

## 701 Portfolio Collection (page 1 of 2)

*Source:* Herman, Joan L., Gearhart, Maryl, and Baker, Eva. Assessing Writing Portfolios: Issues in the Validity and Meaning of Scores. *Educational Assessment*, 1 (3), Summer 1994, pp.201-224.

<b>Subjects:</b>	<i>Writing</i>	<b># of scales</b>	1
<b>Grade(s)</b>	1-4	<b># Scale length</b>	6

### Holistic Scale

<b>6 Exceptional achievement/ Exceptional writer</b>	Unified, focused compositions. Topic or ideas consistently clear, no digressions. Typically clear beginnings, middles, and ends. Transitions typically smooth and logical. Details varied and vivid. Details consistently support logic or idea. Points are often extensively elaborated (8-10 clauses). Mechanical errors are minor and infrequent.
<b>5 Commendable Achievement/ Commendable Writer</b>	Generally well organized according to definite plans. Topics or ideas generally clear. Typically clear beginnings and ends. Most transitions smooth and logical. Details generally varied and vivid; metaphors may sometimes be appropriate. Most details consistent with overall plans. In each composition, at least one point is fully elaborated (6-9 clauses.) Mechanical errors do not confuse reader, but in each composition there may be several minor errors or one or two major errors.
<b>4 Adequate Achievement/ Competent writer</b>	Controlling topics, ideas, or overall plans always present but do not always focus the writing. Endings may sometimes be awkward or abrupt. Transitions are typically logical but may on occasion lack depth and/or direct relevance.
<b>3 Some evidence of achievement/ Developing Writer</b>	Topics or overall plans may not be clearly present. Possible digressions or elaborations confusing to reader. Some transitions. Beginnings and endings may be awkward or abrupt. Key elements may be unevenly developed or omitted. Details used inconsistently. Restricted elaboration of one main point (2-4 clauses). Mechanical errors, some minor, some major, which may on occasion confuse reader.

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### **Holistic Scale**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>2 Limited evidence of achievement/<br/>Emerging writer</b>    | Topics, ideas, or plans may often not be clear.<br>Use of supporting details or events may not be logical.<br>May be digressions or overelaborations that significantly interfere with reader understanding.<br>Typically little sense of beginnings or endings.<br>Few transitions.<br>Minimal use of supportive detail; detail may be irrelevant or confusing.<br>May mechanical errors that interfere with understanding. |
| <b>1 Minimal evidence of achievement<br/>Insufficient writer</b> | Topic may be clear but no overall organizational plans.<br>Many digressions or overelaborations or little development altogether.<br>Little sense of beginnings or endings.<br>May mechanical errors interfere with understanding.<br>Incomplete sentences.  |

## **702 Observing and Reporting: Expository Writing**

**Source:** Vicki Spandel and Ruth Culham, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

<b>Subjects:</b>	<i>Writing</i>	<b># of scales</b>	1
<b>Grade(s)</b>	<i>Not specified</i>	<b># Scale length</b>	5

Expository writing is meant to inform first--but often to entertain as well. The skillful expository writer draws on information from his or her own experience, and from other sources, too--books, films, interviews, etc.--integrating, synthesizing and making connections that might not be apparent to everyone, and then reshaping the whole to give it meaning and relevance for a particular audience. Thus, an expository essay on the life of the sea slug written for curious first graders will be transformed totally when reworked into an essay for experienced marine biologists.

From the most successful expository writing, the reader learns something new and has no trouble paying attention. Basic information (the who, what, when, where, why or how of the subject) is enlivened by fitting examples or anecdotes. The writer shows enough knowledge of the topic to choose information in an order that makes it both knowledgeable and confident encourages a kind of trust on the part of the reader, who feels in good hands taking the writer's word of how things are.

### **Holistic Scale**

- 5** Ferrets out the curious, the remarkable, the little known. Renders the mysterious familiar. Bursting with details. Bits of the surprising, the unexpected. Takes the reader by the hand. A well of good information. Creative examples. Tells enough, tells what matters. An insider's perspective. Anticipates reader's questions. Dots the i's, crosses the t's with flair. Sweeps away the cobwebs. Keeps it lively. Abundant detail. Beyond Obvious.
- 3** Solid and trustworthy, but general. Misses the nuances. Competently presented. Leaves reader hungry for juicy tidbits. Not fully sifted--some sand with the pearls. Leaves some questions for another day. Hits the high points. Development sparing to modest. Overview. Matter-of-fact. Doesn't dig. Ground-level perspective. Functionally informative. Clear, but simple. Reaffirms what reader know/suspected. Garden-variety information. Answers basic questions. Typical textbook.
- 1** Misses even high points. Baffling/befogging information. Repetition to fill space. Stays on the surface. Frugal development. Restricted flow of information. Trivia overload. Leaves reader in the dark. Limited knowledge of topic. Details questionable/missing. Unsupported statements. Meager. Skimpy. Flimsy. Shallow.

**Note:** Scale points 2 and 4 are not specifically described.

## **703 Painting a Picture with Words: Descriptive Writing**

*Source:* Vicki Spandel and Ruth Culham, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

<b>Subjects:</b>	<i>Writing</i>	<b># of scales</b>	<i>1</i>
<b>Grade(s)</b>	<i>Not specified</i>	<b># Scale length</b>	<i>5</i>

### **Holistic Scale**

- 5** Tangible--reach and touch it. Etched with sure strokes. Seen through a discerning eye. Irrefutable. Lives and breathes. Fine brush strokes. Doesn't miss a trick. What matters most. Distinct. Attentive to telling details. Captures the quintessential. True to the original. Graphic. "You had to be there" moments. Precise. Selective. In focus. Notices everything.
- 3** The quick once-over. Broad brushstrokes--sweeping details. Hints at critical details. Never gets too close. A light sketch. Shows the man in the coat--but not the tarnish on the buttons. Coming into focus. General. Panoramic. Mix of critical and trivial. Just out of reach. The big picture. Generic. Partly in shadow. Partly illuminated. Notices the obvious. Readily foretold.
- 1** Details blurry or lost. Paints outside the lines. Insubstantial. Obfuscated. Seen through the fog. Abstract. Bodiless. Misses even the obvious. Out of focus. Faint, colorless. Holes in the canvas. Nebulous. Unanswered questions. Reader struggles for clues. Imprecise. Feeble. Clouded. Fuzzy. Misty.

**Note:** Scale points 2 and 4 are not specifically described.

## 704 Business Letter

Source: Milwaukee Public Schools

<b>Subjects:</b>	<i>Writing</i>	<b># of scales</b>	1
<b>Grade(s)</b>	<i>Not specified</i>	<b># Scale length</b>	5

### Holistic Scale

- 4 Competent - Mastery**  
Business letter form maintained.  
Necessary information presented.  
Ideas well organized and communicated clearly and concisely.  
Command of sentence structure.  
Excellent business letter language.  
Correct usage.  
Correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
- 3 Minimally competent - Acceptable**  
Business letter form maintained.  
Necessary information presented.  
Ideas sufficiently organized and communicated.  
Minimal number of sentence fragments or run-ons.  
Appropriate business letter language.  
Only occasional usage errors (such as agreement, pronoun misuse, tense).
- 2 Not competent - Unacceptable**  
Little concept of business letter form.  
Lack of necessary information.  
Ideas not sufficiently organized and/or communicated.  
Sentence fragments and run-ons; few complete sentences.  
Language inappropriate to business letter.  
Frequent usage errors (such as: agreement, pronoun misuse, tense).  
Incorrect use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling conventions.
- 1 Not competent - Highly flawed**  
No concept of business letter form.  
Lack of necessary information.  
Ideas unorganized.  
Sentence fragments and run-ons; few complete sentences.  
Language inappropriate to business letter.  
Frequent usage errors (such as: agreement, pronoun misuse, tense).  
Incorrect use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling conventions.
- 0** Represents a paper that is illegible or off the point.  
A non-response is also a 0 paper.

## 705 Telling a Story: Narrative Writing

Source: Vicki Spandel and Ruth Culham, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

<b>Subjects:</b>	<i>Writing</i>	<b># of scales</b>	1
<b>Grade(s)</b>	<i>Not specified</i>	<b># Scale length</b>	5

A story recreates an experience, real or imagined. Well-crafted stories unravel in a purposeful fashion, resolving a conflict, tracing the path of important change, solving a mystery, or building to a discovery. Each event in the story has a meaning or significance relative to this turning point; thus, it is easy, upon rereading, to trace the pattern of meaning through the way to story unfolds.

Four elements are usually key: (1) the characters who people the story; (2) the place where it all happens; (3) the events big and small that are central to the plot; and (4) the conflict, problem or question that provides a reason for telling the tale.

The skillful storyteller weaves a tale in which real people struggle, grow, change or make things happen; time and place add depth or meaning to the plot; significant events dominate; and some central conflict or question holds all other elements together--and set a tone of wonder or mystery that keeps the reader wanting to learn what happens next.

### Holistic Scale

- 5 Graceful ending lays the conflict to rest. Reader wonders what will happen. A tale you can retell. Events foreshadow one another. A lead sets up the story. Clear sense of time and place. Conflict resolution, change discovery. Well-developed plot with depth. Intricate framework. Reader gains something from the telling. Characters who learn or grow. Strategic, purposeful sequence. Events matter. Notable turning point.
- 3 Familiar plotline. Reader can foretell events. Reader craves embellishment. Link to conflict sometimes fuzzy. Pithy, telling events mix non-essentials. Characters live and breathe, but lack depth. Skeletal outline. A beginning of sorts. Minimal foreshadowing. Some important questions answered. Barebones sketch. Evolving sense of plot. Emerging sense of time and place. Reaches closure. Plot unfolds logically, but mechanically.
- 1 No "glue" to hold it all together. No real storyline yet. Details wander in search of a plot. Significant intermingles with trivial. Many unanswered questions. Conflict or question not defined yet. Little or no sense of time or place. No sense of closure. No real lead to set up what follows. Tough to stage. Characters do not think or feel yet. Reader asks, "Why are you telling me this?" Doesn't go anywhere. Random sequencing. Not much happens. List of events.

## **706 Elementary Narrative Analytic Scale (page 1 of 3)**

*Source:* Herman, Joan L., Gearhart, Maryl, and Baker, Eva. Assessing Writing Portfolios: Issues in the Validity and Meaning of Scores. *Educational Assessment*, 1 (3), Summer 1993, pp.201-224.

<b>Subjects:</b>	<i>Writing</i>	<b># of scales</b>	4
<b>Grade(s)</b>	1-6	<b># Scale length</b>	6

### **Scale 1: General Competence**

- 6 Exceptional achievement. Exceptional writer.
- 5 Commendable achievement. Commendable writer.
- 4 Adequate achievement. Competent writer.
- 3 Some evidence of achievement. Developing writer.
- 2 Limited evidence of achievement. Emerging writer.
- 1 Minimal evidence of achievement. Insufficient writer.

### **Scale II: Focus/Organization**

- 6 Topic clear. Events are logical.  
No digressions.  
Varied transitions.  
Transitions smooth and logical.  
Clear sense of beginning and end.
- 5 Topic clear.  
Events are logical.  
Possible slight digression without significant distraction to reader.  
Most transitions smooth and logical. Clear sense of beginning and end.
- 4 Topic clear.  
Most events are logical.  
Some digression causing slight reader confusion.  
Most transitions are logical, but may be repetitive.  
Clear sense of beginning and end.
- 3 Topic clear.  
Most events are logical.  
Some digressions or over-elaboration interfering with reader understanding.  
Transitions begin to be used. Limited sense of beginning and end.
- 2 Topic may not be clear.  
Few events are logical.  
May be no attempt to limit topic.  
Much digression or over-elaborations with significant interference with reader understanding.

## **706 Elementary Narrative Analytic Scale (page 2 of 3)**

**Source:** Herman, Joan L., Gearhart, Maryl, and Baker, Eva. Assessing Writing Portfolios: Issues in the Validity and Meaning of Scores. *Educational Assessment, 1* (3), Summer 1993, pp.201-224.

- 1 Topic is not clear.  
No clear organizational plan.  
No attempt to limit topic.  
Much of the paper may be a digression or elaboration.  
Few or no transitions.  
Almost no sense of beginning and end.

### **Scale III: Development**

- 6 Elements of narrative are well-elaborated (plot, setting, characters).  
Elaboration even and appropriate.  
Sentence patterns varied and complex.  
Sentence patterns varied and complex.  
Diction appropriate.  
Detail vivid and specific.
- 5 Elements of narrative are well-elaborated.  
Most elaboration is even and appropriate.  
Some varied sentence patterns used.  
Vocabulary appropriate.  
Some details are more vivid or specific than general statements.  
A few details may lack specificity.
- 4 Most elements of narrative are present.  
Some elaboration may be less even and lack depth.  
Some details are vivid or specific, although one or two may lack direct relevance.  
Supporting details begin to be more specific than general statements.
- 3 Elements of narrative are not evenly developed; some may be omitted.  
Vocabulary not appropriate at times.  
Some supporting detail may be present.
- 2 Minimal development of elements of narrative.  
Minimal or no detail.  
Detail used is uneven and unclear.  
Simple sentence patterns.  
Very simplistic vocabulary.  
Detail may be irrelevant or confusing.
- 1 No development of narrative elements.  
No details.  
Incomplete sentence patterns.



## **706 Elementary Narrative Analytic Scale (page 3 of 3)**

*Source:* Herman, Joan L., Gearhart, Maryl, and Baker, Eva. Assessing Writing Portfolios: Issues in the Validity and Meaning of Scores. *Educational Assessment*, 1 (3), Summer 1993, pp.201-224.

### **Scale IV: Mechanics**

- 6** One or two minor errors.  
No major errors.
- 5** A few minor errors. One or two major errors.  
No more than five combined errors (major and minor).  
Errors do not cause significant reader confusion.
- 4** A few minor errors.  
One or two major errors.  
No more than five combined errors (major and minor).  
Errors do not cause significant reader confusion.
- 3** Some minor errors.  
Some major errors.  
No fewer than five combined errors (major and minor).  
Some errors cause reader confusion.
- 2** Many minor errors.  
Many major errors.  
Many errors cause reader confusion and interference with understanding.
- 1** Many major and minor errors causing reader confusion.  
Difficult to read.

## **707 Rubric for Technical Writing**

*Source:* Independent School District 196, Rosemount, Minnesot

<b>Subjects:</b>	<i>Science, writing</i>	<b># of scales</b>	5
<b>Grade(s)</b>	<i>Not specified</i>	<b># of scale points</b>	3

### **Scale I: Organization/Format**

<b>Advanced</b>	Organizes material in a clear, appropriate, and precise manner.
<b>Adept</b>	Organizes material in an appropriate manner, but may lack some clarity or consistency. Presents basic information but may have extraneous material.
<b>Unacceptable</b>	Little evidence of a cohesive plan. Little or no description or detail. Ideas seem scrambled, jumbled, or disconnected.

### **Scale II: Content**

<b>Advanced</b>	Material content is clear, relevant, accurate, and concise.
<b>Adept</b>	Material is appropriate, but may lack a clear connection to the purpose.
<b>Unacceptable</b>	Little evidence of appropriate content.

### **Scale III: Writing Conventions**

<b>Advanced</b>	Enhances the readability of the paper.
<b>Adept</b>	Minor errors are present, but they do not detract from the readability of the paper.
<b>Unacceptable</b>	Little or no evidence of correct writing. Poor conventions seriously limit the paper's readability.

### **Scale IV: Research and Interpret Data/Information**

<b>Advanced</b>	Correct interpretation of data or information. Analysis and conclusion are based on research.
<b>Adept</b>	Correctly interprets data or information, but analysis or conclusion may not be supported by research.
<b>Unacceptable</b>	Incorrectly interprets data or information with little or no analysis or conclusion. Little or no evidence of research presented.

### **Scale V: Appropriate Vocabulary**

<b>Advanced</b>	Articulates appropriate vocabulary and terms associated with the subject matter.
<b>Adept</b>	Some inappropriate vocabulary present, or limited use of appropriate vocabulary.
<b>Unacceptable</b>	Inappropriate vocabulary and use occurs.

## **708 Daily Journal Writing**

*Source:* Stuart Foundations Project, San Diego City Schools. Cited in "From the Bottom Up:" A Sourcebook of Scoring Rubrics Designed by Teachers, by Linda Carstens, San Diego City Schools.

<b>Subjects:</b>	<i>Writing</i>	<b># of scales</b>	<i>1</i>
<b>Grade(s)</b>	<i>K-2</i>	<b># Scale length</b>	<i>6</i>

### **Holistic Scale**

<b>Secure</b>	Works independently. Writes sentences without any help.
<b>Developing</b>	Completes the task, but may need prompts to complete the task. Needs help with writing or spelling words occasionally.
<b>Assisted</b>	Needs substantial help to complete the task. Unable or unwilling to write own sentences. Copies dictated sentences to own paper.
<b>Could not complete task</b>	Could not or would not dictate a sentence or write anything on the paper.

# 709 Journal Evaluation

Source: Portland, Oregon Public Schools

<b>Subjects:</b>	<i>Writing</i>	<b># of scales</b>	6
<b>Grade(s)</b>	<i>Elementary</i>	<b># Scale length</b>	5

**Note:** Each question is below answered with a rating from 1 to 5, where 1 = least degree and 5 = greatest degree. Scale points 2, 3, and 4 are not specifically defined.

This rubric might be adapted by changing the labels attached to the score points and/or changing the scale length. One possibility would be:

- 1 = Never
- 2 = Rarely
- 3 = About half the time
- 4 = Usually
- 5 = Always or almost always

**Scale I: Is the Journal Used Regularly?**

**Scale II: Is the Writing Fluent?**

**Scale III: Is There Detail and Elaboration?**

**Scale IV: Is There Variety?**

**Scale V: Is There an Attempt to Use Known Conventions to Communicate Effectively?**

**Scale VI: Is There Evidence That the Writer is Willing to Take Risks and Try Out New Ideas?**

## **710 Daily Journal Writing**

Source: Stuart Foundations Project, San Diego City Schools. Cited in "From the Bottom Up:" *A Sourcebook of Scoring Rubrics Designed by Teachers*, by Linda Carstens, San Diego City Schools.

<b>Subjects:</b>	<i>Writing</i>	<b># of scales</b>	<i>1</i>
<b>Grade(s)</b>	<i>Elementary</i>	<b># Scale length</b>	<i>4</i>

### **Holistic Scale**

<b>Secure</b>	Works independently. Writes sentences without any help
<b>Developing</b>	Completes the task, but may need prompts to complete the task. Needs help with writing or spelling words occasionally.
<b>Assisted</b>	Needs substantial help to complete the task. Unable or unwilling to write own sentences. Copies dictated sentences to own paper.
<b>Could not complete task</b>	Could not or would not dictate a sentence or write anything on the paper.

## 711 *Constructing and Argument: Persuasive Writing*

*Source:* Vicki Spandel and Ruth Culham, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

<b>Subjects:</b>	<i>Writing</i>	<b># of scales</b>	<i>1</i>
<b>Grade(s)</b>	<i>Not specified</i>	<b># Scale length</b>	<i>5</i>

In persuasive writing, the writer crafts an argument, using a combination of logic, wit, winning rhetoric, and skillfully presented evidence. The purpose is to influence the reader's thinking, and sometimes to change his/her mind about something or prompt some action.

Constructing a sound argument, the sort that can make a believer even out off a skeptic, demands both rational thought and creative presentation of ideas. First, the writer must sift and weigh all the available information (including what comes from experience), separate out what is inconsequential or insupportable or misleading, and use what remains to build a defensible position. The writer must then make that position crystal clear and defend it with grace and gusto, marshalling the best evidence at hand and sometimes, if it's useful, exposing the weaknesses of opposing views.

Good persuasive writing is clear, compelling, well-supported, opinionated without relying solely on opinion, and lively--since readers who drift off to sleep are rarely convinced of anything. Writers who know an issue inside and out and who can anticipate and filed opposing viewpoints without becoming rattled or cranky stand the best chance to success.

### **Holistic Scale**

- 5 Weak counterpoints exposed. Digs for truth. Propels reader in one direction. Sound reasoning. Clear position. Opinions thoughtfully supported. Credible evidence probing, penetrating. Telling evidence. Avoids exaggeration. Provable statements. Compelling arguments, Fact/opinion distinguished. Conclusions well-grounded. Displays evidence to advantage. Believable. Defensible. Convincing. Tough to refute.
- 3 Some chinks in foundation. Few surprises. Predictable, well-worn arguments. Nudges reader gently. Relies on good will of audience. Overlooks key evidence. Basic position easily inferred. Credible but limited support. Acceptable, knowledge as evidence. Relies on common sense. Fact/opinion sometimes overlap. Non-probing. Holds one position throughout. Mix of rational and muddled thinking.
- 1 Fuzzy thinking dominates. Weak, questionable evidence. Reader resists budging. Appeals to feelings. Position weak/unclear/shifting. Easy to refute. Exaggeration in lieu of logic. Ignores/glosses over facts. Repetition in lieu of real strength. Unsure of ground. Giant leaps of faith required. Minimal content. Unsupported statements