

**Informative-Explanatory Short Essay  
Writing Rubric (Grades 6-11)**

Score	Statement of Purpose/Focus and Organization (4-point rubric)	Evidence/Elaboration (4-point rubric)	Conventions/Editing (2-point rubric begins at scorepoint 2)
4	<p>The response is fully sustained and consistently and purposefully focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>controlling idea or main idea of a topic is focused, clearly stated, and strongly maintained</li> <li>controlling idea or main idea of a topic is introduced and communicated clearly within the purpose, audience, and task</li> </ul> <p>The response has a clear and effective organizational structure creating unity and completeness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effective, consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies between and among ideas</li> <li>logical progression of ideas from beginning to end</li> <li>effective introduction and conclusion for audience and purpose</li> <li>strong connections among ideas, with some syntactic variety</li> </ul>	<p>The response provides thorough and convincing support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details. The response achieves substantial depth that is specific and relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use of evidence from sources is cited, smoothly integrated, comprehensive, relevant, and concrete</li> <li>effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques</li> </ul> <p>The response clearly and effectively expresses ideas, using precise language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use of academic and domain-specific vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> </ul>	

<p><b>3</b></p>	<p>The response is adequately sustained and generally focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus is clear and for the most part maintained, though some loosely related material may be present</li> <li>• some context for the controlling idea or main idea of the topic is adequate within the purpose, audience, and task</li> </ul> <p>The response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety between and among ideas</li> <li>• adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end</li> <li>• adequate introduction and conclusion</li> <li>• adequate, if slightly inconsistent, connection among ideas</li> </ul>	<p>The response provides adequate support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes the use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some evidence from sources is integrated, though citations may be general or imprecise</li> <li>• adequate use of some elaborative techniques</li> </ul> <p>The response adequately expresses ideas, employing a mix of precise with more general language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use of domain-specific vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> </ul>	
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<p><b>2</b></p>	<p>The response is somewhat sustained and may have a minor drift in focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may be clearly focused on the controlling or main idea, but is insufficiently sustained</li> <li>• controlling idea or main idea may be unclear and somewhat unfocused</li> </ul> <p>The response has an inconsistent organizational structure, and flaws are evident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inconsistent use of transitional strategies with little variety</li> <li>• uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end</li> <li>• conclusion and introduction, if present, are weak</li> <li>• weak connection among ideas</li> </ul>	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory support/ evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes partial or uneven use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence from sources is weakly integrated, and citations, if present, are uneven</li> <li>• weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques</li> </ul> <p>The response expresses Ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use of domain-specific vocabulary may at times be inappropriate for the audience and purpose</li> </ul>	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some errors in usage and sentence formation are present, but no systematic pattern of errors is displayed</li> <li>• adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling</li> </ul>
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<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>The response may be related to the topic but may provide little or no focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may be very brief</li> <li>• may have a major drift</li> <li>• focus may be confusing or ambiguous</li> </ul> <p>The response has little or no discernible organizational structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• few or no transitional strategies are evident</li> <li>• frequent extraneous ideas may intrude</li> </ul>	<p>The response provides minimal support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes little or no use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use of evidence from sources is minimal, absent, in error, or irrelevant</li> </ul> <p>The response expression of ideas is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• uses limited language or domain-specific vocabulary</li> <li>• may have little sense of audience and purpose</li> </ul>	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• errors in usage may obscure meaning</li> <li>• inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling</li> </ul>
<p><b>0</b></p>			<p>The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions.</p>
<p><b>NS</b></p>	<p>Insufficient, illegible, foreign language, incoherent, off-topic, or off-purpose writing</p>		