**6 Trait Student Informational Writing Guide**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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 info. from *gobs* of sources (prior knowledge, sources). * 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 info from my prior knowledge and a handful of sources. * Good evidence makes my main points believable.   **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 prior knowledge and some sources. * 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 prior knowledge and a couple of sources. * My support is sketchy -- it could leave you skeptical!   **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. |
| **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. |
| **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. |

**Copy Editors’ Symbols**

