

Grade 4 Writing Task – OPINION – Teacher’s Rubric

The Writing and Language Anchor Standards in the shaded box below are college- and career-ready goals for student writing development.

The specific CCSS Grade 4 descriptors of those Writing and Language Standards form the basis for a Rubric score of 3.

See rubric score 3 for fourth grade descriptors of these standards.

Language in bold on rubric is from SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) rubrics.

WRITING ANCHOR STD #1 (W1): Writes arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

WRITING ANCHOR STD #4 (W4): Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

WRITING ANCHOR STD #8 (W8): Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

LANGUAGE ANCHOR STD #1 (L1): Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

LANGUAGE ANCHOR STD #2 (L2): Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

LANGUAGE ANCHOR STD #3 (L3): Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

LANGUAGE ANCHOR STD #6 (L6): Acquire and accurately use a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

A good opinion essay:

- Has a clear introduction
- States your opinion/claim in a focus statement
- Groups related ideas in paragraphs
- Uses specific facts and details from the text(s) to support your opinion and explain your reasoning
- Uses linking words to connect your opinion and reasons
- Has a conclusion
- Has correct spelling, capitalization, and punctuation

Score	Statement of Purpose: Focus and Organization		Development: Elaboration and Language		Conventions of Standard English	
	Statement of Purpose/Focus	Organization	Elaboration of Evidence	Language and Vocabulary	Grammar & Usage	Punctuation, Spelling, Capitalization
<p>“The opinion piece response...”</p> <p>4</p>	<p>...Is fully sustained and consistently and purposefully focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces a topic or text clearly that states an opinion. (W1a) Concluding statement is directly related to opinion. (W1d) Focus is strongly maintained for the task, purpose, and audience. (W4) 	<p>...Has a clear and effective organizational structure creating unity and completeness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Related ideas are grouped clearly and effectively to support writer's purpose. (W1a) Reasons are supported by specific facts and details. (W1b) Opinions and reasons are linked with a variety of linking words and phrases. (W1c) 	<p>...Provides thorough and convincing support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear and relevant information from multiple sources is skillfully integrated. (W8) 	<p>...Clearly and effectively expresses ideas, using precise languages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposeful choice of words and phrases to convey ideas precisely. (L3a) Effective use of punctuation for effect. (L3b) Effective use of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases. (L6) 	<p>...Demonstrates strong command of conventions with few if any errors in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order of adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (L1e) Formation and use of prepositional phrases (L1f) Production of complete sentences, correcting inappropriate run-ons and fragments. (L1g) Consistent subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.* (L.3.1h) 	<p>...Demonstrates strong command of conventions with few if any errors in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalization. (L2a) Use of commas and quotations to mark direct speech and quotations from text. (L2b) Use of commas before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence. (L2c) Spelling of grade-appropriate words consulting references as needed. (L2d)
<p>“The opinion piece response...”</p> <p>3</p>	<p>...is adequately sustained and generally focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces a topic or text clearly that states an opinion. (W1a) Concluding statement is related to opinion. (W1d) Focus is mostly maintained for the task, purpose, and audience across multiple paragraphs. (W4) 	<p>...Has a recognizable organizational structure though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Related ideas are grouped to support writer's purpose. (W1a) Reasons are supported by facts and details. (W1b) Opinions and reasons are linked using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition). (W1c) 	<p>...Provides adequate support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes the use of sources, facts, and details.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear and relevant information from multiple sources is adequately integrated. (W8) 	<p>...Adequately expresses ideas, employing a mix of precise with more general language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate choice of words and phrases to convey ideas precisely. (L3a) Adequate use of punctuation for effect. (L3b) Adequate use of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases. (L6) 	<p>...Demonstrates adequate command of conventions with some errors but no systematic patterns displayed in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order of adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns. (L1e) Formation and use of prepositional phrases (L1f) Production of complete sentences, correcting inappropriate run-ons and fragments. (L1g) Subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.* (L.3.1h) 	<p>...Demonstrates adequate command of conventions with some errors but no systematic patterns displayed in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalization. (L2a) Use of commas and quotations to mark direct speech and quotations from text. (L2b) Use of commas before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence. (L2c) Spelling of grade-appropriate words consulting references as needed. (L2d)

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	Statement of Purpose/Focus	Organization	Elaboration of Evidence	Language and Vocabulary	Grammar & Usage	Punctuation, Spelling, Capitalization
<p>“The opinion piece response...”</p> <p>2</p>	<p>...Is somewhat sustained with some extraneous material or a minor drift in focus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic is introduced but is vague. • Uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end. • Concluding statement is weakly related to the opinion. • Focus may be insufficiently sustained across multiple paragraphs. 	<p>...Has an inconsistent organizational structure, and flaws are evident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons are listed but lack clear connection to the writer's purpose. • Reasons are poorly supported by facts and details. • Linking words are inconsistently used to connect opinions and reasons. 	<p>...Provides uneven, cursory support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes partial or uneven use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some evidence from sources may weakly integrated, imprecise or repetitive, references may be vague. 	<p>...Expresses ideas unevenly, using simplistic language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak or imprecise choice of words and phrases to convey ideas. • Poor or imprecise use of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases. 	<p>...Demonstrates a partial command of conventions with frequent errors in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order of adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns. • Formation and use of prepositional phrases. • Production of complete sentences. • Subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.* 	<p>...Demonstrates a partial command of conventions with frequent errors in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalization. • Use of commas and quotations to mark direct speech and quotations from text. • Use of commas before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence. • Spelling of grade-appropriate words consulting references as needed.
<p>“The opinion piece response...”</p> <p>1</p>	<p>...May be related to the purpose but may offer little or no focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opinion may be confusing or ambiguous. • May be very brief. • Concluding statement is not related to the opinion or is nonexistent. 	<p>...Has little or no discernable organizational structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons provided are random. • Reasons may not be supported by facts and details. • Linking words are not used or used incorrectly to connect opinions and reasons. 	<p>...Provides minimal support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes little or no use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence from source materials is minimal or irrelevant. 	<p>...Expresses ideas vaguely, lacks clarity, or is confusing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word choice is confusing/unclear. • Only conversational language used. 	<p>...Demonstrates a lack of command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors in order of adjectives, prepositional phrases, sentence formation, and agreement are frequent and severe and meaning is often obscured. 	<p>...Demonstrates a lack of command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors in punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are frequent and severe and meaning is often obscured.

*Skills marked with an asterisk in Language standards are likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing.