

Standards and Scoring Criteria for Writing Tasks

General Rules

The main point here is to estimate the extent to which successful completions of the task requires the kind of cognitive work indicated by each standard.

- If a task has different parts that imply different expectations (e.g., worksheet/short answer questions and a question asking for explanations of some conclusions), the score should reflect the teacher's apparent dominant or overall expectations. Overall expectations are indicated by the proportion of time or effort spent on different parts of the task and criteria for evaluation, if stated by the teacher.
- Take into account what students can reasonably be expected to do at the grade level.
- When it is difficult to decide between two scores, give the higher score only when a persuasive case can be made that the task meets minimal criteria for the higher score.
- If the specific wording of the criteria is not helpful in making judgments, base the score on the general intent or spirit of the standard described in the introductory paragraphs of the standard.

	Construction of Knowledge	Disciplinary Content	Elaborated Written Communication	Connection to Students' Lives
4	N/A	N/A	Explicit call for generalization AND support. The task asks students, using narrative or expository writing, to draw conclusions or to make generalizations or arguments, AND to substantiate them with examples, summaries, illustrations, details, or reasons.	N/A
3	The task's dominant expectation is for students to interpret, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate information, rather than merely to reproduce information.	Success in the task clearly requires understanding of concepts, ideas, or theories central to the discipline.	Call for generalization OR support. The task asks students, using narrative or expository writing, either to draw conclusions or make generalizations or arguments, OR to offer examples, summaries, illustrations, details, or reasons, but not both.	The task asks students, using narrative or expository writing, to connect the topic to experiences, observations, feelings, or situations significant in their lives.
2	There is some expectation for students to interpret, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate information, rather than merely to reproduce information.	Success in the task seems to require understanding of concepts, ideas or theories central in the discipline, but the task does not make these very explicit.	Short-answer exercises. The task or its parts can be answered with only one or two sentences, clauses, or phrasal fragments that complete a thought.	The task offers the opportunity for students, using narrative or expository writing, to connect the topic to experiences, observations, feelings, or situations significant in their lives, but does not explicitly call for them to do so.
1	There is very little or no expectation for students to interpret, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate information. The dominant expectation is that students will merely reproduce information gained by reading, listening, or observing.	Success in the task can be achieved with a very superficial (or even without) understanding of concepts, ideas, or theories central to the discipline.	Fill-in-the-blank or multiple choice exercises.	The task offers very minimal or no opportunity for students to connect the topic to experiences, observations, feelings, or situations significant in their lives.

Writing Tasks

Notes

Criteria for Scoring Construction of Knowledge

The task asks students to interpret, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate information in writing about a topic, rather than merely to reproduce information. To score high, the task should require interpretation, analysis, synthesis, or evaluation of information that goes deeper than simple familiarity with the information.

- ❑ These requirements can be inferred either through explicit instructions from the teacher or through a task that cannot be successfully completed without students doing these things.

Criteria for Scoring Disciplinary Content

The task asks students to show an understanding and/or use of ideas, theories, or perspectives considered central to an academic or professional discipline.

- ❑ To what extent does the task promote students' understanding of and thinking about ideas, theories or perspectives considered seminal or critical within the academic or professional discipline, or in interdisciplinary fields recognized in authoritative scholarship? Examples in math could include proportion, equality, central tendency, or geometric space. Examples in social science could include democracy, social class, market economy, or theories of revolution.
- ❑ Reference to isolated factual claims, definitions, algorithms—though necessary to inquiry within a discipline—will not be considered indicators of significant disciplinary content unless the task requires students to apply powerful disciplinary ideas that organize and interpret the information.

Criteria for Scoring Elaborated Written Communication

The task asks students to draw conclusions or make generalizations or arguments and support them through extended writing.

Criteria for Scoring Connection to Students' Lives

The task asks students to connect the topic to their lives.