

Rubric for Information Writing—Sixth Grade

	Grade 4 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 5 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 6 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 7 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE								
Overall	The writer taught readers different things about a subject. He put facts, details, quotes, and ideas into each part of his writing.	Mid-level	The writer used different kinds of information to teach about the subject. Sometimes she included little essays, stories, or how-to sections in her writing.	Mid-level	The writer conveyed ideas and information about a subject in a well-structured text. Sometimes she incorporated arguments, explanations, stories, or procedural passages.	Mid-level	The writer brought together ideas and information about a subject in a text that develops a subtopic and/or an idea. He incorporated a variety of text structures as needed, including argument, explanation, narrative, and procedural passages.	
Lead	The writer hooked her readers by explaining why the subject mattered, telling a surprising fact, or giving a big picture. She let readers know that she would teach them different things about a subject.	Mid-level	The writer wrote an introduction in which he helped readers get interested in and understand the subject. He let readers know the subtopics that he would later develop, as well as the sequence.	Mid-level	The writer wrote an introduction in which she interested readers, perhaps with a quote or significant fact. She let readers know the subtopics that she would develop later and how her text would unfold.	Mid-level	The writer interested the reader in the topic by explaining its significance or providing a compelling fact, statistic, or anecdote. He made it clear what parts of this topic his text would tackle, and how the ideas and information in the text would unfold.	
Transitions	The writer used words in each section that helped readers understand how one piece of information connected with others. If he wrote the section in sequence, he used words and phrases such as <i>before</i> , <i>later</i> , <i>next</i> , <i>then</i> , and <i>after</i> . If he organized the section in kinds or parts, he used words such as <i>another</i> , <i>also</i> , and <i>for example</i> .	Mid-level	When the writer wrote about results, she used words and phrases like <i>consequently</i> , <i>as a result</i> , and <i>because of this</i> . When she compared information, she used words and phrases such as <i>in contrast</i> , <i>by comparison</i> , and <i>especially</i> . In narrative parts, she used phrases that go with stories such as <i>a little later</i> and <i>three hours later</i> . In the sections that stated an opinion, she used words such as <i>but the most important reason</i> , <i>for example</i> , and <i>consequently</i> .	Mid-level	The writer used transitions to help readers understand how different bits of information and different parts of his writing fit together. He used transitions to help connect ideas, information, and examples, and to imply relationships such as when material exemplifies, adds to, is similar to, explains, is a result of, or contrasts. He used transitions such as <i>for instance</i> , <i>such as</i> , <i>similarly</i> , <i>therefore</i> , <i>as a result</i> , <i>in contrast to</i> , and <i>on the other hand</i> .	Mid-level	The writer used transitions to link concepts with related information. The transitions help the reader follow from part to part and make it clear when information is an example of a bigger idea, follows from an earlier point, introduces a new idea, or suggests a contrast. The writer used such transitions as <i>specifically</i> , <i>for instance</i> , <i>related to</i> , <i>just as</i> , <i>turning to</i> , <i>on the other hand</i> , and <i>however</i> .	

	Grade 4 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 5 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 6 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 7 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE (cont.)								
Ending	The writer wrote an ending in which she reminded readers of her subject and may either have suggested a follow-up action or left readers with a final insight. She added her thoughts, feelings, and questions about the subject at the end.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a conclusion in which he restated the main points and may have offered a final thought or question for readers to consider.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a conclusion in which she restated the important ideas and offered a final insight or implication for the reader to consider.	Mid-level	In his conclusion, the writer reinforced and built on the main point(s) in a way that made the entire piece a cohesive whole. The conclusion may have restated the main points, responded to them, or highlighted their significance.	
Organization	The writer grouped information into sections and used paragraphs and sometimes chapters to separate those sections. Each section had information that was mostly about the same thing. He may have used headings and subheadings.	Mid-level	The writer organized her writing into a sequence of separate sections. She may have used headings and subheadings to highlight the separate sections. The writer wrote each section according to an organizational plan shaped partly by the genre of the section.	Mid-level	The writer chose a focused subject. The writer used subheadings and/or clear introductory transitions to separate sections. The writer made deliberate choices about how to order sections and about the sequence of information and ideas within sections. He chose structures such as compare and contrast, categories, or claim and support to organize information and ideas. Some sections are written as argument, explanation, stories, or procedural passages.	Mid-level	The writer focused her writing on a subtopic or a particular point or two. The writer organized her piece into parts and used structures (claims and supports, problem/solution, sequence, etc.) to organize those parts (and perhaps the whole). The writer used introductions, topic sentences, transitions, formatting, and graphics, where appropriate, to clarify the structure of the piece and to highlight main points.	
								TOTAL:

	Grade 4 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 5 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 6 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 7 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
DEVELOPMENT								
Elaboration*	<p>The writer taught her readers different things about the subject. She chose those subtopics because they were important and interesting.</p> <p>The writer included different kinds of facts and details such as numbers, names, and examples.</p> <p>The writer got her information from talking to people, reading books, and from her own knowledge and observations.</p> <p>The writer made choices about organization, perhaps using compare/contrast, cause/effect, or pro/con. She may have used diagrams, charts, headings, bold words, and definition boxes to help teach her readers.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer explained different aspects of a subject. She included a variety of information such as examples, details, dates, and quotes.</p> <p>The writer used trusted sources and gave credit when appropriate. She made sure to research any details that would add to her writing.</p> <p>The writer worked to make her information understandable to readers. To do this, she referred to earlier parts of her text or summarized background information. The writer let readers know when she was discussing facts and when she was offering her own thinking.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer included varied kinds of information such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions.</p> <p>The writer used trusted sources and information from authorities on the topic and gave the sources credit.</p> <p>The writer worked to make his information understandable and interesting. To do this, he referred to earlier parts of his text, summarized background information, raised questions, or considered possible implications.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer included varied kinds of information such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. She analyzed or explained the information, showing how the information fits with her key points or subtopics, including graphics where appropriate.</p> <p>The writer consistently incorporated and cited sources.</p> <p>The writer worked to make her topic compelling as well as understandable. She brought out why it mattered and why the audience should care about it.</p>	
Craft*	<p>The reader made deliberate word choices to teach his readers. He may have done this by using and repeating key words about his topic.</p> <p>When it felt right to do so, the writer chose interesting comparisons and used figurative language to clarify his points.</p> <p>The writer made choices about which information was best to include or not include.</p> <p>The writer used a teaching tone. To do so, he may have used phrases such as <i>that means</i>, <i>what that really means is</i>, and <i>let me explain</i>.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer made deliberate word choices to have an effect on his readers. He used the vocabulary of experts and explained the key terms.</p> <p>The writer worked to include the exact phrase, comparison, or image to explain information and concepts.</p> <p>The writer not only made choices about which details and facts to include but also made choices about how to convey his information so it would make sense to readers. The writer blended storytelling, summary, and other genres as needed and used text features. (continues)</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer chose her words carefully to explain her information and ideas and to have an effect on the reader.</p> <p>The writer worked to include concrete details, comparisons, and/or images to explain information and concepts and to keep her reader engaged.</p> <p>The writer incorporated domain-specific vocabulary and, when necessary, she explained terms to readers, providing context clues, parenthetical explanations, text boxes, or similar support.</p> <p>The writer supported readers' learning by using a teaching tone and a formal style, as appropriate.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used words purposefully to affect meaning and tone.</p> <p>The writer chose precise words and used metaphors, anecdotes, images, or comparisons to explain what he meant.</p> <p>The writer included domain-specific, technical vocabulary, and defined these when appropriate.</p> <p>The writer used a formal tone, but varied it appropriately to engage the reader.</p>	

*Elaboration and Craft are double-weighted categories: Whatever score a student would get in these categories is worth double the amount of points. For example, if a student exceeds expectations in Elaboration, then that student would receive 8 points instead of 4 points. If a student meets standards in Elaboration, then that student would receive 6 points instead of 3 points.

	Grade 4 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 5 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 6 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 7 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
DEVELOPMENT (cont.)								
Craft (cont.)			The writer used a consistent, inviting, teaching tone and varied his sentences to help readers take in and understand the information.					
								TOTAL:
CONVENTIONS								
Spelling	The writer used what she knew about word families and spelling rules to help her spell and edit. She used the word wall and dictionaries to help her when needed.	Mid-level	The writer used what she knew about word families and spelling rules to help her spell and edit. She used the word wall and dictionaries to help her when needed.	Mid-level	The writer used resources to be sure the words in his writing were spelled correctly, including technical vocabulary.	Mid-level	The writer checked spelling of technical, domain-specific words and was careful with the spelling of citations.	
Punctuation and Sentence Structure	When writing long, complex sentences, the writer used commas to make them clear and correct.	Mid-level	The writer used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences (<i>for example, as you might know,</i>). The writer used a variety of punctuation to fix any run-on sentences. He used punctuation to cite his sources.		The writer used punctuation such as dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons to help her include extra information and explanation in some of her sentences. The writer accurately cited her references, using appropriate punctuation.		The writer varied his sentence structure, sometimes using simple and sometimes using complex sentence structure. The writer used internal punctuation appropriately within sentences and when citing sources, including commas, dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons.	
								TOTAL:

Teachers, we created these rubrics so you will have your own place to pull together scores of student work. You can use these assessments immediately after giving the on-demands and also for self-assessment and setting goals.

Scoring Guide

In each row, circle the descriptor in the column that matches the student work. Scores in the categories of Elaboration and Craft are worth double the point value (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 instead of 1. 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, or 4).

Total the number of points and then track students' progress by seeing when the total points increase.

Total score: _____

If you want to translate this score into a grade, you can use the provided table to score each student on a scale of 0–4.

Number of Points	Scaled Score
1–11	1
11.5–16.5	1.5
17–22	2
22.5–27.5	2.5
28–33	3
33.5–38.5	3.5
39–44	4

Rubric for Argument Writing—Sixth Grade

	Grade 4 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 5 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 6 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 7 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE								
Overall	The writer made a claim about a topic or a text and tried to support his reasons.	Mid-level	The writer made a claim or thesis on a topic or text, supported it with reasons, and provided a variety of evidence for each reason.	Mid-level	The writer explained the topic/text and staked out a position that can be supported by a variety of trustworthy sources. Each part of the text built her argument, and led to a conclusion.	Mid-level	The writer laid out a well-supported argument and made it clear that this argument is part of a bigger conversation about a topic/text. He acknowledged positions on the topic or text that might disagree with his own position but still showed why his position makes sense.	
Lead	The writer wrote a few sentences to hook her readers, perhaps by asking a question, explaining why the topic mattered, telling a surprising fact, or giving background information. The writer stated her claim.	Mid-level	The writer wrote an introduction that led to a claim or thesis and got his readers to care about his opinion. The writer got his readers to care by not only including a cool fact or jazzy question, but also by telling readers what was significant in or around the topic. The writer worked to find the precise words to state his claim; he let readers know the reasons he would develop later.	Mid-level	The writer wrote an introduction to interest readers and help them understand and care about a topic or text. She thought backward between the piece and the introduction to make sure that the introduction would fit with the whole. Not only did the writer clearly state her claim, she also told her readers how her text would unfold.	Mid-level	The writer interested readers in his argument and helped them to understand the backstory behind it. He gave the backstory in a way that got readers ready to see his point. The writer made it clear to readers what his piece would argue and forecasted the parts of his argument.	
Transitions	The writer used words and phrases to glue parts of his piece together. He used phrases such as <i>for example</i> , <i>another example</i> , <i>one time</i> , and <i>for instance</i> to show when he was shifting from saying reasons to giving evidence and <i>in addition to</i> , <i>also</i> , and <i>another</i> to show when he wanted to make a new point.	Mid-level	The writer used transition words and phrases to connect evidence back to her reasons using phrases such as <i>this shows that</i> . . . The writer helped readers follow her thinking with phrases such as <i>another reason</i> and <i>the most important reason</i> . She used phrases such as <i>consequently</i> and <i>because of</i> to show what happened. The writer used words such as <i>specifically</i> and <i>in particular</i> to be more precise.	Mid-level	The writer used transitions to help readers understand how the different parts of his piece fit together to explain and support his argument. The writer used transitions to help connect claim(s), reasons, and evidence and to imply relationships, such as when material exemplifies, adds to, is similar to, explains, is a result of, or contrasts. The writer used transitions such as <i>for instance</i> , <i>in addition</i> , <i>one reason</i> , <i>furthermore</i> , <i>according to</i> , <i>this evidence suggests</i> , and <i>thus we can say that</i> .	Mid-level	The writer used transitions to link the parts of her argument. The transitions help readers follow from part to part and make it clear when she is stating a claim or counterclaim, giving a reason, or offering or analyzing evidence. These transitions include terms such as <i>the text states</i> , <i>as</i> , <i>this means</i> , <i>another reason</i> , <i>some people may say</i> , <i>but</i> , <i>nevertheless</i> , and <i>on the other hand</i> .	

	Grade 4 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 5 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 6 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 7 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE (cont.)								
Ending	The writer wrote an ending for her piece in which she restated and reflected on her claim, perhaps suggesting an action or response based on what she had written.	Mid-level	The writer worked on a conclusion in which he connected back to and highlighted what the text was mainly about, not just the preceding paragraph.	Mid-level	In the conclusion, the writer restated the important points and offered a final insight or implication for readers to consider. The ending strengthened the overall argument.	Mid-level	In his conclusion, the writer reinforced and built on the main point(s) in a way that made the entire text a cohesive whole. The conclusion reiterated how the support for his claim outweighed the counterclaim(s), restated the main points, responded to them, or highlighted their significance.	
Organization	The writer separated sections of information using paragraphs.	Mid-level	The writer grouped information and related ideas into paragraphs. She put the parts of her writing in the order that most suited her purpose and helped her prove her reasons and claim.	Mid-level	The writer organized his argument into sections: he arranged reasons and evidence purposefully, leading readers from one claim or reason to another. The order of the sections and the internal structure of each section made sense.	Mid-level	The writer purposely arranged parts of her piece to suit her purpose and to lead readers from one claim, counterclaim, reason, or piece of evidence to another. The writer used topic sentences, transitions, and formatting (where appropriate) to clarify the structure of the piece and to highlight her main points.	
								TOTAL:

	Grade 4 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 5 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 6 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 7 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
DEVELOPMENT								
Elaboration*	<p>The writer gave reasons to support her opinion. She chose the reasons to convince her readers.</p> <p>The writer included examples and information to support her reasons, perhaps from a text, her knowledge, or her life.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer gave reasons to support his opinion that were parallel and did not overlap. He put them in an order that he thought would be most convincing.</p> <p>The writer included evidence such as facts, examples, quotations, micro-stories, and information to support his claim.</p> <p>The writer discussed and unpacked the way that the evidence went with the claim.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer included and arranged a variety of evidence such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions.</p> <p>The writer used trusted sources and information from experts and gave the sources credit.</p> <p>The writer worked to explain how the reasons and evidence she gave supported her claim(s) and strengthened her argument. To do this the writer referred to earlier parts of her text, summarized background information, raised questions, or highlighted possible implications.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer included varied kinds of evidence such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. He analyzed or explained the reasons and evidence, showing how they fit with his claim(s) and built his argument.</p> <p>The writer consistently incorporated and cited trustworthy sources.</p> <p>The writer wrote about another possible position or positions—a different claim or claims about this subject—and explained why the evidence for his position outweighed the counterclaim(s).</p> <p>The writer worked to make his argument compelling as well as understandable. He brought out why it mattered and why the audience should care about it.</p>	
Craft*	<p>The writer made deliberate word choices to convince his readers, perhaps by emphasizing or repeating words that would make his readers feel emotions.</p> <p>If it felt right to do so, the writer chose precise details and facts to help make his points and used figurative language to draw the readers into his line of thought.</p> <p>The writer made choices about which evidence was best to include or not include to support his points.</p> <p>The writer used a convincing tone.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer made deliberate word choices to have an effect on her readers.</p> <p>The writer reached for the precise phrase, metaphor, or image that would convey her ideas.</p> <p>The writer made choices about how to angle her evidence to support her points.</p> <p>When it seemed right to do so, the writer tried to use a scholarly voice and varied her sentences to create the pace and tone of the different sections of her piece.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer chose his words carefully to support his argument and to have an effect on his reader.</p> <p>The writer worked to include concrete details, comparisons, and/or images to convey his ideas, build his argument, and keep his reader engaged.</p> <p>When necessary, the writer explained terms to readers, providing definitions, context clues or parenthetical explanations.</p> <p>The writer made his piece sound serious.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used words purposefully to affect meaning and tone.</p> <p>The writer chose precise words and used metaphors, images, or comparisons to explain what she meant.</p> <p>The writer included domain-specific, technical vocabulary relevant to her argument and audience and defined these when appropriate.</p> <p>The writer used a formal tone, but varied it appropriately to engage the reader.</p>	
								TOTAL:

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CONVENTIONS								
Spelling	The writer used what she knew about word families and spelling rules to help her spell and edit. She used the word wall and dictionaries to help her when needed.	Mid-level	The writer used what he knew about word patterns to spell correctly and he used references to help him spell words when needed. The writer made sure to correctly spell words that were important to his topic.	Mid-level	The writer used resources to be sure the words in her writing were spelled correctly, including returning to sources to check spelling.	Mid-level	The writer matched the spelling of technical vocabulary to that found in resources and text evidence. He spelled material in citations correctly.	
Punctuation and Sentence Structure	When writing long, complex sentences, the writer used commas to make them clear and correct. The writer used periods to fix his run-on sentences.	Mid-level	The writer used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences (<i>At this time in history, . . .</i>). The writer used a variety of punctuation to fix any run-on sentences. The writer used punctuation to cite her sources.	Mid-level	The writer used punctuation such as dashes, colons, parentheses, and semicolons to help him include or connect information in some of his sentences. The writer punctuated quotes and citations accurately.	Mid-level	The writer varied her sentence structure, sometimes using simple and sometimes using complex sentence structure. The writer used internal punctuation appropriately within sentences and when citing sources, including commas, dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons.	
								TOTAL:

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Rubric for Narrative Writing—Sixth Grade								
	Grade 4 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 5 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 6 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 7 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE								
Overall	The writer wrote the important part of an event bit by bit and took out unimportant parts.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a story of an important moment. It reads like a story, even though it might be a true account.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a story that has tension, resolution, and realistic characters, and also conveys an idea, lesson, or theme.	Mid-level	The writer created a narrative that has realistic characters, tension, and change, and that not only conveys, but also develops an idea, lesson, or theme.	
Lead	The writer wrote a beginning in which she showed what was happening and where, getting readers into the world of the story.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a beginning in which she not only showed what was happening and where, but also gave some clues to what would later become a problem for the main character.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a beginning that not only set the plot/story in motion, but also hinted at the larger meaning the story would convey. It introduced the problem, set the stage for the lesson that would be learned, or showed how the character relates to the setting in a way that matters in the story.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a beginning that not only sets the story in motion, it also grounds it in a place or situation. It includes details that will later be important to the story. These details might point to the central issue or conflict, show how story elements connect, or hint at key character traits.	
Transitions	The writer showed how much time went by with words and phrases that mark time such as <i>just then</i> and <i>suddenly</i> (to show when things happened quickly) or <i>after a while</i> and <i>a little later</i> (to show when a little time passed).	Mid-level	The writer used transitional phrases to show passage of time in complicated ways, perhaps by showing things happening at the same time (<i>meanwhile, at the same time</i>) or flashback and flash-forward (<i>early that morning, three hours later</i>).	Mid-level	The writer not only used transitional phrases and clauses to signal complicated changes in time, she also used them to alert her readers to changes in the setting, tone, mood, point of view, or time in the story (such as <i>suddenly, unlike before, if only she had known</i>).	Mid-level	The writer used transitional phrases and clauses to connect what happened to why it happened (<i>If he hadn't . . . he might not have, because of, although, little did she know that</i>).	

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STRUCTURE (cont.)								
Ending	The writer wrote an ending that connected to the beginning or the middle of the story. The writer used action, dialogue, or feeling to bring her story to a close.	Mid-level	The writer wrote an ending that connected to the main part of the story. The character said, did, or realized something at the end that came from what happened previously in the story. The writer gave readers a sense of closure.	Mid-level	The writer wrote an ending that connected to what the story is really about. She gave the reader a sense of closure by showing a new realization or insight or a change in the character/ narrator. The writer showed this through dialogue, action, inner thinking, or small actions the character takes.	Mid-level	The writer gave the reader a sense of closure by showing clearly how the character or place changed or the problem was resolved. If there was no resolution, he gave details to leave the reader thinking about a central idea or theme.	
Organization	The writer used paragraphs to separate the different parts or times of the story or to show when a new character was speaking.	Mid-level	The writer used paragraphs to separate different parts or times in the story and to show when a new character was speaking. Some parts of the story are longer and more developed than others.	Mid-level	The writer used paragraphs purposefully, perhaps to show time and setting changes, new parts of the story, or to create suspense for readers. She created a logical, clear sequence of events.	Mid-level	The writer used a traditional—or slightly modified—story structure (rising action, conflict, falling action) to best bring out the meaning of his story and reach his audience.	
								TOTAL:
DEVELOPMENT								
Elaboration*	The writer added more to the heart of her story, including not only actions and dialogue but also thoughts and feelings.	Mid-level	The writer developed characters, setting, and plot throughout this story, especially the heart of the story. To do this, she used a blend of description, action, dialogue, and thinking.	Mid-level	The writer developed realistic characters, and developed the details, action, dialogue, and internal thinking that contribute to the deeper meaning of the story.	Mid-level	The writer developed the action, dialogue, details, and inner thinking to convey an issue, idea, or lesson. He showed what is specific about the central character. The writer developed the setting and the characters' relationship to the setting.	

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DEVELOPMENT (cont.)								
Craft*	<p>The writer showed why characters did what they did by including their thinking.</p> <p>The writer made some parts of the story go quickly, some slowly.</p> <p>The writer included precise and sometimes sensory details and used figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification) to bring his story to life.</p> <p>The writer used a storytelling voice and conveyed the emotion or tone of his story through description, phrases, dialogue, and thoughts.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer showed why characters act and speak as they do by including their thinking and their responses to what happened.</p> <p>The writer slowed down the heart of the story. She made less important parts shorter and less detailed and blended storytelling and summary as needed.</p> <p>The writer included precise details and used figurative language so that readers could picture the setting, characters, and events. She used some objects or actions as symbols to bring forth her meaning.</p> <p>The writer varied her sentences to create the pace and tone of her narrative.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer developed some relationship between characters to show <i>why</i> they act and speak as they do. He told the internal, as well as the external story.</p> <p>The writer wove together precise descriptions, figurative language, and some symbolism to help readers picture the setting, actions, and events and to bring forth meaning.</p> <p>The writer used language that fit his story's meaning and context (e.g., different characters use different kinds of language).</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer developed contradictions and change in characters and situations.</p> <p>The writer used specific details and figurative language to help the reader understand the place and the mood (making an object or place symbolic, using the weather, using repetition).</p> <p>The writer varied her tone to match the variety of emotions experienced by the characters across the story.</p>	
								TOTAL:
CONVENTIONS								
Spelling	<p>The writer used what she knew about word families and spelling rules to help her spell and edit. She used the word wall and dictionaries when needed.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used what he knows about word families and spelling rules to help him spell and edit. He used the word wall and dictionaries when needed.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used resources to be sure the words in her writing are spelled correctly.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used the Internet and other sources at hand to check spelling of literary and high-frequency words.</p>	

*Elaboration and Craft are double-weighted categories: Whatever score a student would get in these categories is worth double the amount of points. For example, if a student exceeds expectations in Elaboration, then that student would receive 8 points instead of 4 points. If a student meets standards in Elaboration, then that student would receive 6 points instead of 3 points.

	Grade 4 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 5 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 6 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 7 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
CONVENTIONS (cont.)								
Punctuation and Sentence Structure	When writing long, complex sentences, the writer used commas to make them clear and correct.	Mid-level	The writer used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences (<i>one day at the park</i> ,). She also used commas to show when a character is talking directly to someone, <i>such as "Are you mad, Mom?"</i>	Mid-level	The writer used punctuation such as dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons to help him include extra detail and explanation in some of his sentences. The writer used commas and quotation marks or italics or some other way to make clear when characters are speaking.	Mid-level	The writer varied her sentence structure, sometimes using simple and sometimes using complex sentence structure. The writer punctuated dialogue sections accurately.	
								TOTAL:

Teachers, we created these rubrics so you will have your own place to pull together scores of student work. You can use these assessments immediately after giving the on-demands and also for self-assessment and setting goals.

Scoring Guide

In each row, circle the descriptor in the column that matches the student work. Scores in the categories of Elaboration and Craft are worth double the point value (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 instead of 1. 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, or 4).

Total the number of points and then track students' progress by seeing when the total points increase.

Total score: _____

If you want to translate this score into a grade, you can use the provided table to score each student on a scale of 0–4.

Number of Points	Scaled Score
1–11	1
11.5–16.5	1.5
17–22	2
22.5–27.5	2.5
28–33	3
33.5–38.5	3.5
39–44	4

Name: _____

Date: _____

Rubric for Information Writing—Seventh Grade

	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE								
Overall	The writer used different kinds of information to teach about the subject. Sometimes she included little essays, stories, or how-to sections in her writing.	Mid-level	The writer conveyed ideas and information about a subject in a well-structured text. Sometimes she incorporated arguments, explanations, stories, or procedural passages.	Mid-level	The writer brought together ideas and information about a subject in a text that develops a subtopic and/or an idea. He incorporated a variety of text structures as needed, including argument, explanation, narrative, and procedural passages.	Mid-level	The writer discussed key concepts within a topic and made it clear why these concepts are important. She provided examples with relevant information, using a variety of text structures and formatting, as needed, to make concepts and information compelling and accessible.	
Lead	The writer wrote an introduction in which he helped readers get interested in and understand the subject. He let readers know the subtopics that he would develop later as well as the sequence.	Mid-level	The writer wrote an introduction in which she interested readers, perhaps with a quote or significant fact. She let readers know the subtopics that she would develop later and how her text would unfold.	Mid-level	The writer interested the reader in the topic by explaining its significance or providing a compelling fact, statistic, or anecdote. He made it clear what parts of this topic his text would tackle, and how the ideas and information in the text would unfold.	Mid-level	After hooking the reader, the writer provided context, introduced a focus/main idea, and oriented readers to the overall structure of the text (compare/contrast, cause and effect, claims and support, classification, etc.).	

	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE (cont.)								
Transitions	When the writer wrote about results, she used words and phrases such as <i>consequently</i> , <i>as a result</i> , and <i>because of this</i> . When she compared information, she used phrases such as <i>in contrast</i> , <i>by comparison</i> , and <i>especially</i> . In narrative parts, she used phrases that go with stories such as <i>a little later</i> and <i>three hours later</i> . If she wrote sections that stated an opinion, she used words such as <i>but the most important reason</i> , <i>for example</i> , and <i>consequently</i> .	Mid-level	The writer used transitions to help readers understand how different bits of information and different parts of his writing fit together. He used transitions to help connect ideas, information, and examples, and to imply relationships such as when material exemplifies, adds to, is similar to, explains, is a result of, or contrasts. He used transitions such as <i>for instance</i> , <i>such as</i> , <i>similarly</i> , <i>therefore</i> , <i>as a result</i> , <i>in contrast to</i> , and <i>on the other hand</i> .	Mid-level	The writer used transitions to link concepts with related information. The transitions help the reader follow from part to part and make it clear when information is an example of a bigger idea, follows from an earlier point, introduces a new idea, or suggests a contrast. The writer used such transitions as <i>specifically</i> , <i>for instance</i> , <i>related to</i> , <i>just as</i> , <i>turning to</i> , <i>on the other hand</i> , and <i>however</i> .	Mid-level	The writer used transitions to lead the reader across parts of the text and to help the reader note how parts of the text relate back to earlier parts, using phrases such as <i>just as</i> , <i>returning to</i> , <i>as we saw earlier</i> , <i>similarly to</i> , <i>unlike</i> , and <i>yet</i> .	
Ending	The writer wrote a conclusion in which he restated the main points and may have offered a final thought or question for readers to consider.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a conclusion in which she restated the important ideas and offered a final insight or implication for the reader to consider.	Mid-level	In his conclusion, the writer reinforced and built on the main point(s) in a way that made the entire piece a cohesive whole. The conclusion may have restated the main points, responded to them, or highlighted their significance.	Mid-level	In her conclusion, the writer suggested implications, built up the significance of her main points, and/or alluded to potential challenges.	

	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE (cont.)								
Organization	<p>The writer organized her writing into a sequence of separate sections. She may have used headings and subheadings to highlight the separate sections.</p> <p>The writer wrote each section according to an organizational plan shaped partly by the genre of the section.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer chose a focused subject.</p> <p>The writer used subheadings and/or clear introductory transitions to separate sections.</p> <p>The writer made deliberate choices about how to order sections and about the sequence of information and ideas within sections. He chose structures such as compare and contrast, categories, or claim and support to organize information and ideas. Some sections are written as argument, explanation, stories, or procedural passages.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer focused her writing on a subtopic or a particular point or two.</p> <p>The writer organized her piece into parts and used structures (claims and supports, problem/solution, sequence, etc.) to organize those parts (and perhaps the whole).</p> <p>The writer used introductions, topic sentences, transitions, formatting, and graphics, where appropriate, to clarify the structure of the piece and to highlight main points.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer focused on key concepts within the topic.</p> <p>The writer organized information and ideas into broader categories and clarified how sections are ordered and connected.</p> <p>The writer used his organizational structure to help the reader's comprehension, perhaps holding back details until first conveying broader points, or only offering a second perspective after the first was established.</p> <p>The sections and information built on each other throughout the piece: concepts and examples were introduced in a logical fashion.</p>	
								TOTAL:
DEVELOPMENT								
Elaboration*	<p>The writer explained different aspects of a subject. He included a variety of information such as examples, details, dates, and quotes.</p> <p>The writer used trusted sources and gave credit when appropriate. He made sure to research any details that would add to his writing.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer included varied kinds of information such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions.</p> <p>The writer used trusted sources and information from authorities on the topic and gave the sources credit.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer included varied kinds of information such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. She analyzed or explained the information, showing how the information fits with her key points or subtopics, including graphics where appropriate.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer brought out the parts of the topic that were most significant to his audience and to his point(s).</p> <p>The writer analyzed the relevance of his information and made sure the information supported the major concepts.</p>	

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	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
DEVELOPMENT (cont.)								
Elaboration (cont.)	The writer worked to make his information understandable to readers. To do this, he may have referred to earlier parts of his text and summarized background information. He let readers know when he was discussing facts and when he was offering his own opinion.	Mid-level	The writer worked to make his information understandable and interesting. To do this, he referred to earlier parts of his text, summarized background information, raised questions, or considered possible implications.	Mid-level	The writer consistently incorporated and cited sources. The writer worked to make her topic compelling as well as understandable. She brought out why it mattered and why the audience should care about it.	Mid-level	The writer incorporated trustworthy and significant sources, and explained if and when a source seemed problematic.	
Craft*	The writer made deliberate word choices to have an effect on her readers. She used the vocabulary of experts and explained key terms. The writer not only made choices about which details and facts to include but also made choices about how to convey her information so it would make sense to readers. She blended storytelling, summary, and other genres as needed and used text features. The writer used a consistent, inviting teaching tone and varied her sentences to help readers take in and understand the information.	Mid-level	The writer chose her words carefully to explain her information and ideas and to have an effect on the reader. The writer worked to include concrete details, comparisons, and/or images to explain information and concepts and to keep her reader engaged. The writer incorporated domain-specific vocabulary and, when necessary, she explained terms to readers, providing context clues, parenthetical explanations, text boxes, or similar support. The writer supported readers' learning by using a teaching tone and a formal style, as appropriate.	Mid-level	The writer used words purposefully to affect meaning and tone. The writer chose precise words and used metaphors, anecdotes, images, or comparisons to explain what he meant. The writer included domain-specific, technical vocabulary, and defined these when appropriate. The writer used a formal tone, but varied it appropriately to engage the reader.	Mid-level	The writer intended to affect her reader in particular ways—to make the reader think, realize, or feel a particular way—and she chose language to do that. The writer consistently used comparisons, analogies, vivid examples, and/or anecdotes to help readers grasp the meaning of concepts and the significance of information. The writer varied her tone to match the different purposes of different sections of her piece.	
								TOTAL:

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	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS								
Spelling	The writer used what he knew about word families and spelling rules to help him spell and edit. He used the word wall and dictionaries to help him when needed.	Mid-level	The writer used resources to be sure the words in his writing are spelled correctly, including technical vocabulary.	Mid-level	The writer checked spelling of technical, domain-specific words and was careful with the spelling of citations.	Mid-level	The writer checked spelling of technical, domain-specific words and was careful with the spelling and details of citations, excerpts, quotations, and statistics.	
Punctuation and Sentence Structure	The writer used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences (for example, <i>As you might know</i>). The writer used a variety of punctuation to fix any run-on sentences. She used punctuation to cite her sources.	Mid-level	The writer used punctuation such as dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons to help her include extra information and explanation in some of her sentences. The writer accurately cited her references, using appropriate punctuation.	Mid-level	The writer varied his sentence structure, sometimes using simple and sometimes using complex sentence structure. The writer used internal punctuation appropriately within sentences and when citing sources, including commas, dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons.	Mid-level	The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout her piece. The writer used verb tenses that shift when needed (as in when moving from a citation back to her own writing), deciding between active and passive voice where appropriate. The writer used internal punctuation effectively, including the use of ellipses to accurately insert excerpts from sources.	
								TOTAL:

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Scoring Guide

In each row, circle the descriptor in the column that matches the student work. Scores in the categories of Elaboration and Craft are worth double the point value (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 instead of 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, or 4).

Total the number of points and then track students' progress by seeing when the total points increase.

Total score: _____

If you want to translate this score into a grade, you can use the provided table to score each student on a scale of 0–4.

Number of Points	Scaled Score
1–11	1
11.5–16.5	1.5
17–22	2
22.5–27.5	2.5
28–33	3
33.5–38.5	3.5
39–44	4

Name: _____ Date: _____

Rubric for Argument Writing—Seventh Grade

	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE								
Overall	The writer made a claim or thesis on a topic or text, supported it with reasons, and provided a variety of evidence for each reason.	Mid-level	The writer explained the topic/text and staked out a position that can be supported by a variety of trustworthy sources. Each part of the text built her argument, and led to a conclusion.	Mid-level	The writer laid out a well-supported argument and made it clear that this argument is part of a bigger conversation about a topic/text. He acknowledged positions on the topic or text that might disagree with his own position, but still showed why his position makes sense.	Mid-level	The writer laid out an argument about a topic/text and made it clear why her particular argument is important and valid. She stayed fair to those who might disagree with her by describing how her position is one of several and making it clear where her position stands in relation to others.	
Lead	The writer wrote an introduction that led to a claim or thesis and got his readers to care about his opinion. He got readers to care by not only including a cool fact or jazzy question, but also figuring out what was significant in or around the topic and giving readers information about what was significant about the topic. The writer worked to find the precise words to state his claim; he let readers know the reasons he would develop later.	Mid-level	The writer wrote an introduction to interest readers and help them understand and care about a topic or text. She thought backward between the piece and the introduction to make sure that the introduction would fit with the whole. Not only did the writer clearly state her claim, she also told her readers how her text would unfold.	Mid-level	The writer interested readers in his argument and helped them to understand the back story behind it. He gave the back story in a way that got readers ready to see his point. The writer made it clear to readers what his piece would argue and forecasted the parts of his argument.	Mid-level	After hooking her readers, the writer provided specific context for her own as well as another's position(s), introduced her position, and oriented readers to the overall line of argument she would develop.	

	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE (cont.)								
Transitions	<p>The writer used transition words and phrases to connect evidence back to her reasons using phrases such as <i>this shows that</i>. . .</p> <p>The writer helped readers follow her thinking with phrases such as <i>another reason</i> and <i>the most important reason</i>. She used phrases such as <i>consequently</i> and <i>because of</i> to show what happened.</p> <p>The writer used words such as <i>specifically</i> and <i>in particular</i> to be more precise.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used transitions to help readers understand how the different parts of his piece fit together to explain and support his argument.</p> <p>The writer used transitions to help connect claim(s), reasons, and evidence and to imply relationships, such as when material exemplifies, adds to, is similar to, explains, is a result of, or contrasts. The writer used transitions such as <i>for instance</i>, <i>in addition</i>, <i>one reason</i>, <i>furthermore</i>, <i>according to</i>, <i>this evidence suggests</i>, and <i>thus we can say that</i>.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used transitions to link the parts of her argument. The transitions help readers follow from part to part and make it clear when she is stating a claim or counterclaim, giving a reason, or offering or analyzing evidence. These transitions include terms such as <i>the text states</i>, <i>as</i>, <i>this means</i>, <i>another reason</i>, <i>some people may say</i>, <i>but</i>, <i>nevertheless</i>, and <i>on the other hand</i>.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used transitions to lead readers across parts of the text and to help them note how parts of the text relate back to earlier parts. He used phrases such as <i>now some argue</i>, <i>while this may be true</i>, <i>it is also the case that</i>, <i>despite this</i>, <i>as stated earlier</i>, <i>taken as a whole</i>, <i>this is significant because</i>, <i>the evidence points to</i>, and <i>by doing so</i>.</p>	
Ending	<p>The writer worked on a conclusion in which he connected back to and highlighted what the text was mainly about, not just the preceding paragraph.</p>	Mid-level	<p>In the conclusion, the writer restated the important points and offered a final insight or implication for readers to consider. The ending strengthened the overall argument.</p>	Mid-level	<p>In his conclusion, the writer reinforced and built on the main point(s) in a way that made the entire text a cohesive whole. The conclusion reiterated how the support for his claim outweighed the counterclaim(s), restated the main points, responded to them, or highlighted their significance.</p>	Mid-level	<p>In the conclusion, the writer described the significance of her argument for stakeholders or offered additional insights, implications, questions, or challenges.</p>	
Organization	<p>The writer grouped information and related ideas into paragraphs. She put the parts of her writing in the order that most suited her purpose and helped her prove her reasons and claim.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer organized his argument into sections: he arranged reasons and evidence purposefully, leading readers from one claim or reason to another.</p> <p>The order of the sections and the internal structure of each section made sense.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer purposely arranged parts of her piece to suit her purpose and to lead readers from one claim, counterclaim, reason, or piece of evidence to another.</p> <p>The writer used topic sentences, transitions, and formatting (where appropriate) to clarify the structure of the piece and to highlight her main points.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer organized claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence into sections and clarified how sections are connected.</p> <p>The writer created an organizational structure that supports a reader's growing understanding across the whole of his argument, arranging the sections to build on each other in a logical, compelling fashion.</p>	
								TOTAL:

	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
DEVELOPMENT								
Elaboration*	<p>The writer gave reasons to support his opinion that were parallel and did not overlap. He put them in an order that he thought would be most convincing.</p> <p>The writer included evidence such as facts, examples, quotations, micro-stories, and information to support his claim.</p> <p>The writer discussed and unpacked the way that the evidence went with the claim.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer included and arranged a variety of evidence such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions.</p> <p>The writer used trusted sources and information from experts and gave the sources credit.</p> <p>The writer worked to explain how the reasons and evidence she gave supported her claim(s) and strengthened her argument. To do this the writer referred to earlier parts of her text, summarized background information, raised questions, or highlighted possible implications.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer included varied kinds of evidence such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. He analyzed or explained the reasons and evidence, showing how they fit with his claim(s) and build his argument.</p> <p>The writer consistently incorporated and cited trustworthy sources.</p> <p>The writer wrote about another possible position or positions—a different claim or claims about this subject—and explained why the evidence for his position outweighed the counterclaim(s).</p> <p>The writer worked to make his argument compelling as well as understandable. He brought out why it mattered and why the audience should care about it.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer brought out the aspects of the argument that were most significant to her audience and to her overall purpose(s).</p> <p>The writer incorporated trustworthy and significant sources and explained if and when a source seemed problematic.</p> <p>The writer analyzed the relevance of the reasons and evidence for her claims as well as for the counterclaim(s) and helped readers understand each position. The writer made sure all of her analysis led readers to follow her line of argument.</p>	
Craft*	<p>The writer made deliberate word choices to have an effect on her readers.</p> <p>The writer reached for the precise phrase, metaphor, or image that would convey her ideas.</p> <p>The writer made choices about how to angle her evidence to support her points.</p> <p>When it seemed right to do so, the writer tried to use a scholarly voice and varied her sentences to create the pace and tone of the different sections of her piece.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer chose his words carefully to support his argument and to have an effect on his reader.</p> <p>The writer worked to include concrete details, comparisons, and/or images to convey his ideas, build his argument, and keep his reader engaged.</p> <p>When necessary, the writer explained terms to readers, providing definitions, context clues or parenthetical explanations.</p> <p>The writer made his piece sound serious.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used words purposefully to affect meaning and tone.</p> <p>The writer chose precise words and used metaphors, images, or comparisons to explain what she meant.</p> <p>The writer included domain-specific, technical vocabulary relevant to her argument and audience and defined these when appropriate.</p> <p>The writer used a formal tone, but varied it appropriately to engage the reader.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer intended to affect his reader in particular ways—to make the reader think, realize or feel a particular way—and he chose language to do that.</p> <p>The writer consistently used comparisons, analogies, vivid examples, anecdotes, or other rhetorical devices to help readers follow his thinking and grasp the meaning and significance of a point or a piece of evidence.</p> <p>The writer varied his tone to match the different purposes of different sections of his argument.</p>	
								TOTAL:

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	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS								
Spelling	The writer used what he knew about word patterns to spell correctly and he used reference to help him spell words when needed. He made sure to correctly spell words that were important to his topic.	Mid-level	The writer used resources to be sure the words in her writing were spelled correctly, including returning to sources to check spelling.	Mid-level	The writer matched the spelling of technical vocabulary to that found in resources and text evidence. He spelled material in citations correctly.	Mid-level	The writer spelled technical vocabulary and literary vocabulary accurately. She spelled material in citations according to sources, and spelled citations accurately.	
Punctuation and Sentence Structure	The writer used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences, for example, <i>At this time in history</i> , and <i>it was common to</i> The writer used a variety of punctuation to fix any run-on sentences. The writer used punctuation to cite her sources.	Mid-level	The writer used punctuation such as dashes, colons, parentheses, and semicolons to help him include or connect information in some of his sentences. The writer punctuated quotes and citations accurately.	Mid-level	The writer varied her sentence structure, sometimes using simple and sometimes using complex sentence structure. The writer used internal punctuation appropriately within sentences and when citing sources, including commas, dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons.	Mid-level	The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout his argument. The writer used verb tenses that shift when needed (as in when moving from a citation back to his own writing), deciding between active and passive voice where appropriate. The writer used internal punctuation effectively, including the use of ellipses to accurately insert excerpts from sources.	
								TOTAL:

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Scoring Guide

In each row, circle the descriptor in the column that matches the student work. Scores in the categories of Elaboration and Craft are worth double the point value (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 instead of 1. 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, or 4).

Total the number of points and then track students' progress by seeing when the total points increase.

Total score: _____

If you want to translate this score into a grade, you can use the provided table to score each student on a scale of 0–4.

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1–11	1
11.5–16.5	1.5
17–22	2
22.5–27.5	2.5
28–33	3
33.5–38.5	3.5
39–44	4

Name: _____

Date: _____

Rubric for Narrative Writing—Seventh Grade

	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE								
Overall	The writer wrote a story of an important moment. It reads like a story, even though it might be a true account.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a story that has tension, resolution, and realistic characters, and also conveys an idea, lesson, or theme.	Mid-level	The writer created a narrative that has realistic characters, tension, and change, and that not only conveys, but also develops an idea, lesson, or theme.	Mid-level	The writer not only created a narrative with well-developed characters who change, he used the story to comment on a social issue, teach a lesson, and/or develop a point of view.	
Lead	The writer wrote a beginning in which she not only showed what was happening and where, but also gave some clues to what would later become a problem for the main character.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a beginning that not only set the plot/story in motion, but also hinted at the larger meaning the story would convey. It introduced the problem, set the stage for the lesson that would be learned, or showed how the character relates to the setting in a way that matters in the story.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a beginning that not only sets the story in motion, it also grounds it in a place or situation. It includes details that will later be important to the story. These details might point to the central issue or conflict, show how story elements connect, or hint at key character traits.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a beginning that establishes the situation and place, hinting at a bigger context for the story (revealing issues that have been brewing, showing how the setting affects the character, contextualizing a time in history, developing one out of many points of view).	
Transitions	The writer used transitional phrases to show passage of time in complicated ways, perhaps by showing things happening at the same time (<i>meanwhile, at the same time</i>) or flashback and flash-forward (<i>early that morning, three hours later</i>).	Mid-level	The writer not only used transitional phrases and clauses to signal complicated changes in time, she also used them to alert her readers to changes in the setting, tone, mood, point of view, or time in the story (such as <i>suddenly, unlike before, if only she had known</i>).	Mid-level	The writer used transitional phrases and clauses to connect what happened to why it happened (<i>If he hadn't . . . he might not have, because of, although, little did she know that</i>).	Mid-level	The writer used transitional phrases and clauses, grammatical structures (paragraphing, descriptive phrases, and clauses) and text structures (chapter divisions, extended italics) to alert his reader to changes in the setting, the mood, the point of view, or the time in the story.	

	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE (cont.)								
Ending	The writer wrote an ending that connected to the main part of the story. The character said, did, or realized something at the end that came from what happened previously in the story. The writer gave readers a sense of closure.	Mid-level	The writer wrote an ending that connected to what the story is really about. She gave the reader a sense of closure by showing a new realization or insight or a change in the character/ narrator. The writer showed this through dialogue, action, inner thinking, or small actions the character takes.	Mid-level	The writer gave the reader a sense of closure by showing clearly how the character or place changed or the problem was resolved. If there was no resolution, he gave details to leave the reader thinking about a central idea or theme.	Mid-level	The writer gave the reader a sense of closure by revealing character change(s) that followed from events in the story, or a resolution. If there was no resolution, she wrote to convey how the events of the story affected the characters, and to circle back to a central idea, issue, or theme.	
Organization	The writer used paragraphs to separate different parts or times in the story and to show when a new character was speaking. Some parts of the story are longer and more developed than others.	Mid-level	The writer used paragraphs purposefully, perhaps to show time and setting changes, new parts of the story, or to create suspense. She created a logical, clear sequence of events.	Mid-level	The writer used a traditional—or slightly modified—story structure (rising action, conflict, falling action) to best bring out the meaning of his story and reach his audience.	Mid-level	The writer modified a traditional story structure, dealing with time in purposeful ways, to best suit her genre, bring out the meaning of her story, and reach her audience.	
								TOTAL:
DEVELOPMENT								
Elaboration*	The writer developed characters, setting, and plot throughout this story, especially the heart of the story. To do this, she used a blend of description, action, dialogue, and thinking.	Mid-level	The writer developed realistic characters, and developed the details, action, dialogue, and internal thinking that contribute to the deeper meaning of the story.	Mid-level	The writer developed the action, dialogue, details, and inner thinking to convey an issue, idea, or lesson. He showed what is specific about the central character. The writer developed the setting and the characters' relationship to the setting.	Mid-level	<p>The writer developed complicated story elements: she may have contrasted the character's thinking with his or her actions or dialogue.</p> <p>The writer developed the central character's relationship to other characters. She showed character flaws as well as strengths to add complexity.</p> <p>The writer used details that related to and conveyed meaning or developed a lesson or theme.</p>	

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	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
DEVELOPMENT (cont.)								
Craft*	<p>The writer showed why characters act and speak as they do by including their thinking and their responses to what happened.</p> <p>The writer slowed down the heart of the story. She made less important parts shorter and less detailed and blended storytelling and summary as needed.</p> <p>The writer included precise details and used figurative language so that readers could picture the setting, characters, and events. She used some objects or actions as symbols to bring forth her meaning.</p> <p>The writer varied her sentences to create the pace and tone of her narrative.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer developed some relationship between characters to show <i>why</i> they act and speak as they do. He told the internal, as well as the external story.</p> <p>The writer wove together precise descriptions, figurative language, and some symbolism to help readers picture the setting, actions, and events and to bring forth meaning.</p> <p>The writer used language that fit his story's meaning and context (e.g., different characters use different kinds of language).</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer developed contradictions and change in characters and situations.</p> <p>The writer used specific details and figurative language to help the reader understand the place and the mood (making an object or place symbolic, using the weather, using repetition).</p> <p>The writer varied her tone to match the variety of emotions experienced by the characters across the story.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer conveyed the pressures characters feel and the dreams they hold. He related those to their actions. The writer developed complicated characters who change and/or who change others.</p> <p>The writer created a mood as well as a physical setting, and showed how the place changed, or its relationships to the characters changed. The writer used symbolism to connect with a theme.</p> <p>The writer varied his tone to bring out different perspectives within the story, or to show a gap between the narrator's point of view and that of other characters.</p>	
								TOTAL:
LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS								
Spelling	<p>The writer used what he knows about word families and spelling rules to help him spell and edit. He used the word wall and dictionaries when needed.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used resources to be sure the words in her writing are spelled correctly.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used the Internet and other sources at hand to check spelling of literary and high-frequency words.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used the Internet and other sources to check the spelling of literary, historical, and geographical words.</p>	

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	Grade 5 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 6 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 7 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 8 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS (cont.)								
Punctuation and Sentence Structure	The writer used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences (<i>one day at the park</i>). She also used commas to show when a character is talking directly to someone, such as <i>Are you mad, Mom?</i>	Mid-level	The writer used punctuation such as dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons to help him include extra detail and explanation in some of his sentences. The writer used commas and quotation marks or italics or some other way to make clear when characters are speaking.	Mid-level	The writer varied her sentence structure, sometimes using simple and sometimes using complex sentence structure. The writer punctuated dialogue sections accurately.	Mid-level	The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout his piece. The writer used verb tenses that shift when needed (as in when moving from a flashback back into the present tense of the story), deciding between active and passive voice where appropriate.	
								TOTAL:

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Scoring Guide

In each row, circle the descriptor in the column that matches the student work. Scores in the categories of Elaboration and Craft are worth double the point value (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 instead of 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, or 4).

Total the number of points and then track students' progress by seeing when the total points increase.

Total score: _____

If you want to translate this score into a grade, you can use the provided table to score each student on a scale of 0–4.

Number of Points	Scaled Score
1–11	1
11.5–16.5	1.5
17–22	2
22.5–27.5	2.5
28–33	3
33.5–38.5	3.5
39–44	4

Name: _____ Date: _____

Rubric for Information Writing—Eighth Grade								
	Grade 6 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 7 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 8 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 9 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE								
Overall	The writer conveyed ideas and information about a subject in a well-structured text. Sometimes she incorporated arguments, explanations, stories, or procedural passages.	Mid-level	The writer brought together ideas and information about a subject in a text that develops a subtopic and/or an idea. He incorporated a variety of text structures as needed, including argument, explanation, narrative, and procedural passages.	Mid-level	The writer discussed key concepts within a topic and made it clear why these concepts are important. She provided examples with relevant information, using a variety of text structures and formatting, as needed, to make concepts and information compelling and accessible.	Mid-level	The writer discussed complex concepts, presenting facts and information in an engaging manner, teaching the reader significant concepts and information. The writer conveyed the sources of the information and analyzed them when relevant.	
Lead	The writer wrote an introduction in which she interested readers, perhaps with a quote or significant fact. The writer let readers know the subtopics she would develop later and how her text would unfold.	Mid-level	The writer interested the reader in the topic by explaining its significance or providing a compelling fact, statistic, or anecdote. He made it clear what parts of this topic his text would tackle, and how the ideas and information in the text would unfold.	Mid-level	After hooking the reader, the writer provided context, introduced a focus/main idea, and oriented readers to the overall structure of the text (compare/contrast, cause and effect, claims and support, classification, etc.).	Mid-level	The writer wrote an engaging lead that explained the topic's significance, contextualized it with background information, and mentioned key points of view or issues that would be discussed.	
Transitions	The writer used transitions to help readers understand how different bits of information and different parts of her writing fit together. The writer used transitions to help connect ideas, information, and examples, and to imply relationships such as when material exemplifies, adds on to, is similar to, explains, is a result of, or contrasts. The writer used transitions such as <i>for instance</i> , <i>such as</i> , <i>similarly</i> , <i>therefore</i> , <i>as a result</i> , <i>in contrast to</i> , and <i>on the other hand</i> .	Mid-level	The writer used transitions to link concepts with related information. The transitions help the reader follow from part to part and make it clear when information is an example of a bigger idea, follows from an earlier point, introduces a new idea, or suggests a contrast. The writer used such transitions as <i>specifically</i> , <i>for instance</i> , <i>related to</i> , <i>just as</i> , <i>turning to</i> , <i>on the other hand</i> , and <i>however</i> .	Mid-level	The writer used transitions to lead the reader across parts of the text and to help the reader note how parts of the text relate back to earlier parts, using phrases such as <i>just as</i> , <i>returning to</i> , <i>as we saw earlier</i> , <i>similarly to</i> , <i>unlike</i> , and <i>yet</i> .	Mid-level	The writer used transitional phrases to show the relationship between parts of the text, including references to prior sections, and previewing future sections. The writer may have used transitions to show the source of cited information. These transitions might include <i>adapted from</i> , <i>excerpted from</i> , <i>according to</i> , <i>building from</i> , <i>revealed in</i> , <i>suggested by</i> , <i>illustrated by</i> , and <i>demonstrated in</i> .	

	Grade 6 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 7 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 8 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 9 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE (cont.)								
Ending	The writer wrote a conclusion in which she restated the important ideas and offered a final insight or implication for the reader to consider.		In his conclusion, the writer reinforced and built on the main point(s) in a way that made the entire piece a cohesive whole. The conclusion may have restated the main points, responded to them, or highlighted their significance.	Mid-level	In her conclusion, the writer suggested implications, built up the significance of her main points, and/or alluded to potential challenges.	Mid-level	In the conclusion, the writer strengthened implications, suggested action to take, and/or mentioned multiple perspectives or potential challenges.	
Organization	The writer chose a focused subject. The writer used subheadings and/or clear introductory transitions to separate sections. The writer made deliberate choices about how to order sections and about the sequence of information and ideas within sections. The writer chose structures such as compare-and-contrast, categories, and claim-and-support to organize information and ideas. The writer wrote some sections as argument, explanation, stories, or procedural passages.	Mid-level	The writer focused her writing on a subtopic or a particular point or two. The writer organized her piece into parts and used structures (claims and supports, problem/solution, sequence, etc.) to organize those parts (and perhaps the whole). The writer used introductions, topic sentences, transitions, formatting, and graphics, where appropriate, to clarify the structure of the piece and to highlight main points.	Mid-level	The writer focused on key concepts within the topic. The writer organized information and ideas into broader categories and clarified how sections are ordered and connected. The writer used his organizational structure to help the reader's comprehension, perhaps holding back details until first conveying broader points, or only offering a second perspective after the first was established. The sections and information built on each other throughout the piece: concepts and examples were introduced in a logical fashion.	Mid-level	The writer's organizational structure introduced and layered key concepts and information. The writer layered information to maintain tension, engage the reader's interest, and/or build complexity. The writer build the sections upon each other logically, allowing the reader to build knowledge and deeper understandings.	
								TOTAL:

	Grade 6 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 7 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 8 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 9 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
DEVELOPMENT								
Elaboration*	<p>The writer included varied kinds of information such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions.</p> <p>The writer used trusted sources and information from authorities on the topic and gave the sources credit.</p> <p>The writer worked to make her information understandable and interesting. To do this, she may have referred to earlier parts of her text, summarized background information, raised questions, and considered possible implications.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer included varied kinds of information such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. She analyzed or explained the information, showing how the information fits with her key points or subtopics, including graphics where appropriate.</p> <p>The writer consistently incorporated and cited sources.</p> <p>The writer worked to make her topic compelling as well as understandable. She brought out why it mattered and why the audience should care about it.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer brought out the parts of the topic that were most significant to his audience and to his point(s).</p> <p>The writer analyzed the relevance of his information and made sure the information supported the major concepts.</p> <p>The writer incorporated trustworthy and significant sources, and explained if and when a source seemed problematic.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer developed key concepts, giving some context and background. The writer used examples to clarify, explain, and interest.</p> <p>The writer analyzed the facts and information, explaining the relevance of cited source material.</p> <p>The writer included trustworthy and significant sources of information, analyzing and critiquing these sources when relevant.</p>	
Craft*	<p>The writer chose her words carefully to explain her information and ideas to have an effect on her reader.</p> <p>The writer worked to include concrete details, comparisons, and/or images to explain information and concepts, and to keep her reader engaged.</p> <p>The writer incorporated domain-specific vocabulary and when necessary explained terms to readers, providing context clues, parenthetical explanations, text boxes, or similar support.</p> <p>The writer supported readers' learning by using a teaching tone and a formal style, as appropriate.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used words purposefully to affect meaning and tone.</p> <p>The writer chose precise words and used metaphors, anecdotes, images, or comparisons to explain what he meant.</p> <p>The writer included domain-specific, technical vocabulary, and defined these when appropriate.</p> <p>The writer used a formal tone, but varied it appropriately to engage the reader.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer intended to affect her reader in particular ways—to make the reader think, realize, or feel a particular way—and she chose language to do that.</p> <p>The writer consistently used comparisons, analogies, vivid examples, and/or anecdotes to help readers grasp the meaning of concepts and the significance of information.</p> <p>The writer varied her tone to match the different purposes of different sections of her piece.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer intended to affect the reader in particular ways—to make the reader think, realize, or feel a particular way—and chose particular language to do that.</p> <p>In addition to using other literary devices, the writer may have used allusions.</p> <p>The writer varied the tone to match the different purposes of different sections of the argument, as well as to develop its overall impact.</p> <p>The writer made choices about formatting, considering the best form to best convey the content.</p>	
								TOTAL:

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	Grade 6 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 7 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 8 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 9 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
CONVENTIONS								
Spelling	The writer used resources to be sure the words in her writing were spelled correctly, including technical vocabulary.	Mid-level	The writer checked spelling of technical, domain-specific words and was careful with the spelling of citations.	Mid-level	The writer checked spelling of technical, domain-specific words and was careful with the spelling and details of citations, excerpts, quotations, and statistics.	Mid-level	The writer spelled accurately throughout, including cited text and citations.	
Punctuation and Sentence Structure	The writer used punctuation such as dashes, parentheses, colons, or semicolons to help her include extra information and explanation in some of her sentences. The writer accurately cited her references, using appropriate punctuation.	Mid-level	The writer varied his sentence structure, sometimes using simple and sometimes using complex sentence structure. The writer used internal punctuation appropriately within sentences and when citing sources, including commas, dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons.	Mid-level	The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout her piece. The writer used verb tenses that shift when needed (as in when moving from a citation back to her own writing), deciding between active and passive voice where appropriate. The writer used internal punctuation effectively, including the use of ellipses to accurately insert excerpts from sources.	Mid-level	The writer used sentence structure and verb tense purposefully (i.e., using fragments to emphasize key points; using present tense to create immediacy). The writer used punctuation to emphasize connections, to strengthen tone, to clarify, and to add complexity.	
								TOTAL:

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Scoring Guide

In each row, circle the descriptor in the column that matches the student work. Scores in the categories of Elaboration and Craft are worth double the point value (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 instead of 1. 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, or 4).

Total the number of points and then track students' progress by seeing when the total points increase.

Total score: _____

If you want to translate this score into a grade, you can use the provided table to score each student on a scale of 0–4.

Number of Points	Scaled Score
1–11	1
11.5–16.5	1.5
17–22	2
22.5–27.5	2.5
28–33	3
33.5–38.5	3.5
39–44	4

Name: _____ Date: _____

Rubric for Argument Writing—Eighth Grade

	Grade 6 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 7 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 8 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 9 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE								
Overall	The writer explained the topic/text and staked out a position that could be supported by a variety of trustworthy sources. Each part of the writer's text helped build her argument, and led to a conclusion.	Mid-level	The writer laid out a well-supported argument and made it clear that this argument is part of a bigger conversation about a topic/text. He acknowledged positions on the topic or text that might disagree with his own position, but still showed why his position makes sense.	Mid-level	The writer laid out an argument about a topic/text and made it clear why her particular argument is important and valid. She stayed fair to those who might disagree with her by describing how her position is one of several and making it clear where her position stands in relation to others.	Mid-level	The writer presented an argument, offering context, honoring other points of view, and indicating the conditions under which the position holds true. The writer developed the argument with logical reasoning and convincing evidence, acknowledging the limitations of the position and citing—and critiquing—sources.	
Lead	The writer wrote an introduction to interest readers and help them understand and care about a topic or text. She thought backward between the piece and the introduction to make sure that the introduction fit with the whole. Not only did the writer clearly state her claim, she also told her readers how her text would unfold.	Mid-level	The writer interested readers in his argument and helped them to understand the backstory behind it. He gave the backstory in a way that got readers ready to see his point. The writer made it clear to readers what his piece would argue and forecasted the parts of his argument.	Mid-level	After hooking her readers, the writer provided specific context for her own as well as another's position(s), introduced her position, and oriented readers to the overall line of argument she would develop.	Mid-level	The writer demonstrated the significance of the argument and may have offered hints of upcoming parts of the essay. The writer presented needed background information to show the complexity of the issue. In addition to introducing the overall line of development the argument will take, the writer distinguished that argument from others.	

	Grade 6 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 7 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 8 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 9 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE (cont.)								
Transitions	<p>The writer used transitions to help readers understand how the different parts of her piece fit together to explain and support her argument.</p> <p>The writer used transitions to help connect claim(s), reasons, and evidence, and to imply relationships such as when material exemplifies, adds on to, is similar to, explains, is a result of, or contrasts. She used transitions such as <i>for instance, in addition, one reason, furthermore, according to, this evidence suggests, and thus we can say that</i>.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used transitions to link the parts of her argument. The transitions help readers follow from part to part and make it clear when she is stating a claim or counterclaim, giving a reason, or offering or analyzing evidence. These transitions include terms such as <i>the text states, as, this means, another reason, some people may say, but, nevertheless, and on the other hand</i>.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used transitions to lead readers across parts of the text and to help them note how parts of the text relate back to earlier parts. He used phrases such as <i>now some argue, while this may be true, it is also the case that, despite this, as stated earlier, taken as a whole, this is significant because, the evidence points to, and by doing so</i>.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used transitions to clarify the relationship between claims, reasons, and evidence, and help the reader follow the logic in the argument. The writer also used transitions to make clear the relationship of sources to each other and to the claim, such as <i>while it may be true that, nevertheless, there are times when/certain circumstances when, and others echo this idea</i>.</p>	
Ending	<p>In her conclusion, the writer restated the important points and offered a final insight or implication for readers to consider. The ending strengthened the overall argument.</p>	Mid-level	<p>In his conclusion, the writer reinforced and built on the main point(s) in a way that made the entire text a cohesive whole. The conclusion reiterated how the support for his claim outweighed the counterclaim(s), restated the main points, responded to them, or highlighted their significance.</p>	Mid-level	<p>In the conclusion, the writer described the significance of her argument for stakeholders or offered additional insights, implications, questions, or challenges.</p>	Mid-level	<p>In the concluding section, the writer may have clarified the conditions under which the position holds true, discussed possible applications or consequences, and/or offered possible solutions.</p>	
Organization	<p>The writer organized her argument into sections: She arranged reasons and evidence purposefully, leading readers from one claim or reason to another. The order of the sections and the internal structure of each section the writer used made sense.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer purposely arranged parts of her piece to suit her purpose and to lead readers from one claim, counterclaim, reason, or piece of evidence to another. The writer used topic sentences, transitions, and formatting (where appropriate) to clarify the structure of the piece and to highlight her main points.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer organized claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence into sections and clarified how sections are connected.</p> <p>The writer created an organizational structure that supports a reader's growing understanding across the whole of his argument, arranging the sections to build on each other in a logical, compelling fashion.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer created a logical and compelling structure for the argument so that each part builds on a prior section, and the whole moves the reader toward understandings.</p>	
								TOTAL:

	Grade 6 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 7 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 8 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 9 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
DEVELOPMENT								
Elaboration*	<p>The writer included and arranged a variety of evidence such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions.</p> <p>The writer used trusted sources and information from experts and gave the sources credit.</p> <p>The writer worked to explain how the reasons and evidence she gave supported her claim(s) and strengthened her argument. To do this, she may have referred to earlier parts of her text, summarized background information, raised questions, or highlighted possible implications.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer included varied kinds of evidence such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. He analyzed or explained the reasons and evidence, showing how they fit with his claim(s) and built his argument.</p> <p>The writer consistently incorporated and cited trustworthy sources.</p> <p>The writer wrote about another possible position or positions—a different claim or claims about this subject—and explained why the evidence for his position outweighed the counterclaim(s).</p> <p>The writer worked to make his argument compelling as well as understandable. He brought out why it mattered and why the audience should care about it.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer brought out the aspects of the argument that were most significant to her audience and to her overall purpose(s).</p> <p>The writer incorporated trustworthy and significant sources and explained if and when a source seemed problematic.</p> <p>The writer analyzed the relevance of the reasons and evidence for her claims as well as for the counterclaim(s) and helped readers understand each position. The writer made sure all of her analysis led readers to follow her line of argument.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer brought out the aspects of the argument that were most significant to the audience and to the purposes. When appropriate, the writer acknowledged limitations or critiques of sources—perhaps evaluating sources’ reasoning or suspect motivations.</p> <p>The writer angled and/or framed evidence to clearly and fairly represent various perspectives, while also maintaining a clear position.</p>	
Craft*	<p>The writer chose her words carefully to support her argument and to have an effect on her reader.</p> <p>The writer worked to include concrete details, comparisons, and/or images to convey her ideas, build her argument, and keep her reader engaged.</p> <p>When necessary, the writer explained terms to readers, providing definitions, context clues, or parenthetical explanations.</p> <p>The write made her piece sound serious.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer used words purposefully to affect meaning and tone.</p> <p>The writer chose precise words and used metaphors, images, or comparisons to explain what she meant.</p> <p>The writer included domain-specific, technical vocabulary relevant to her argument and audience and defined these when appropriate.</p> <p>The writer used a formal tone, but varied it appropriately to engage the reader.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer intended to affect his reader in particular ways—to make the reader think, realize, or feel a particular way—and he chose language to do that.</p> <p>The writer consistently used comparisons, analogies, vivid examples, anecdotes, or other rhetorical devices to help readers follow his thinking and grasp the meaning and significance of a point or a piece of evidence.</p> <p>The writer varied his tone to match the different purposes of different sections of his argument.</p>	Mid-level	<p>The writer intended to make the reader think, realize, or feel a particular way—and chose language to do that.</p> <p>In addition to using other literary devices, the writer may have used allusions.</p> <p>The writer varied the tone to match the purposes of different sections of the argument, as well as to develop an overall impact.</p>	
								TOTAL:

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	Grade 6 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 7 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 8 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 9 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS								
Spelling	The writer used resources to be sure the words in her writing were spelled correctly, including returning to sources to check spelling.	Mid-level	The writer matched the spelling of technical vocabulary to that found in resources and text evidence. He spelled material in citations correctly.	Mid-level	The writer spelled technical vocabulary and literary vocabulary accurately. She spelled material in citations according to sources, and spelled citations accurately.	Mid-level	The writer used accurate spelling, including cited text and citations.	
Punctuation and Sentence Structure	The writer used punctuation such as dashes, colons, parentheses, and semicolons to help her include or connect information in some of her sentences. The writer punctuated quotes and citations accurately.	Mid-level	The writer varied her sentence structure, sometimes using simple and sometimes using complex sentence structure. The writer used internal punctuation appropriately within sentences and when citing sources, including commas, dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons.	Mid-level	The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout his argument. The writer used verb tenses that shift when needed (as in when moving from a citation back to his own writing), deciding between active and passive voice where appropriate. The writer used internal punctuation effectively, including the use of ellipses to accurately insert excerpts from sources.	Mid-level	The writer used sentence structure and verb tense purposefully (i.e., using fragments to emphasize key points, using present tense to create immediacy). The writer used punctuation to emphasize connections, to strengthen tone, to clarify, and to add complexity.	
								TOTAL:

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Total the number of points and then track students' progress by seeing when the total points increase.

Total score: _____

If you want to translate this score into a grade, you can use the provided table to score each student on a scale of 0–4.

Number of Points	Scaled Score
1–11	1
11.5–16.5	1.5
17–22	2
22.5–27.5	2.5
28–33	3
33.5–38.5	3.5
39–44	4

Name: _____ Date: _____

Rubric for Narrative Writing—Eighth Grade

	Grade 6 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 7 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 8 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 9 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE								
Overall	The writer wrote a story that has tension, resolution, and realistic characters, and also conveys an idea, lesson, or theme.	Mid-level	The writer created a narrative that has realistic characters, tension, and change, and that not only conveys, but also develops an idea, lesson, or theme.	Mid-level	The writer not only created a narrative with well-developed characters who change, he used the story to comment on a social issue, teach a lesson, and/or develop a point of view.	Mid-level	The writer created a narrative with well-developed characters whose interactions build tension and change over time. The writer used that story to comment on a social issue, teach a lesson, and/or develop a particular point of view.	
Lead	The writer wrote a beginning that not only set the plot/story in motion, but also hinted at the larger meaning the story would convey. It introduced the problem, set the stage for the lesson that would be learned, or showed how the character relates to the setting in a way that matters in the story.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a beginning that not only sets the story in motion, it also grounds it in a place or situation. It includes details that will later be important to the story. These details might point to the central issue or conflict, show how story elements connect, or hint at key character traits.	Mid-level	The writer wrote a beginning that establishes the situation and place, hinting at a bigger context for the story (revealing issues that have been brewing, showing how the setting affects the character, contextualizing a time in history, developing one out of many points of view).	Mid-level	The writer wrote a beginning establishing a situation, place, and/or atmosphere; foreshadowing the problem(s); and hinting at questions, issues, ideas, or themes. The writer introduced a particular narrative voice and point of view.	
Transitions	The writer not only used transitional phrases and clauses to signal complicated changes in time, she also used them to alert her readers to changes in the setting, tone, mood, point of view, or time in the story (such as <i>suddenly</i> , <i>unlike before</i> , <i>if only she had known</i>).	Mid-level	The writer used transitional phrases and clauses to connect what happened to why it happened (<i>If he hadn't . . . he might not have, because of, although, little did she know that</i>).	Mid-level	The writer used transitional phrases and clauses, grammatical structures (paragraphing, descriptive phrases, and clauses) and text structures (chapter divisions, extended italics) to alert his reader to changes in the setting, the mood, the point of view, or the time in the story.	Mid-level	The writer used transitional phrases and clauses, grammatical structures to demonstrate the passage of time, to connect parts of the story, to imply cause and effect, to raise questions, and/or to make allusions (<i>long before</i> , <i>as when</i> , <i>just as</i> , <i>without realizing</i> , <i>ever afterward</i>).	
Ending	The writer wrote an ending that connected to what the story is really about. She gave the reader a sense of closure by showing a new realization or insight or a change in the character/narrator. The writer showed this through dialogue, action, inner thinking, or small actions the character takes.	Mid-level	The writer gave the reader a sense of closure by showing clearly how the character or place changed or the problem was resolved. If there was no resolution, he gave details to leave the reader thinking about a central idea or theme.	Mid-level	The writer gave the reader a sense of closure by revealing character change(s) that followed from events in the story, or a resolution. If there was no resolution, she wrote to convey how the events of the story affected the characters, and to circle back to a central idea, issue, or theme.	Mid-level	The writer gave the reader a sense of closure by returning to a theme, and/or revealing how characters change or make a change. If there wasn't resolution, the writer made a connection to a larger issue or mood that added to the meaning of the whole story or suggested social commentary.	

	Grade 6 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 7 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 8 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 9 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
STRUCTURE (cont.)								
Organization	The writer used paragraphs purposefully, perhaps to show time and setting changes, new parts of the story, or to create suspense for readers. She created a logical, clear sequence of events.	Mid-level	The writer used a traditional—or slightly modified—story structure (rising action, conflict, falling action) to best bring out the meaning of his story and reach his audience.	Mid-level	The writer modified a traditional story structure, dealing with time in purposeful ways, to best suit her genre, bring out the meaning of her story, and reach her audience.	Mid-level	The writer used or adapted story structures and literary traditions (quest structure, coming of age, cautionary tale, etc.) to fit the story, meaning, genre, audience. The writer dealt with time purposefully (eg, introducing multiple plot lines, flash-forwards, or flashbacks).	
								TOTAL:
DEVELOPMENT								
Elaboration*	The writer developed realistic characters, and developed the details, action, dialogue and internal thinking that contribute to the deeper meaning of the story.	Mid-level	The writer developed the action, dialogue, details, and inner thinking to convey an issue, idea, or lesson. He showed what is specific about the central character. The writer developed the setting and the characters' relationship to the setting.	Mid-level	The writer developed complicated story elements: she may have contrasted the character's thinking with his or her actions or dialogue. The writer developed the central character's relationship to other characters. She showed character flaws as well as strengths to add complexity. The writer used details that related to and conveyed meaning or developed a lesson or theme.	Mid-level	The writer developed complicated story elements through key details—using them to add to tension or meaning. The writer showed character flaws, strengths, and aspects that make them unique or worthy of being written about. The writer used details to convey meaning or develop a lesson or theme.	
Craft*	The writer developed some relationship between characters to show <i>why</i> they act and speak as they do. He told the internal, as well as the external story. The writer wove together precise descriptions, figurative language, and some symbolism to help readers picture the setting, actions, and events and to bring forth meaning.	Mid-level	The writer developed contradictions and change in characters and situations. The writer used specific details and figurative language to help the reader understand the place and the mood (making an object or place symbolic, using the weather, using repetition). The writer varied her tone to match the variety of emotions experienced by the characters across the story.	Mid-level	The writer conveyed the pressures characters feel and the dreams they hold. He related those to their actions. The writer developed complicated characters who change and/or who change others. The writer created a mood as well as a physical setting, and showed how the place changed, or its relationships to the characters changed.	Mid-level	The writer developed characters across scenes, offering insight into their troubles, hopes, relationships, and giving clues about how they change. The writer used setting to create mood and add to meaning. The writer used symbolism or metaphor for subtle as well as obvious connections to a theme.	

*Elaboration and Craft are double-weighted categories: Whatever score a student would get in these categories is worth double the amount of points. For example, if a student exceeds expectations in Elaboration, then that student would receive 8 points instead of 4 points. If a student meets standards in Elaboration, then that student would receive 6 points instead of 3 points.

	Grade 6 (1 POINT)	1.5 PTS	Grade 7 (2 POINTS)	2.5 PTS	Grade 8 (3 POINTS)	3.5 PTS	Grade 9 (4 POINTS)	SCORE
DEVELOPMENT (cont.)								
Craft* (cont.)	The writer used language that fit his story's meaning and context (e.g., different characters use different kinds of language).				The writer used symbolism to connect with a theme. The writer varied his tone to bring out different perspectives within the story, or to show a gap between the narrator's point of view and that of other characters.		The writer varied the pace and tone to develop tension and/or develop different perspectives across the text.	
								TOTAL:
CONVENTIONS								
Spelling	The writer used resources to be sure the words in her writing are spelled correctly.	Mid-level	The writer used the Internet and other sources at hand to check spelling of literary and high-frequency words.	Mid-level	The writer used the Internet and other sources to check the spelling of literary, historical, and geographical words.	Mid-level	The writer checked spelling for accuracy, double-checking for misused homonyms and technologically created mishaps.	
Punctuation and Sentence Structure	The writer used punctuation such as dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons to help him include extra detail and explanation in some of his sentences. The writer used commas and quotation marks or italics or some other way to make clear when characters are speaking.	Mid-level	The writer varied her sentence structure, sometimes using simple and sometimes using complex sentence structure. The writer punctuated dialogue sections accurately.	Mid-level	The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout his piece. The writer used verb tenses that shift when needed (as in when moving from a flashback back into the present tense of the story), deciding between active and passive voice where appropriate.	Mid-level	The writer was accurate and purposeful with conventions, using them to enhance and pace the tone of the text. If the writer broke conventions, it was purposefully (for example, using fragments or dialect) when appropriate to the genre and purpose.	
								TOTAL:

Teachers, we created these rubrics so you will have your own place to pull together scores of student work. You can use these assessments immediately after giving the on-demands and also for self-assessment and setting goals.

Scoring Guide

In each row, circle the descriptor in the column that matches the student work. Scores in the categories of Elaboration and Craft are worth double the point value (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 instead of 1. 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, or 4).

Total the number of points and then track students' progress by seeing when the total points increase.

Total score: _____

If you want to translate this score into a grade, you can use the provided table to score each student on a scale of 0–4.

Number of Points	Scaled Score
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