



OPINION GRADES 3-5

- IDEAS
- ORGANIZATION
- VOICE
- WORD CHOICE
- SENT. FLUENCY
- CONVENTIONS

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 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 opinion but may provide little or no focus.	• Insufficient (includes copied text) • In a language other than English • Off-topic • Off-purpose
	• opinion is introduced, clearly communicated, and the focus is strongly maintained for the purpose and audience	• opinion is clear, and the focus is mostly maintained for the purpose and audience	• opinion may be somewhat unclear, or the focus may be insufficiently sustained for the purpose and/or audience	• opinion 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 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 may be evident; ideas may be randomly ordered or have an unclear progression	

SCORE	4	3	2	1	NS
EVIDENCE/ELABORATION	The response provides thorough and convincing elaboration of the support/evidence for the opinion and supporting idea(s) 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 opinion and supporting idea(s) that includes the use of source material. The response adequately develops ideas, employing a mix of precise with more general language.	The response provides uneven, cursory elaboration of the support/evidence for the opinion and supporting idea(s) that includes partial or uneven use of source material. The response develops ideas unevenly, using simplistic language.	The response provides minimal elaboration of the support/evidence for the opinion and supporting idea(s) 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 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 of 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.

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



CAASPP Smarter Balanced ELA Writing Rubric

INFORMATIVE-EXPLANATORY

GRADES 3-5

- IDEAS
- ORGANIZATION
- VOICE
- WORD CHOICE
- SENT. FLUENCY
- CONVENTIONS

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 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
	• controlling/main idea of a topic is clearly communicated, and the focus is strongly maintained for the purpose and audience	• controlling/main idea of a topic is clear, and the focus is mostly maintained for the purpose and audience	• controlling/main idea of a topic may be somewhat unclear, or the focus may be insufficiently sustained for the purpose and/or audience	• controlling/main 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 may be evident; ideas may be randomly ordered or have an unclear progression	

SCORE	4	3	2	1	NS
EVIDENCE/ELABORATION	The response provides thorough elaboration of the support/evidence for the 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 source material is integrated and relevant, yet may be general	• some evidence (facts and details) from the source material may be weakly integrated, imprecise, or 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 • effective, appropriate style enhances content	• vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose • generally appropriate style is evident	• vocabulary use is uneven or somewhat ineffective for the audience and purpose • inconsistent or weak attempt to create appropriate style	• vocabulary is limited or ineffective for the audience and purpose • little or no evidence of appropriate style	

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

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

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.



NARRATIVE GRADES 3-8

- IDEAS
- ORGANIZATION
- VOICE
- WORD CHOICE
- SENT. FLUENCY
- CONVENTIONS

SCORE	4	3	2	1	NS
ORGANIZATION/PURPOSE	The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, is fully sustained and the focus is clear and maintained throughout: • an effective plot helps to create a sense of unity and completeness • effectively establishes a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view* • consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas; strong connection between and among ideas • natural, logical sequence of events from beginning to end • effective opening and closure for audience and purpose	The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, is adequately sustained, and the focus is adequate and generally maintained: • an evident plot helps to create a sense of unity and completeness, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected • adequately establishes a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view* • adequate use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas • adequate sequence of events from beginning to end • adequate opening and closure for audience and purpose	The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, is somewhat sustained and may have an uneven focus: • there may be an inconsistent plot, and/or flaws may be evident • unevenly or minimally establishes a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view* • uneven use of appropriate transitional strategies and/or little variety • weak or uneven sequence of events • opening and closure, if present, are weak	The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, may be maintained but may provide little or no focus: • there is little or no discernible plot or there may just be a series of events • may be brief or there is little to no attempt to establish a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view* • few or no appropriate transitional strategies may be evident and may cause confusion • little or no organization of an event sequence; frequent extraneous ideas and/or a major drift may be evident • opening and/or closure may be missing or unsatisfactory	• Insufficient (includes copied text) • In a language other than English • Off-topic • Off-purpose

*point of view begins at grade 7

SCORE	4	3	2	1	NS
DEVELOPMENT/ELABORATION	The narrative, real or imagined, provides thorough, effective elaboration using relevant details, dialogue, and/or description: • experiences, characters, setting and/or events are clearly developed • connections to source materials may enhance the narrative • effective use of a variety of narrative techniques that advance the story or illustrate the experience • effective use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language that clearly advances the purpose • effective, appropriate style enhances the narration	The narrative, real or imagined, provides adequate elaboration using details, dialogue, and/or description: • experiences, characters, setting, and/or events are adequately developed • connections to source materials may contribute to the narrative • adequate use of a variety of narrative techniques that generally advance the story or illustrate the experience • adequate use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language that generally advances the purpose • generally appropriate style is evident	The narrative, real or imagined, provides uneven, cursory elaboration using partial and uneven details, dialogue, and/or description: • experiences, characters, setting, and/or events are unevenly developed • connections to source materials may be ineffective, awkward, or vague but do not interfere with the narrative • narrative techniques are uneven and inconsistent • partial or weak use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language that may not advance the purpose • inconsistent or weak attempt to create appropriate style	The narrative, real or imagined, provides minimal elaboration using few or no details, dialogue, and/or description: • experiences, characters, setting, and/or events may be vague, lack clarity, or confusing • connections to source materials, if evident, may detract from the narrative • use of narrative techniques may be minimal, absent, incorrect, or irrelevant • may have little or no use of sensory, concrete, or figurative language; language does not advance and may interfere with the purpose • little or no evidence of appropriate style	• Insufficient (includes copied text) • In a language other than English • Off-topic • Off-purpose

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