



Informational Writing Rubric

Grade 8

	1 Beginning	2 Approaching	3 Developing	4 Proficient	5 Advanced
Claim Weight: 3x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This piece does not yet contain a claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The piece of writing exceeds the achievement described in level 1 but has not fully met the criteria for level 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The claim or thesis in this draft is vague or unclear, so the reader does not have a specific understanding of exactly which aspect of the topic the writing will explore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The piece of writing exceeds the achievement described in level 3 but has not fully met the criteria for level 5. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A specific claim expressing a central idea effectively introduces the topic of the writing and its focus. The claim, sometimes called a thesis, answers the question or prompt fully.
Evidence Weight: 5x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This piece of writing does not yet include the types or amounts of evidence it needs to support the claim. The evidence may be irrelevant to the claim or missing altogether. (Citations are not included when required.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The piece of writing exceeds the achievement described in level 1 but has not fully met the criteria for level 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some evidence develops the topic and supports the main idea or claim, but other evidence is not strong enough or relevant, so the claim is not fully supported. (Citations may be missing or inaccurate when required.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The piece of writing exceeds the achievement described in level 3 but has not fully met the criteria for level 5. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-chosen, relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information develop the topic fully. Evidence effectively supports the claim and presents a thorough picture of the topic. (When reference materials are used, accurate citations are included.)
Reasoning Weight: 5x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facts and details in this writing do not yet have clear explanations to tell why they were selected or how they support the claim. In this draft the language does not yet effectively explain the connections between the evidence and the claim and may not be specific enough to develop the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The piece of writing exceeds the achievement described in level 1 but has not fully met the criteria for level 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explanations connect some facts and details to the claim, but other facts and details are not explained fully to show how they support and develop the claim. Some explanations use language that is precise and related to the topic to show how the evidence supports the claim, but other explanations use words that are not topic-specific. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The piece of writing exceeds the achievement described in level 3 but has not fully met the criteria for level 5. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed explanations link the facts and details to the claim and effectively show how the evidence supports it. All explanations use precise subject-matter vocabulary to support and strengthen the claim.
Coherence Weight: 5x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This piece of writing does not yet have an introduction that reveals the topic and the way information will be presented. This piece of writing is not yet organized into a clear structure that supports the claim. This piece of writing does not yet use accurate transitions to connect ideas to the claim. This piece of writing does not yet end with a conclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The piece of writing exceeds the achievement described in level 1 but has not fully met the criteria for level 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The piece has an introduction that reveals the claim of the writing, but it does not have a clear focus that previews the supporting information that will be presented. The information in this piece of writing is not yet presented in the best organizational strategy to support the claim, or the chosen strategy is not clear. Some transitions connect ideas in the writing, but other ideas are not linked with meaningful and varied transitions to create a cohesive text. This piece of writing includes a concluding statement or section that is not yet fully related to the information presented or developed into an effective conclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The piece of writing exceeds the achievement described in level 3 but has not fully met the criteria for level 5. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction grabs readers' attention, narrows to a specific claim, and previews the plan for development. The writing organizes related facts and details using the most effective strategy for the piece, such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect. The chosen strategy is clear and effectively supports the claim. Formatting, graphics, and multimedia clarify the writing when appropriate. A variety of effective transitions connect ideas to show how the information clearly supports the claim. The transitions link the ideas into a cohesive, unified piece of writing. This piece of writing includes an effective and well-written concluding statement or section.
Audience Appeal Weight: 2x	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writing has an informal tone that is not appropriate for a serious piece of writing. The writing shows the need for additional support in developing an appropriate command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writing exceeds the achievement described in level 1 but has not fully met the criteria for level 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The style varies from formal to informal. The writing is challenging to read at times because of errors in standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, and can achieve more with revision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writing exceeds the achievement described in level 3, perhaps containing only minor but consistent errors, but has not fully met the criteria for level 5. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writing maintains a formal style and shows a skillful command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling with very few errors.