

# Four-Strand/Four-Level Writing Scoring Guide

Everett Public Schools~ Date Revised 7/8/2011

**CONTENT** is writing to a narrow topic with relevant ideas supported with details, examples, facts and anecdotes so the meaning is clear.



**ORGANIZATION** is arranging events/ideas/reasons in an order that provides a sense of completeness appropriate to the purpose. It is a logical pattern, and transitions for cohesion.



**Level 4: Advanced**

- A. Focus is narrow and concentrated throughout the paper and centered on a substantive thesis/position.
- B. Reason(s) are significant; fully support the thesis/position.
- C. Elaboration is significant, purposeful, specific and precise; uses combination of details/examples/facts/anecdotes to fully support thesis/reasons; clarifies.
- D. Message is insightful, distinct and/or anticipates questions.
- E. Commentary (8th-HS) tightly connects elaboration, reason(s), and thesis/position to help the reader understand.

**Level 3: Proficient**

- A. Focus is maintained and consistent throughout the paper and centered on a manageable thesis/position.
- B. Reason(s) are relevant and support the thesis/position.
- C. Elaboration is meaningful, relevant and specific; uses details/examples/facts/anecdotes to support thesis/reasons; explains reasons.
- D. Message is present, interesting or important; goes beyond the obvious although may be anticipated.
- E. Commentary (8th-HS) connects elaboration, reason(s), and thesis/position.

**Level 2: Basic**

- A. Focus is general throughout the paper; thesis/position may be vague, unmanageable or simplistic
- B. Reason(s) are generally connected; may not adequately support the thesis/position.
- C. Elaboration is sometimes connected but does not adequately support the thesis/reasons; connection may be implied; may confuse reader.
- D. Message is present; may be simplistic, obvious or may require interpretation to make sense.
- E. Commentary (8th-HS) may connect elaboration, reason(s), and thesis/position in a general way; reader may have to infer the connections.

**Level 1: Below Basic**

- A. Focus is lost or wanders throughout paper; no thesis/position evident.
- B. Reason(s) do not support the thesis/position or are missing.
- C. Elaboration does not support thesis/reasons; is missing.
- D. Message is missing, severely flawed or comprised of random thoughts that make no discernable point.
- E. Commentary (8th-HS) is missing or does not connect elaboration, reason(s), and thesis/position.

**Level 4: Advanced**

- A. Introduction uniquely presents thesis/position. Uses one or more of the introduction strategies. Creatively engages the reader. Gives a strong sense of direction.
- B. Middle reasons/elaboration are tightly and purposefully arranged in a unified, cohesive and/or logical pattern to develop the thesis/position; has a sense of completeness.
- C. Transitions intentionally signal/imply connections throughout the text; clearly provide a sense of cohesion (between/within-paragraphs).
- D. Conclusion signals a thought-provoking and insightful wrap-up that tightly connects to the thesis and body of the paper. Uniquely uses one or more conclusion strategies.

**Level 3: Proficient**

- A. Introduction presents thesis/position. Effectively uses one or more of the introduction strategies. Engages the reader. Gives a sense of direction.
- B. Middle reasons/elaboration are arranged in a unified, cohesive and/or logical pattern to develop the thesis/position; has a sense of completeness.
- C. Transitions show, signal, or maintain connections (between/within-paragraphs).
- D. Conclusion provides a strong wrap-up that effectively connects to the thesis and body of paper, more than a summary. Effectively uses at least one or more of the conclusion strategies.

**Level 2: Basic**

- A. Introduction may only state main points or restate prompt. May attempt one or more of the introduction strategies. Does not attempt to engage the reader. Limited sense of direction.
- B. Middle reasons/elaboration are loosely arranged or are outline-like (formulaic); may lack completeness.
- C. Transitions are telling/sequencing connections (between/within-paragraphs).
- D. Conclusion is limited to summarizing; may attempt one or more of the conclusion strategies.

**Level 1: Below Basic**

- A. Introduction is missing; introduction strategy is not attempted; leaves reader with no direction.
- B. Middle reasons/elaboration are randomly or illogically ordered; may lack completeness.
- C. Transitions are incorrectly used, omitted, or repetitive in use (between/within-paragraphs).
- D. Conclusion is missing or restates topic/thesis or the text abruptly ends. Conclusion strategy is not attempted.

**STYLE** is writing fluently with well-chosen words while using an engaging voice.



**CONVENTIONS** is using rules of standard English for usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and paragraphs to make the meaning of the text clear.



**Level 4: Advanced**

- A. Sentences create an appropriate cadence to address a designated audience/purpose/form; shows an intentional use of sentence beginnings, structures and lengths.
- B. Word Choice is vivid, apt, memorable; is natural and never overdone; uses various active verbs.
- C. Voice uses tone that engages designated audience; may take risks.

**Level 3: Proficient**

- A. Sentences create a suitable cadence for a designated audience/purpose/form through a variety of beginnings, structures and lengths.
- B. Word Choice is specific and persuasive/compelling; strengthens writing, and shows use of active verbs.
- C. Voice uses tone that is appropriate for designated audience; writes in a consistent voice.

**Level 2: Basic**

- A. Sentences create a cadence that is troublesome for audience/purpose/form due to limited variety of beginnings, structures and lengths.
- B. Word Choice is limited; does not enhance writing; may show thesaurus overload, and/or mostly uses passive verbs.
- C. Voice uses tone that is inconsistent with relationship to designated audience.

**Level 1: Below Basic**

- A. Sentences create a cadence that is awkward for audience/purpose/form using minimal variety of beginnings, structures and lengths.
- B. Word Choice shows redundancy; is incorrect/has omissions, or confuses and weakens the writing.
- C. Voice uses tone that does not address the designated audience.

**Level 4: Advanced**

intentionally applies usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation and paragraphs to enhance meaning; may break rules for style purposes; demonstrates good command of conventions.

**Level 3: Proficient**

lower grade-level expectations must be met. Accurately applies grade-level usage, spelling, punctuation and paragraph expectations; has competent use of conventions.

**Level 2: Basic**

consistently applies lower grade-level usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation and/or paragraph expectations; lower grade-level errors do not interfere with meaning and/or readability.

**Level 1: Below Basic**

inconsistently applies lower grade-level usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and/or paragraph expectations; lower grade-level errors interfere with meaning and/or readability.

**Comment:** (In addition, mark off-prompt, off-mode here)