

Opinion Essay Writing Rubric (Grades 3–5)

Score	4	3	2	1
<b>Purpose, Focus, and Organization</b>	<p>The response is fully sustained and consistently focused within the purpose, audience, and task; and it has a clearly stated opinion and effective organizational structure creating coherence and completeness. The response includes most of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongly maintained opinion with little or no loosely related material</li> <li>Skillful use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas</li> <li>Logical progression of ideas from beginning to end with a satisfying introduction and conclusion</li> </ul>	<p>The response is adequately sustained and generally focused within the purpose, audience, and task; and it has an opinion and evident organizational structure with a sense of completeness. The response includes most of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A maintained opinion, though some loosely related material may be present</li> <li>Adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety to clarify the relationships between and among ideas</li> <li>Adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end with a sufficient introduction and conclusion</li> </ul>	<p>The response is somewhat sustained within the purpose, audience, and task but may include loosely related or extraneous material; and it may have an opinion with an inconsistent organizational structure. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partially focused opinion but insufficiently sustained or unclear</li> <li>Inconsistent use of transitional strategies with little variety</li> <li>Uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end and an inadequate introduction or conclusion</li> </ul>	<p>The response is related to the topic but may demonstrate little or no awareness of the purpose, audience, and task; and it may have no discernible opinion and little or no discernible organizational structure. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absent, confusing, or ambiguous opinion</li> <li>Frequent extraneous ideas impeding understanding</li> <li>Few or no transitional strategies</li> <li>Too brief to demonstrate knowledge of focus or organization</li> </ul>

\*To receive a score in all categories the response must be in English, of a sufficient length, and address the prompt.

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Score	4	3	2	1
<b>Evidence and Elaboration</b>	<p>The response provides thorough and convincing support/evidence for the writer’s opinion that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details. The response includes most of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant evidence integrated smoothly and thoroughly with references to sources</li> <li>• Effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques, demonstrating understanding of the topic and text</li> <li>• Clear and effective expression of ideas, using precise language</li> <li>• Academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> <li>• Varied sentence structure, demonstrating language facility</li> </ul>	<p>The response provides adequate support/evidence for the writer’s opinion that includes the use of sources, facts, and details. The response includes most of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally integrated evidence from sources, though references may be general, imprecise, or inconsistent</li> <li>• Adequate use of some elaborative techniques</li> <li>• Adequate expression of ideas, employing a mix of precise and general language</li> <li>• Domain-specific vocabulary generally appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> <li>• Some variation in sentence structure</li> </ul>	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory support/evidence for the writer’s opinion that includes ineffective use of sources, facts, and details. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weakly integrated evidence from sources and erratic or irrelevant references</li> <li>• Repetitive or ineffective use of elaborative techniques</li> <li>• Imprecise or simplistic expression of ideas</li> <li>• Inappropriate or ineffective domain-specific vocabulary</li> <li>• Sentences possibly limited to simple constructions</li> </ul>	<p>The response provides minimal support/evidence for the writer’s opinion, including little if any use of sources, facts, and details. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal, absent, erroneous, or irrelevant evidence from the source material</li> <li>• Expression of ideas that is vague, unclear, or confusing</li> <li>• Limited or inappropriate language or domain-specific vocabulary</li> <li>• Sentences limited to simple constructions</li> </ul>
Score	N/A	2	1	0
<b>Conventions</b>	<p>(2-point rubric begins at score point 2)</p>	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of basic conventions. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some minor errors in usage but no patterns of errors</li> <li>• Adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, sentence formation, and spelling</li> </ul>	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of basic conventions. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various errors in usage</li> <li>• Inconsistent use of correct punctuation, capitalization, sentence formation, and spelling</li> </ul>	<p>The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions, with frequent and severe errors often obscuring meaning.</p>

\*To receive a score in all categories the response must be in English, of a sufficient length, and address the prompt.