**6 Trait Student Writing Guide (DBQ)**

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| **Ideas** | **Organization** |
| **6*** I have a clear, focused thesis -- I have a vision!!!!
* I know this topic like an insider and it shows.
* I give my reader clear, accurate, insightful information.
* I pull information from gobs of outside knowledge and from all or all but one of the docs.
* I effectively discussed and responded to any counterarguments.
* Strong support makes everything I say convincing.

**5*** My thesis is clear.
* I accurately respond to the prompt.
* I give the reader useful information.
* I pulled information from outside knowledge and five of the docs.
* Good evidence makes my main points believable.
* I discussed and responded to any counterarguments, but I’m not entirely sure of that part of my essay.

**4*** You can tell what my thesis is, even if I don’t state it.
* I acceptably respond to the prompt.
* I give my reader a good overview of this topic.
* I pulled information from outside knowledge and four of the docs.
* I have some support for my thesis -- I’m not sure if it’s enough.

http://images.weddingclipart.com/images/1/1221244306526_373/img_1221244306526_3731.jpg**3*** I think you can figure out my thesis or main point.
* I don’t know enough to feel comfortable with this topic, most of what I say is simply common knowledge.
* I pulled information from outside knowledge and less than four of the docs.
* My support is sketchy -- it could leave you skeptical!
* I ignored any counterarguments.

**2*** My thesis is still coming together.
* There are BIG gaps in what I know about this topic, and my ideas are undeveloped, OR my assertions/claims are not supported.

**1*** I don’t have a thesis or main point.
* I don’t really know anything about this topic -- yet.
 | **6*** My organization/structure will guide you like a light in the dark.
* My lead sets up the discussion -- and invites you to be part of it.
* My ending helps you draw important conclusions.
* This piece is organized to make learning about this topic easy.
* I show connections you might not even think of if I did not bring them up.

**5*** My organization/structure will help you make sense of the topic.
* My lead invites you into the discussion.
* My ending brings the discussion to a close.
* The organization makes my thoughts easy to follow.
* I connect ideas to each other -- or to a big picture.

**4*** This design/structure works fine for this kind of writing.
* My lead gets the discussion started.
* The conclusion lets you know the conversation is over.
* I don’t think you’ll ever feel lost.
* The most important connections are clear.

http://images.weddingclipart.com/images/1/1221244306526_373/img_1221244306526_3731.jpg**3*** You might need to work to stay on track.
* I think my lead goes one way, my paper another.
* Maybe I stopped too quickly, or repeated things I had already said.
* You might need to reread to figure out what is most important.
* I just followed a formula for transitions: *First, Second*, etc.

**2*** You might find yourself asking, “Where is this going?”
* My lead is one everyone uses -- I’m not sure it fits.
* My ending doesn’t really wrap things up.
* It’s hard to follow this -- things come at the wrong time.
* I didn’t know how to connect ideas.

**1*** My writing is random. There is no real design to it.
* I don’t have a lead. I just started writing.
* I have no conclusion. I just stopped with I ran out of things to say.
* My writing jumps from point to point.
* Nothing goes with anything else.
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| **Sentence Fluency** | **Conventions** |
| **6*** My sentences are clear, direct, and to the point.
* You could read this very quickly and easily -- and not miss one important point.
* My sentence beginnings make it easy to follow the flow of ideas.
* My sentences show variety, but I avoided extremes of long and short.

**5*** My sentences are clear and direct.
* The whole piece is very readable.
* Sentence beginnings show how ideas connect.
* I avoided sentences that were overly long or uncomfortable short.

**4*** Most sentences are clear and fairly easy to read.
* There might be one or two spots I could smooth out.
* I need better transitions and less repetition.
* I could use more variety, but there’s nothing too long or short.

http://images.weddingclipart.com/images/1/1221244306526_373/img_1221244306526_3731.jpg**3*** Most sentences come clear if you read carefully.
* Some bumpy moments make it hard to read quickly.
* My beginnings (of sentences) are repetitious. They don’t really show connections either.
* I have some long, gangly sentences. I have short sentences too.

**2*** When I read this aloud, it’s a bumpy ride.
* You’ll need to slow down and pay attention.
* Most of my sentences start the same way.
* Most of my sentences are too long or too short.

**1*** This is very tough to get through, even for me.
* You’ll have to fix things as you go.
* It’s hard to tell where sentences begin and end.
* Are these even sentences?
 | **6*** Even a picky editor will have trouble finding an error.
* I read this silently and aloud -- the conventions bring out the meaning and voice.
* I cited all sources correctly and used the right format.
* This is ready to publish.

**5*** I have some tine errors -- you might not even notice!
* I read this carefully. My conventions help show a reader how to read my text.
* All sources are cited correctly.
* This is ready to publish with only light touchups.

**4*** You might spot some errors, but the meaning is clear.
* I proofed this text, but I need to look again.
* My citations need a few small corrections.
* Some light editing should do the trick.

http://images.weddingclipart.com/images/1/1221244306526_373/img_1221244306526_3731.jpg**3*** You will notice errors -- and they might slow you down.
* I did not proof carefully -- and I missed too many things.
* I need to recheck my citations carefully.
* This needs thorough, careful editing.

**2*** Errors jump at you. They get in the way.
* This does not look edited. I left all the work to the reader.
* Some citations are missing, or they’re not done right.
* I have serious problems with layout (such as no margins or unreadable fonts).
* I need to edit this line by line.

**1*** Errors make my copy had to read.
* Even patient readers might give up.
* I forgot about citing sources.
* I need to read this aloud word by word, pen in hand.
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| **Voice** | **Word Choice** |
| **6*** My voice is professional and enthusiastic -- just right.
* I use my voice to welcome readers into the discussion.
* I feel confident that my message is important and interesting.
* I like this topic, and want you to like it too.
* I feel certain you will want to publish this on the class website.

**5*** My voice is professional and sincere. It suits my topic and audience.
* The voice in this piece reaches out to readers.
* Knowing my topic helps me sound confident.
* I like this topic. You can hear that in my voice.
* You will most likely want to publish it on the class website.

**4*** My voice is sincere and appropriate.
* You can hear me -- especially in some parts.
* I sound confident in those parts I’m sure about.
* I like this topic all right -- most of the time.
* There are definitely some moments you will want to publish on the class website.

http://images.weddingclipart.com/images/1/1221244306526_373/img_1221244306526_3731.jpg**3*** I think I need more voice -- or a different voice.
* My voice either fades away or takes over.
* If I knew this topic better, you’d hear more confidence.
* I have to work at sounding enthusiastic.
* It’s not *quite* ready to share.

**2*** I think I sound more like an encyclopedia than a person with a message.
* I couldn’t get into it. My readers will hear that.
* It’s hard to be confident when you don’t know the topic.
* I think you’ll need to work at paying attention. I did!
* This is *not* ready to publish on the website.

**1*** It’s the wrong voice -or it’s just a whisper.
* I don’t really care if anyone reads this.
* I don’t know anything about this topic.
* I just wrote to get done.
 | **6*** Every word or phrase is chosen to make the message clear for the reader.
* I felt comfortable with terms I needed and used them well.
* I defined or explained things so the reader could follow the discussion easily.
* You won’t find any wordiness or jargon in my writing.
* I write to inform my readers, not overwhelm them.

**5*** My word choice makes the message clear.
* I know the language that goes with the topic, and used it correctly.
* I defined any terms a reader might not know.
* You won’t find much wordiness or jargon.
* My word choice should help a reader understand this topic.

**4*** My words make sense. They get the job done.
* If I used technical/historical terms, I’m pretty sure they’re correct.
* I think if I defined anything I needed to.
* Wordiness and jargon are not a real problem.
* I think a reader can make sense of this.

http://images.weddingclipart.com/images/1/1221244306526_373/img_1221244306526_3731.jpg**3*** You’ll get the general idea!
* I tried to use terms correctly -- I didn’t always know the right words for the moment.
* New Terms might not always be explained.
* Wordiness? Jargon? Could be a problem here and there.
* I think you can figure out what I mean if you try.

**2*** Some of this is unclear now that I take another look.
* I couldn’t seem to come up with the right words.
* I was too vague and general -- OR
* I just kept repeating myself…
* You’ll have some work to do to make sense of this.

**1*** This doesn’t make sense, even to me.
* I think I used the wrong words -- it’s confusing.
* The language is pretty vague, OR --
* It’s just nonsense. I don’t know what I wanted to say.
* It’s anyone’s guess what this means.
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**Copy Editors’ Symbols**

