
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) WRITING RUBRICS

Grade 8 items that are not machine-scored—i.e., constructed-response, extended constructed-response, and extended writing response items—are manually scored using either a holistic rubric or a two-trait rubric.

Four-Point Holistic Rubric

Genre: Narrative

A holistic rubric evaluates one major feature, which is ideas. On the Georgia Milestones EOG assessment, a holistic rubric is scored from zero to four. Each point value represents the difference in the levels or quality of the student’s work. To score an item on a holistic rubric, the scorer need only choose the description and associated point value that best represents the student’s work. Increasing point values represent a greater understanding of the content and, thus, a higher score.

Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

Genre: Argumentative or Informational/Explanatory

A two-trait rubric, on the other hand, evaluates two major traits, which are conventions and ideas. On the Georgia Milestones EOG assessment, a two-trait rubric contains two scales, one for each trait, ranging from zero to three on one scale (conventions) and zero to four on the other (ideas). A score is given for each of the two traits, for a total of seven possible points for the item. To score an item on a two-trait rubric, a scorer must choose the description and associated point value for each trait that best represents the student’s work. The two scores are added together. Increasing point values represent a greater understanding of the content and, thus, a higher score.

On the following pages are the rubrics that will be used to evaluate writing on the Georgia Milestones Grade 8 English Language Arts EOG assessment.



Four-Point Holistic Rubric

Genre: Narrative

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p><i>This trait examines the writer’s ability to effectively develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences based on a text that has been read.</i></p>	4	<p><i>The student’s response is a well-developed narrative that fully develops a real or imagined experience based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively establishes a situation and a point of view and introduces a narrator and/or characters • Organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically • Effectively uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, pacing, and reflection, to develop rich, interesting experiences, events, and/or characters • Uses a variety of words and phrases consistently and effectively to convey the sequence of events, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events • Uses precise words, phrases, and sensory language to convey experiences and events and capture the action • Provides a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events • Integrates ideas and details from source material effectively • Has very few or no errors in usage and/or conventions that interfere with meaning*
	3	<p><i>The student’s response is a complete narrative that develops a real or imagined experience based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes a situation and introduces one or more characters • Organizes events in a clear, logical order • Uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, pacing, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters • Uses words and/or phrases to indicate sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events • Uses words, phrases, and details to capture the action and convey experiences and events • Provides an appropriate conclusion • Integrates some ideas and/or details from source material • Has a few minor errors in usage and/or conventions that interfere with meaning*

Four-Point Holistic Rubric

Genre: Narrative (continued)

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p><i>This trait examines the writer’s ability to effectively develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences based on a text that has been read.</i></p>	2	<p><i>The student’s response is an incomplete or oversimplified narrative based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces a vague situation and at least one character • Organizes events in a sequence but with some gaps or ambiguity • Attempts to use a narrative technique, such as dialogue, description, pacing, or reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters • Uses occasional signal words inconsistently and ineffectively to indicate sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, or show the relationships among experiences and events • Uses some words or phrases inconsistently and ineffectively to convey experiences, and events, and capture the action • Provides a weak or ambiguous conclusion • Attempts to integrate ideas or details from source material • Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that sometimes interfere with meaning*
	1	<p><i>The student’s response provides evidence of an attempt to write a narrative based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response is a summary of the story. • Provides a weak or minimal introduction of a situation or character • May be too brief to demonstrate a complete sequence of events, or signal shifts in one time frame or setting to another, or show relationships among experiences and events • Shows little or no attempt to use dialogue, description, pacing, or reflection to develop experiences, events, and/or characters • Uses words that are inappropriate, overly simple, or unclear • Provides few, if any, words to convey experiences, or events, or capture the action • Provides a minimal or no conclusion • May use few, if any, ideas or details from source material • Has frequent major errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning*
	0	<p><i>The student’s response is flawed for various reasons and will receive a condition code:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code A: Blank • Code B: Copied • Code C: Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible • Code D: Non-English/Foreign Language • Code E: Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive

*Students are responsible for language conventions learned in their current grade as well as in prior grades. Refer to the language skills for each grade to determine the grade-level expectations for grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Also refer to the “Language Progressive Skills, by Grade” chart in Appendix A for those standards that need continued attention beyond the grade in which they were introduced.

Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

Trait 1 for Informational/Explanatory Genre

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p>Idea Development, Organization, and Coherence</p> <p><i>This trait examines the writer’s ability to effectively establish a controlling idea and to support the idea with evidence from the text(s) read and to elaborate on the idea with examples, illustrations, facts, and other details in order. The writer must integrate the information from the text(s) into his/her own words and arrange the ideas and supporting evidence (from text that they have read) in order to create cohesion for an informative/explanatory essay.</i></p>	4	<p><i>The student’s response is a well-developed informative/explanatory text that examines a topic in depth and conveys ideas and information clearly based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively introduces a topic • Effectively organizes ideas, concepts, and information using various strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect • Effectively develops the topic with multiple, relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic • Effectively uses appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts • Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic • Establishes and maintains a formal style • Provides a strong concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented
	3	<p><i>The student’s response is a complete informative/explanatory text that examines a topic and presents information based on a text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces a topic • Generally organizes ideas, concepts, and information • Develops the topic with a few facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples • Uses some transitions to connect and clarify relationships among ideas, but relationships may not always be clear • Uses some precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to explain the topic • Maintains a formal style, for the most part • Provides a concluding statement or section
	2	<p><i>The student’s response is an incomplete or oversimplified informative/explanatory text that cursorily examines a topic.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to introduce a topic • Attempts to develop a topic with too few details • Ineffectively organizes ideas, concepts, and information • Uses limited language and vocabulary that does not inform or explain the topic • Uses few transitions to connect and clarify relationships among ideas • Uses a formal style inconsistently or uses an informal style • Provides a weak concluding statement or section
	1	<p><i>The student’s response is a weak attempt to write an informative/explanatory text that examines a topic.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not introduce a topic or topic is unclear • May not develop a topic • May be too brief to group any related ideas together • May not use any linking words to connect ideas • Uses vague, ambiguous, or repetitive language • Uses a very informal style • Provides a minimal or no concluding statement or section
	0	<p><i>The student’s response is flawed for various reasons and will receive a condition code:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code A: Blank • Code B: Copied • Code C: Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible • Code D: Non-English/Foreign Language • Code E: Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive

Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

Trait 2 for Informational/Explanatory Genre

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
Language Usage and Conventions <i>This trait examines the writer's ability to demonstrate control of sentence formation, usage, and mechanics as embodied in the grade-level expectations of the language standards.</i>	3	<i>The student's response demonstrates full command of language usage and conventions.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively varies sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style • Shows command of language and conventions when writing • Any errors in usage and conventions do not interfere with meaning*
	2	<i>The student's response demonstrates partial command of language usage and conventions.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies some sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style • Shows some knowledge of languages and conventions when writing • Has minor errors in usage and conventions with no significant effect on meaning*
	1	<i>The student's response demonstrates weak command of language usage and conventions.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has fragments, run-ons, and/or other sentence structure errors • Shows little knowledge of languages and conventions when writing • Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning*
	0	<i>The student's response is flawed for various reasons and will receive a condition code:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code A: Blank • Code B: Copied • Code C: Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible • Code D: Non-English/Foreign Language • Code E: Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive

*Students are responsible for language conventions learned in their current grade as well as in prior grades. Refer to the language skills for each grade to determine the grade-level expectations for grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Also refer to the "Language Progressive Skills, by Grade" chart in Appendix A for those standards that need continued attention beyond the grade in which they were introduced.

Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

Trait 1 for Argumentative Genre

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p>Idea Development, Organization, and Coherence</p> <p><i>This trait examines the writer’s ability to effectively establish a claim as well as to address counterclaims, to support the claim with evidence from the text(s) read, and to elaborate on the claim with examples, illustrations, facts, and other details. The writer must integrate the information from the text(s) into his/her own words and arrange the ideas and supporting evidence in order to create cohesion for an argument essay.</i></p>	4	<p><i>The student’s response is a well-developed argument that effectively relates and supports claims with clear reasons and relevant text-based evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively introduces claim(s) • Uses an organizational strategy to present reasons and relevant evidence logically • Supports claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence using specific, well-chosen facts, details, or other information from credible sources and demonstrates a good understanding of the topic or texts • Acknowledges and counters opposing claim(s), as appropriate • Uses words, phrases, and/or clauses that effectively connect and show direct, strong relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence • Establishes and maintains a formal style that is appropriate for the task, purpose, and audience • Provides a strong concluding statement or section that logically follows from the argument presented
	3	<p><i>The student’s response is a complete argument that relates and supports claims with some text-based evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly introduces claim(s) • Uses an organizational strategy to present some reasons and evidence • Uses specific facts, details, definitions, examples, and/or other information from sources to develop claim(s) • Attempts to acknowledge and/or counter opposing claim(s), as appropriate • Uses words and/or phrases to connect ideas and show relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence • Uses a formal style fairly consistently for task, purpose, and audience • Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented
	2	<p><i>The student’s response is an incomplete or oversimplified argument that partially supports claims with loosely related, text-based evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to introduce claim(s) • Attempts to use an organizational structure which may be formulaic • Develops, sometimes unevenly, reasons and/or evidence to support claim(s) • Makes little, if any, attempt to acknowledge or counter opposing claim(s) • Attempts to support claim(s) with facts, reasons, and other evidence sometimes, but logic and relevancy are often unclear • Uses few words or phrases to connect ideas; connections are not always clear • Uses a formal style inconsistently or an informal style that does not fit task, purpose, or audience • Provides a weak concluding statement or section that may not follow the argument presented
	1	<p><i>The student’s response is a weak attempt to write an argument and does not support claims with adequate text-based evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not introduce claim(s)/claims(s) must be inferred • May be too brief to demonstrate an organizational structure, or no structure is evident • Has minimal support for claim(s) • Makes no attempt to acknowledge or counter opposing claim(s) • Uses minimal or no words or phrases to connect ideas • Uses a very informal style that is not appropriate for task, purpose, or audience • Provides a minimal or no concluding statement or section
	0	<p><i>The student’s response is flawed for various reasons and will receive a condition code:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code A: Blank • Code B: Copied • Code C: Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible • Code D: Non-English/Foreign Language • Code E: Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive

Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

Trait 2 for Argumentative Genre

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p>Language Usage and Conventions</p> <p><i>This trait examines the writer's ability to demonstrate control of sentence formation, usage, and mechanics as embodied in the grade-level expectations of the language standards.</i></p>	3	<p><i>The student's response demonstrates full command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively varies sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style • Shows command of language and conventions when writing • Any errors in usage and conventions do not interfere with meaning*
	2	<p><i>The student's response demonstrates partial command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies some sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style • Shows some knowledge of languages and conventions when writing • Has minor errors in usage and conventions with no significant effect on meaning*
	1	<p><i>The student's response demonstrates weak command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has fragments, run-ons, and/or other sentence structure errors • Shows little knowledge of languages and conventions when writing • Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning*
	0	<p><i>The student's response is flawed for various reasons and will receive a condition code:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code A: Blank • Code B: Copied • Code C: Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible • Code D: Non-English/Foreign Language • Code E: Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive

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