use the active voice.	2	Some difficulty using correct parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Some difficulty with quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	2	Not much personal style. Mostly uses formal language, but sometimes “talks to” the reader. Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences that contain repetitive openings. Incorrect placement of modifiers without use of active voice.	1	Poor use of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Poor use of quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	1	Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge. Uses informal language and “talks to” the reader.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience.	1

## Persuasive Writing

# Persuasive



### **Bulwer-Lytton:**

The pen is mightier than the sword

## Persuasive Writing

Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation	
Points:					
Writing is clear, coherent, and focused and shows awareness of audience. States a clear position or opinion in a well-defined thesis. Position is supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations; Author addresses possible reader concerns or arguments. Conclusion includes personal summary or understanding and inspires a strong reaction from reader.	4	Extremely well organized, using patterns such as compare/contrast and order of importance throughout paper. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through an introduction, supportive paragraphs, and conclusion.	4	Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All guidelines are followed.	4
Writing is clear, usually focused, and shows awareness of audience. States a position or opinion in a thesis. Position is mostly supported by relevant facts, details, and explanations; Author addresses some possible reader concerns or arguments; fails to conclude with personal summary or understanding and generates a general reaction from the reader.	3	Well-organized; patterns are mostly effective and used fairly consistently. Writing progresses through an introduction, supportive paragraphs, and conclusion.	3	Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most guidelines are followed.	3
Writing is somewhat clear, though unfocused, and shows little awareness of audience. Opening is dull. Weakly states a position in a thesis. Position not well supported; Author spends little time addressing possible reader concerns or arguments. Conclusion includes only very general summary/observation and generates little or no reaction from the reader.	2	Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear introduction, supportive paragraphs and conclusion.	2	Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Some guidelines are followed.	2
Writing is somewhat, incoherent, and unfocused; no awareness of audience. Little or no statement of position in a thesis. Position is unsupported. Author does not address possible reader concerns or arguments. No summary or understanding.	1	Writing is disorganized; hard to notice a pattern.	1	Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Guidelines are not followed.	1

## Persuasive Writing

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly. Always uses active voice through correct placement of modifiers.	4	Author always uses parts of speech and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper. Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets and semicolons are used correctly.	4	Distinctive style; reader “hears” author speaking. Engages the reader’s interest by showing exceptional knowledge and interest in topic.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Sentences are used correctly most of the time. Active voice is used through correct placement of modifiers.	3	Mostly correct usage of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets are used correctly most of the time.	3	Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Writing communicates some personal knowledge and interest in topic.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience.	3
Some variety of sentence structures and openings are used, but are used incorrectly. Placement of modifiers is inconsistent in an attempt to use the active voice.	2	Some difficulty using correct parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Some difficulty with quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	2	Not much personal style. Occasional glimpses of author’s interest and knowledge.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences that contain repetitive openings. Incorrect placement of modifiers without use of active voice.	1	Poor use of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Poor use of quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	1	Mistakes and lack of care indicate author’s lack of interest and knowledge.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience.	1

Narrative Writing Rubric

# Personal Narrative



Show don't tell. - Henry James

## Personal Narrative Writing Rubric

Ideas & Content		Organization		Presentation
Points:				
Writing relates a clear, coherent and focused personal event, experience, or situation, and shows awareness of audience. Lead is attention grabbing. Ending clearly reflects the significance of why the event or experience was special by conveying personal feelings, and lessons learned.	4	Extremely well-organized. Includes a well-developed yet focused plot. Suspense builds throughout the story. Writing <u>clearly</u> progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending.	4	Each page is typed, unwritten. Margins are consistent. Has been taken care of. Headings; illustrations; carefully drawn. Guidelines are followed.
Writing usually relates a clear, coherent and focused personal event, experience, or situation, and shows awareness of audience. Lead is somewhat attention grabbing. Ending attempts to reflect the significance of why the event or experience was special by somewhat conveying personal feelings, and lesson learned.	3	Well-organized; Includes a clear plot. Writing progresses through a beginning, middle, and ending. Suspense is included.	3	Neatly and consistently typed. Straight margins. Paper. Most guidelines followed.
Writing struggles to relate a clear, coherent, and focused personal event, experience or situation. Awareness or audience is limited. Lead is dull. Ending includes only very general summary of personal feelings and attempts to convey lessons learned.	2	Somewhat organized, but fails to write a clear beginning, middle, and ending. Some suspense, but does not keep reader interest. Attempts a plot, but it is unclear or unfocused.	2	Generally neat. Some smudges or ink. Some guidelines followed.
Writing fails to relate a clear, coherent, and focused personal event, experience or situation. No awareness of audience. Ending does not include personal summary, reaction or understanding of lessons learned.	1	Writing is disorganized; little pattern. Little suspense. No plot development.	1	Paper is so wrinkled that reader can't read it. Guidelines not followed.

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Writing
Points:						
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Dialogue supports and explains action. Dialogue is mixed with narration. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly. Always uses active voice through correct placement of modifiers.	4	Author always uses parts and speech and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper. Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets and semicolons are used correctly.	4	Point of view is unique in its open and realistic quality. Distinctive style; Reader "hears" author "speaking" throughout the piece.	4	Author pre-use "de ch au
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Dialogue usually supports	3	Mostly correct usage of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.	3	Point of view is clear. Some glimpses of a distinctive style. Reader	3	Au pre Lin

## Personal Narrative Writing Rubric

and explains action. Dialogue is sometimes mixed with narration. Sentences are used mostly correctly. Active voice is used through correct placement of modifiers.		Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets are used correctly most of the time.		frequently “hears” author “speaking.”		wo son auc
Some variety of sentence structures and openings are used, but some are used incorrectly. Some dialogue used, but it is random; doesn’t fit with story. Imbalance of dialogue and narration. Placement of modifiers is inconsistent in an attempt to use the active voice.	2	Some difficulty using correct parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Some difficulty with quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	2	Point is view is somewhat clear. Attempts at distinctive style. Reader occasionally “hears” author speaking.	2	Au ger wo usa use lim auc
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences. Dialogue is completely random. There is little variety of dialogue/ narration or sentence openings. Incorrect placement use of modifiers without use of active voice	1	Poor use of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Poor use of quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	1	Point of view is unclear. Style is not distinctive. Reader does not “hear” author “speaking.”	1	Au cho Fu aw

## Summary Writing Rubric

# Summary



Say all you have to say in the fewest possible words, or your reader will be sure to skip them; and in the plainest possible words or he will certainly misunderstand them. - John Ruskin

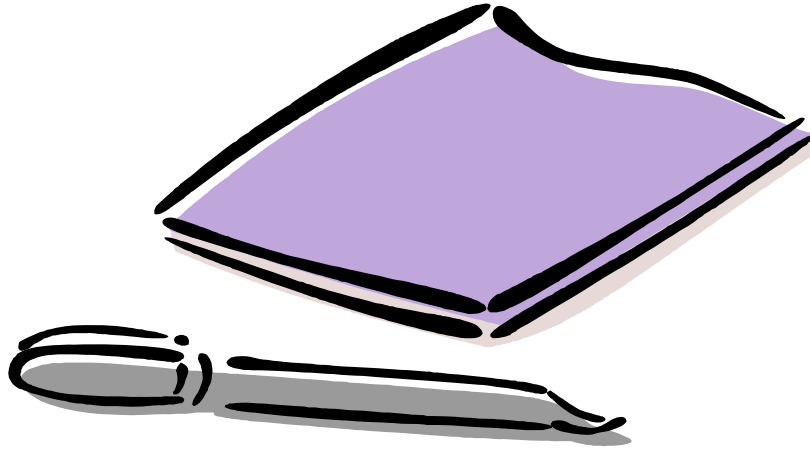
## Summary Writing Rubric

Ideas & Content	Organization	Presentation	
Points:			
Writing creatively identifies the title of the original selection, its source (if available), genre and main idea. Author paraphrases in an engaging manner that demonstrates in-depth understanding of the topic and key information.	4 Extremely well organized, with each detail supporting the topic sentence of the summary. Creative use of transitions to connect ideas. All information is included according to the order of the original piece. The summary is approximately 1/4-the length of the original selection.	4 Each page is carefully written or typed, unwrinkled, and clean. Margins are straight; special care has been taken with titles and headings; illustrations are carefully drawn. All guidelines followed.	4
Writing clearly identifies the title of the original selection, its source (if available), genre and main idea. Author accurately paraphrases which demonstrates an understanding of the topic and key information.	3 Well-organized, with a majority of the details supporting the topic sentence of the summary. Effective use of transitions to connect ideas. Most information is included according to the order of the original piece. The summary is approximately 1/3 the length of the original selection.	3 Neatly and carefully written; straight margins; unwrinkled paper. Most guidelines followed.	3
Writing attempts to identify the title of the original selection, its source (if available), genre and main idea. Author inconsistently/inaccurately paraphrases, which demonstrates a limited understanding of the topic and key information.	2 Roughly organized, with some details supporting the topic sentence of the summary. Ideas are roughly connected by transitions. Information is inconsistently included according to the order of the original piece. The summary is approximately 1/2 the length of the original selection.	2 Generally neat, but shows a few smudges or corrected errors. Some guidelines followed.	2
Writing does not identify the title of the original selection, its source (if available), genre and main idea. Author does not paraphrasing to demonstrate understanding of topic and key information.	1 Writing is disorganized without details that support the topic sentence of the summary. Ideas are not connected by transitions. Writing does not include details according to the order of the original piece. The summary length is roughly the same as the original selection.	1 Paper is so wrinkled and messy that reader does not want to touch it. Guidelines not followed.	1

## Summary Writing Rubric

Sentence Fluency		Conventions		Voice		Word Choice	
Points:							
Writing is consistently smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are used correctly. Always uses active voice through correct placement of modifiers.	4	Author always uses parts of speech and verb tenses correctly; punctuation of sentences is correct. All proper nouns and initial words in sentences are capitalized. Spelling is correct throughout paper. Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets and semicolons are used correctly.	4	Author maintains objective point of view throughout writing by omitting personal opinion, reaction and knowledge. The author uses language that reflects the tone of the original piece.	4	Author always chooses precise, colorful words and uses them correctly. No “dead” words used. Word choice shows awareness of audience. Realistic and specific language consistently used.	4
Writing is mostly smooth, with a variety of sentence structures and openings. Sentences are used correctly most of the time. Active voice is used through correct placement of modifiers.	3	Mostly correct usage of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets are used correctly most of the time.	3	Author maintains objective point of view throughout the majority of writing by omitting personal opinion, reaction and knowledge. The author uses some language that reflects the tone of the original piece.	3	Author mostly chooses precise, colorful words. Limited use of “dead” words. Word choice shows some awareness of audience. Realistic and specific language generally used.	3
Some variety of sentence structures and openings are used, but are used incorrectly. Placement of modifiers is inconsistent in an attempt to use the active voice.	2	Some difficulty using correct parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Some difficulty with quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	2	Author attempts to maintain an objective point of view by limiting personal opinion, reaction and knowledge. The author’s language hints at the tone of the original piece.	2	Author tends to choose general rather than precise words. Some incorrect usage. Many “dead” words used. Word choice shows limited awareness of audience. Some, realistic or specific language is used.	2
Author writes in fragments or run-on sentences with some complete simple sentences that contain repetitive openings. Incorrect placement of modifiers and use of active voice.	1	Poor use of parts of speech, verb tenses, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Poor use of quotations, hyphens, dashes and brackets.	1	Author does not attempt to write from an objective point of view. Author’s language is not connected to the tone of the original piece.	1	Author has difficulty choosing the proper word. Full of “dead” words. No awareness of audience. Little realistic or specific language used.	1

# SECTION 3



“How -To”

## **REVIEWING RUBRICS WITH STUDENTS**

With some careful planning on the part of the teacher, these rubrics can help students to:

1. achieve writing standards
2. understand the vocabulary associated with good writing

### **Six Plus One Traits: Seventh Grade Writing Standards, Pages 4-5**

Start the year with an introduction to the traits of good writing. By reviewing only the “Advanced,” or Level 4 on the rubric with students, they can shoot for the stars. Even those students who currently are at the Below Basic or Basic Levels can improve when they know what the “ultimate” goals are for a writer.

The Levels, 3, 2, and 1 are all derivatives of the Level 4 description on each rubric. For that reason, it is not necessary to give the students the complete rubrics with all traits and all levels.

The handout can be given out at the beginning of the school year, and students can continue to refer to it as they work on different traits and different writing units.

### **Student Trait Rubrics, Pages 6-12**

Individual handouts for each writing trait are available in Section 1, “Student Rubrics.” Many teachers feel that on a given writing assignment, they only want their students to be focusing on one or two traits.

When working on a particular trait, the teacher can hand out the rubric for that trait and help students understand the differences between the “Advanced,” “Proficient,” “Basic” and “Below Basic.” If some student sample paragraphs are stories are available (with the names removed), the teacher can have students practice using the rubric by rating the writing sample on the 4-point scale and connecting specific passages of the test to specific phrases in the rubric.

## **Teacher Rubrics, Pages 14-30**

These rubrics are meant for the teacher to use as an assessment tool.

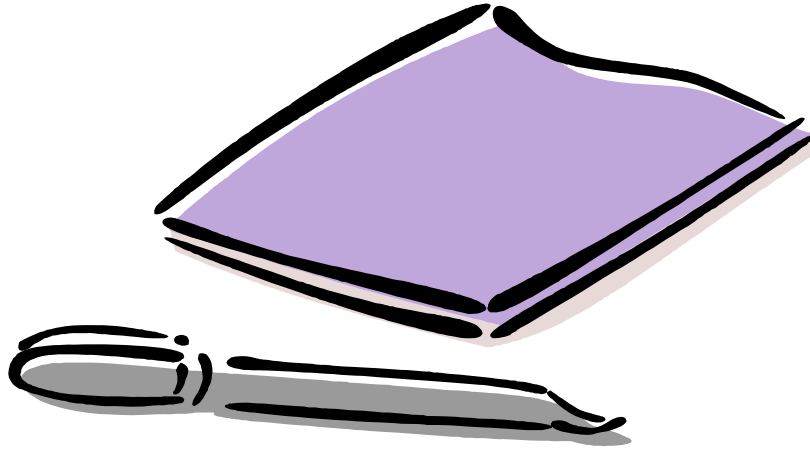
Some teachers have found that by only using the teacher rubric students are overwhelmed with the format and information. However, as teachers read student work, they can easily circle or underline parts of the rubric in each column that apply to that particular student paper. Thus, detailed feedback for each student is provided on one sheet of paper. This can easily become part of a portfolio or student writing file.

Please note that it is not necessary to assess all traits for each student on each assignment! For example, let's say the first big writing assignment is to have students write a short personal story about themselves. The teacher may only have taught the students about expressing their ideas clearly (Ideas and content) and choosing specific vocabulary words (Word Choice). In this situation, only those two columns on the teacher rubric are necessary for assessment.

If a point system for grading is used, a specific number of points for each trait can be assigned at the top of each column. Please remember, though, that Level 3 should be Proficient; making a Level 3 performance (Proficient) worth 3 points out of 4 would not be a good idea, because that would be a 75%!

These rubrics are meant to make a teacher's life easier- not more confusing!

# SECTION 4



## Appendix

# DEFINITIONS

## GENRES

### NARRATIVE

- ✓ Tells a story and includes a beginning, middle, and end.
- ✓ Includes setting, character, plot, conflict, climax, and resolution.

### EXPOSITORY

- ✓ Provides information and includes introduction, body, and conclusion paragraphs.
- ✓ Includes topic sentences, reasons/details/facts, transitions, elaboration, and a closing/clincher

### RESEARCH REPORT

- ✓ Expresses topic as a specific (focused) question that is covered thoroughly.
- ✓ Includes support from facts, details, examples, and explanations from multiple sources.
- ✓ Includes a bibliography

### RESPONSE TO LITERATURE

- ✓ Responses exhibit carefully reading, understanding, and insight.
- ✓ Goes beyond a summary of the literature to expressing a truth about it.

### PERSUASIVE

- ✓ States a clear position or opinion on a meaningful topic.
- ✓ Supports the position with organized and relevant evidence.
- ✓ Anticipates and addresses reader concerns and potential counterarguments.

# **DEFINITIONS**

## TRAITS

### IDEAS & CONTENT

- ✓ Focus of paper is clear and well-supported

### ORGANIZATION

- ✓ Structure allows for a clear and effective understanding of the topic

### VOICE

- ✓ Ability of the writer to speak to the reader in a unique and appropriate way

### SENTENCE FLUENCY

- ✓ Variety of sentence length and structures.

### WORD CHOICE

- ✓ Using precise, colorful language appropriate to the audience

### CONVENTIONS

- ✓ Proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization

### PRESENTATIONS

- ✓ Following specific guidelines in a neat and clean manner.

# DEFINITIONS

## GENERAL TERMINOLOGY

### AWARENESS OF AUDIENCE

- ✓ Author needs to understand who the reader will be, such as teacher, student, parent, etc., and modify the writing to fit the purpose

### DEAD WORDS

- ✓ Simple words that can easily be replaced with more specific, descriptive choices. Some examples of dead words are good, nice, like, pretty.

### LITERARY DEVICES

- ✓ Ways to enhance the writing, such as similes, metaphors, hyperbole, personification, etc.

### PRIMARY SOURCES

- ✓ A first-hand account or document, such as an interview or a diary.

### SECONDARY SOURCES

- ✓ Any information based on someone else's account, such as a newspaper article or book.

### SOPHISTICATION

- ✓ To bring to a deeper and more complex level than the average student.