Grades 1-3 English Language Arts Scoring Guide

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|  | **Content** | **Organization** | **Sentence Structure** | **Vocabulary** | **Conventions** |
| **Focus** | When marking **Content** appropriate for grades 1-3 narrative writing, the marker should consider how effectively the writer   * Establishes the relationship between events, actions, and the context (situation) * Uses specific details * Demonstrates the reader/writer relationship (voice) | When marking **Organization** appropriate for grades 1-3 narrative writing, the marker should consider how effectively the writer   * Introduces the response * Establishes the connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters * Brings closure to the writing | When marking **Sentence Structure** appropriate for grades 1-3 narrative writing, the marker should consider how effectively the writer   * Controls sentence structure * Uses different sentence patterns and lengths * Uses a variety of sentence beginnings   **Length and complexity of response must be considered.** | When marking **Vocabulary** appropriate for grades 1-3 narrative writing, the marker should consider the extent to which the writer uses   * Words appropriately * Expressions effectively * Words and expressions together to enhance the writing   **Length and complexity of response must be considered.** | When marking **Conventions** appropriate for grades 1-3 narrative writing, the marker should consider the extent to which the writer   * Uses end punctuation and capitalization * Controls spelling * Controls usage of language and the clarity of communication   **Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.** |
| **Excellent**  **5** | * Events, actions, and/or ideas are creative and are consistent with the context established by the writer. * Details are precise and consistently effective. * The writing is confident, holds the reader’s interest, and presents a well-supported main idea. | * The beginning is purposeful and effectively establishes events, characters, and/or setting, and provides direction for the writing. * Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are developed and consistently maintained. * The ending effectively ties events and/or actions together. | * Sentence structure is consistently controlled. * Sentence type and length are varied and effective. * Sentence beginnings are consistently varied. | * Well-chosen words are used effectively. * Expressions are consistently precise and effective. * Words and expressions are used to create vivid images and consistently enhance the writing. | * End punctuation and capitalization are essentially correct. * Most words, familiar and unfamiliar, are spelled correctly; spelling errors are understandable “slips.” * Errors that are present do not affect the clarity or effectiveness of communication. |
| **Proficient**  **4** | * Events, actions, and/or ideas are intentionally chosen and are appropriate for the context established by the writer. * Details are specific and usually effective. * The writing is purposeful, draws the readers’ interest, and presents a supported main idea. | * The beginning clearly establishes events, characters, and/or setting, and provides direction for the writing. * Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are usually maintained. * The ending clearly provides an appropriate finish for events and/or actions. | * Sentence structure is usually controlled. * Sentence type and length are usually varied and effective. * Sentence beginnings are often varied. | * Well-chosen words are often used. * Expressions are usually specific and effective. * Words and expressions are descriptive and often enhance the writing. | * End punctuation and capitalization are usually correct. * Most familiar words are spelled correctly; errors are “slips”; unfamiliar words may be spelled phonetically. * Errors that are present rarely affect the clarity of communication. |
| **Satisfactory**  **3** | * Events, actions, and/or ideas are generally appropriate for the context established by the writer. * Details are general and may be predictable but are appropriate. * The writing is straightforward and generally holds the reader’s interest, and provides some support of a main idea. | * The beginning directly presents information about events, characters, and/or setting. * Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are generally maintained. * The ending is predictable and/or may be contrived but is connected to events and/or actions. | * Sentence structure is generally controlled but may occasionally impede meaning. * Sentences may vary in type and length. * Some variety of sentence beginnings is evident. | * Words chosen tend to be common or ordinary. * Expressions are usually more general than specific. * Words and expressions sometimes enhance the writing. | * Conventional end punctuation and capitalization are generally correct. * Many familiar words are spelled correctly; errors suggest uneven control of spelling rules; unfamiliar words are generally spelled phonetically. * Errors are sometimes intrusive and may affect the clarity of communication. |
| **Limited**  **2** | * Events, actions, and/or ideas or vague and may not be appropriate for the context established by the writer. * Details are few and/or may be repetitive. * The writing is ambiguous, it does not hold the reader’s interest, and the main idea is inadequately developed. | * The beginning presents information about events, characters, and/or setting but lacks direction. * Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are unclear or inconsistent. * The ending is predictable and/or contrived. | * Sentence structure is sometimes lacking control, and this often impedes meaning. * There is little variation in sentence type and/or length. * There is little variety of sentence beginnings. | * Words used indicate a lack of vocabulary. * Expressions are simplistic and/or ineffective. * Words and expressions are basic and/or may detract from the writing. | * End punctuation and capitalization, when present, are inconsistent. * Many familiar words are misspelled and/or spelled phonetically. * Errors interfere with the clarity of communication. |
| **Poor**  **1** | * Events, actions, and/or ideas are undeveloped and/or inappropriate. * Details are scant. * The writing is confusing and/or frustrating for the reader, and a main idea is lacking. | * The beginning provides little information and/or is ineffective. * Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are missing. * The ending, if present, is unconnected to the events and/or actions. | * Thought units are difficult to recognize, and this severely impedes the meaning. * There is no variation in sentence type and/or length. * There is no variety of sentence beginnings. | * Words chosen are sometimes inappropriate and/or misused. * Expressions are misused or missing. * Words and expressions are simple and/or inadequate. | * There is little, if any, evidence that the writer understands correct use of end punctuation and capitalization. * Words may be difficult to discern and are generally spelled phonetically. * Communication is not clear. |
| **Insufficient**  **INS** | * The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment, or the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess **Content**. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. |

Grades 4-6 English Language Arts Scoring Guide

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|  | **Content** | **Organization** | **Sentence Structure** | **Vocabulary** | **Conventions** |
| **Focus** | When marking **Content** appropriate for grades 4-6 narrative writing, the marker should consider how effectively the writer   * Establishes a context * Uses ideas and/or events that are appropriate for the established context * Use specific details (of characters, setting, actions, events, etc.) * Demonstrate an awareness of audience | When marking **Organization** appropriate for grades 4-6 narrative writing, the marker should consider how effectively the writer   * Introduces the response * Follows a coherent order * Establishes connections and/or relationships among events, actions, details, and/or characters * Brings closure to the writing | When marking **Sentence Structure** appropriate for grades 4-6 narrative writing, the marker should consider how effectively the writer   * Writer’s control of sentence structure * Effectiveness and variety of sentence type and sentence length * Variety of sentence beginnings   **Length and complexity of response must be considered.** | When marking **Vocabulary** appropriate for grades 4-6 narrative writing, the marker should consider the extent to which the writer uses   * Words and expressions are used accurately * Words and expressions are used effectively * Words and expressions to enhance the student’s voice   **Length and complexity of response must be considered.** | When marking **Conventions** appropriate for grades 4-6 narrative writing, the marker should consider the extent to which the writer   * Mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, indentation for new speakers, etc.) and usage (subject-verb agreement, pronoun-antecedent agreement, etc.) * Clarity and flow of the response.   **Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.** |
| **Excellent**  **5** | * The context is clearly established and consistent. * The ideas and/or events are deliberately chosen for the context established. * Supporting details are precise and consistently effective. * The writing is confident and/or creative and holds the reader’s interest. | * The introduction is purposeful, interesting, and effectively establishes events, characters, and/or setting, and provides direction for the writing. * Events and/or details are developed in paragraphs, in a purposeful and effective order, and coherence is maintained. * Connections and/or relationships among events, actions, details, and/or characters are consistently maintained. * The ending ties events and/or actions together. | * Sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled. * Sentence type and sentence length are consistently effective and varied. * Sentence beginnings are consistently varied. | * Words and expressions are used accurately. * Precise words and expressions are used to create vivid images and/or to enrich details. * Words and expressions are used to create vivid images and enhance the student’s voice. | * The quality of the writing is enhanced because it is essentially error-free. * Errors, if present, do not reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the response. |
| **Proficient**  **4** | * The context is clearly established and appropriate. * The ideas and/or events are intentionally chosen for the context established. * Supporting details are specific and generally effective. * The writing is considered and draws the reader’s interest. | * The introduction clearly establishes events, characters, and/or setting, and provides direction for the writing. * Events and/or details are developed in paragraphs, in a purposeful order, and coherence is generally maintained. * Connections and/or relationships among events, actions, details, and/or characters are maintained. * The ending provides and appropriate finish for events and/or actions. | * Sentence structure is controlled. * Sentence type and sentence length are usually effective and varied. * Sentence beginnings are often varied. | * Words and expressions are often used accurately. * Specific words and expressions are frequently used to create images and/or to add clarity to details. * Words and expressions are descriptive and often enhance the student’s voice. | * The quality of the writing is sustained because it contains only minor convention errors. * Errors that are present rarely reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the response. |
| **Satisfactory**  **3** | * The context is established and generally appropriate. * The ideas and/or events are adequate for the context established. * Supporting details are general and may be predictable. * The writing is straightforward and generally holds the reader’s interest. | * The introduction directly presents information about events, characters, and/or setting. * Events and/or details are developed in a discernable order, although coherence may falter occasionally. * Connections and/or relationships among events, actions, details, and/or characters are generally maintained. * The ending is predictable and/or contrived but is connected to events and/or actions. | * Sentence structure is generally controlled, but lapses may occasionally impede meaning. * Sentence type and sentence length are sometimes effective and/or varied. * Some variety of sentence beginnings is evident. | * Words and expressions are generally used appropriately. * General words and expressions are used adequately to clarify meaning. * Words and expressions generally enhance the student’s voice. | * The quality of the writing is maintained through generally correct use of conventions. * Errors that are present occasionally reduce the clarity and sometimes interrupt the flow of the response. |
| **Limited**  **2** | * The context is vaguely established and/or may not be appropriate. * The ideas and/or events are vague given the context established. * Supporting details are few and /or may be repetitive. * The writing is superficial and does not hold the reader’s interest. | * The introduction presents information about events, characters, and/or setting but lacks direction. * The development of events and/or details is not clearly discernable, and coherence falters frequently. * Connections and/or relationships among events, actions, details, and/or characters are unclear and/or inconsistent or missing. * The ending is predictable and/or contrived, and may not be connected to events and/or actions. | * Sentence structure sometimes lacks control, and this may impede the meaning. * There is little variation of sentence type and sentence length. * There is little variety of sentence beginnings. | * Words and expressions generally convey only vague meanings. * Imprecise words and expressions predominate; specific words, if present, may be awkwardly used. * Words and expressions are basic and may detract from the student’s voice. | * The quality of the writing is weakened by the frequent incorrect use of conventions. * Errors often reduce the clarity and interrupt the flow of the response. |
| **Poor**  **1** | * The context may be unclear and/or inappropriate. * The ideas and/or events are undeveloped and/or unrelated to any context established. * Supporting details are scant. * The writing is confusing and/or frustrating for the reader. | * The introduction provides little information and/or is ineffective. * The development of events and/or details is haphazard and incoherent. * Connections and/or relationships among events, actions, details, and/or characters are missing. * The ending, if present, is unconnected to the events and/or actions. | * Sentence structure generally lacks control, and this often impedes the meaning. * There is no variation of sentence type or sentence length. * There is no variety of sentence beginnings. | * Words and expressions convey only vague meanings. * Overgeneralized words and expressions predominate; specific words, if present, are frequently misused. * Words and expressions are simple and/or obscure the student’s voice. | * The quality of the writing is impaired by the consistently incorrect use of conventions. * Errors severely reduce the clarity and impede the flow of the response. |
| **Insufficient**  **INS** | * The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment, or the student has written so little that it is not possible to assess Content. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. |

Grades 7-9 English Language Arts Scoring Guide

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|  | **Content** | **Organization** | **Sentence Structure** | **Vocabulary** | **Conventions** |
| **Focus** | When marking Content appropriate for grades 7-9 narrative writing, the marker should consider how effectively the student   * Explores the topic * Establishes a purpose * Presents ideas * Supports the response * Considers the reader | When marking **Organization** for grades 7-9 narrative writing, the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates   * Focus * Coherent order * Connections between events and/or details * Closure | When marking **Sentence Structure** for grades 7-9 narrative writing, the marker should consider the extent to which   * Sentence structure is controlled * Sentence type and sentence length are effective and varied * Sentence beginnings are varied   **Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.** | When marking **Vocabulary** for grades 7-9 narrative writing, the marker should consider the   * Accuracy of the words and expressions * Effectiveness of the words and expressions * Appropriateness and effectiveness of the voice/tone created by the student   **Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.** | When marking **Conventions** for grades 7-9 narrative writing, the marker should consider the extent to which the student has control of   * Mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, indentation for new speakers, etc.) and usage (subject-verb agreement, pronoun antecedent agreement, etc.) * Clarity and flow of the response   **Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.** |
| **Excellent**  **5** | * The student’s exploration of the topic is insightful and/or imaginative. * The student’s purpose, whether stated or implied, is deliberate. * The ideas presented by the student are perceptive and/or carefully chosen. * Supporting details are precise and/or original. * The writing is confident and/or creative and holds the reader’s interest. | * The introduction is engaging and skillfully establishes a focus that is consistently sustained. * Events and/or details are developed in a judicious order, and coherence is maintained. * Transitions, either explicit or implicit, fluently connect events and/or details within sentences and/or paragraphs. * Closure is effective and related to the focus. | * Sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled. * Sentence type and sentence length are consistently effective and varied. * Sentence beginnings are consistently varied. | * Words and expressions are used accurately and deliberately. * Precise words and expressions are used to create vivid images and/or to enrich details. * The voice/tone created by the student is convincing. | * The quality of writing is enhanced because it is essentially error-free. * Any errors that are present do not reduce clarity and/or do not interrupt the flow of the response. |
| **Proficient**  **4** | * The student’s exploration of the topic is adept and/or plausible. * The student’s purpose, whether stated or implied, is intentional. * The ideas presented by the student are thoughtful and/or sound. * Supporting details are specific and/or apt. * The writing is considered and/or elaborated and draws the reader’s interest. | * The introduction is purposeful and clearly establishes a focus that is capably sustained. * Events and/or details are developed in a sensible order, and coherence is generally maintained. * Transitions, either explicit or implicit, clearly connect events and/or details with sentences and/or between paragraphs. * Closure is appropriate and related to the focus. | * Sentence structure is consistently controlled. * Sentence type and sentence length are usually effective and varied. * Sentence beginnings are often varied. | * Words and expressions are often used accurately. * Specific words and expressions show some evidence of careful selection and/or some awareness of connotative effect. * The voice/tone created by the student is distinct. | * The quality of the writing is sustained because it contains only minor convention errors. * Any errors that are present rarely reduce clarity and/or seldom interrupt the flow of the response. |
| **Satisfactory**  **3** | * The student’s exploration of the topic is clear and/or logical. * The student’s purpose, whether stated or implied, is evident. * The ideas presented by the student are appropriate and/or predictable. * Supporting details are relevant and/or generic. * The writing is straightforward and/or generalized and occasionally appeals to the reader’s interest. | * The introduction is functional and establishes a focus that is generally sustained. * Events and/or details are developed in a discernable order, although coherence my falter occasionally. * Transitions, either explicit or implicit, tend to be mechanical and are generally used to connect events and/or details within sentences and/or between paragraphs. * Closure is related to the focus and is mechanical and/or artificial. | * Sentence structure is generally controlled, but lapses may occasionally impede meaning. * Sentence type and sentence length are sometimes effective and/or varied. * Some variety of sentence beginnings is evident. | * Words and expressions are generally used appropriately. * General words and expressions are used adequately to clarify meaning. * The voice/tone created by the student is discernable but may be inconsistent or uneven. | * The quality of the writing is sustained through generally correct use of conventions. * Errors occasionally reduce clarity and/or sometimes interrupt the flow of the response. |
| **Limited**  **2** | * The student’s exploration of the topic is tenuous and/or simplistic. * The student’s purpose, whether stated or implied, is vague. * The ideas presented by the student are superficial and/or ambiguous. * Supporting details are imprecise and/or abbreviated. * The writing is uncertain and/or incomplete and does not appeal to the reader’s interest. | * The introduction lacks purpose and/or is not functional; any focus established provides little direction and/or is not sustained. * The development of events and/or details is not clearly discernible, and coherence falters frequently. * Transitions, either explicit or implicit, are lacking and/or indiscriminately used to connect events and/or details within sentences and/or between paragraphs. * Closure is abrupt, contrived, and/or unrelated to the focus. | * Sentence structure often lacks control, and this may impede meaning. * Sentence type and sentence length are seldom effective and/or varied; syntactic structures are frequently awkward. * There is little variety of sentence beginnings. | * Words and expressions are often used inexactly. * Imprecise words and expressions predominate; specific words, if present, may be improperly used. * The voice/tone created by the student is not clearly established or is indistinct. | * The quality of the writing is weakened by the frequently incorrect use of conventions. * Errors blur clarity and/or interrupt the flow of the response. |
| **Poor**  **1** | * The student’s exploration of the topic is minimal and/or tangential. * The student’s purpose, whether stated or implied, is insubstantial. * The ideas presented by the student are overgeneralized and/or underdeveloped. * Supporting details are irrelevant and/or scant. * The writing is confusing and/or lacks validity and does not interest the reader. | * The introduction, if present, is obscure and/or ineffective; any focus established provides no direction and/or is undeveloped. * The development of events and/or details is haphazard and/or incoherent. * Transitions, either explicit or implicit, are absent and/or inappropriately used to connect events and/or details within sentences and/or between paragraphs. * Closure is ineffectual or missing. | * Sentence structure generally lacks control, and this often impedes meaning. * There is essentially no variation in sentence type or sentence length; syntactic structures are unintelligible. * There is essentially no variety of sentence beginnings. | * Words and expressions are generally used inaccurately. * Ineffective words and expressions predominate; specific words, if present, are frequently misused. * The voice/tone created by the student is not evident or is indiscreet. | * The quality of the writing is impaired by the consistently incorrect use of conventions. * Errors severely reduce clarity and/or impede the flow of the response. |
| **Insufficient**  **INS** | * The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment, or the student has written so little that it is not possible to assess Content. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. | * The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**. |