

Step Write Up[®]



THE INFORM/EXPLAIN RUBRIC

High school-ready students should be able to write informational or explanatory essays by accurately conveying relevant ideas and information.

IDEAS

"Ideas" refers to the originality and clarity of ideas in the piece of writing.
Good writers generate and convey fresh ideas and avoid dull, obvious observations.

☐ TIME TO STEP IT UP

- ☐ Topic is not established.
- ☐ Ideas rarely connect to the topic.
- ☐ Purpose is not clear.

☐ YOU'RE ALMOST THERE

- ☐ Topic is established.
- ☐ Ideas usually stay on topic.
- ☐ Purpose is somewhat clear and recognizable.

☐ YOU'VE MADE IT!

- ☐ Topic is precise and clearly established.
- ☐ Ideas consistently stay on topic.
- ☐ Purpose is clear and recognizable (e.g., explain, define, organize, inform, examine, etc.).

ORGANIZATION

"Organization" refers to the structure or framework in which the ideas are arranged.
Good writers smoothly and logically arrange their ideas so that readers don't get lost or confused.

☐ TIME TO STEP IT UP

- ☐ Topic is not introduced.
- ☐ Ideas, concepts and information are not organized.
- ☐ Transitions are ineffective or absent.
- ☐ Ideas are jumbled.
- ☐ Conclusion is abrupt or nonexistent.

☐ YOU'RE ALMOST THERE

- ☐ Topic is introduced.
- ☐ Ideas, concepts, and information are partially organized to make connections and distinctions.
- ☐ Varied transitions link ideas.
- ☐ Ideas are divided and sequenced.
- ☐ Conclusion is present.

☐ YOU'VE MADE IT!

- ☐ Topic is skillfully introduced.
- ☐ Complex ideas, concepts, and information are organized to make important connections and distinctions.
- ☐ Appropriate and varied transitions skillfully link ideas.
- ☐ Ideas are logically divided and sequenced (e.g., paragraphing, illustrating, graphing, bulleting, etc.).
- ☐ Satisfying conclusion is provided.

SUPPORT

"Support" refers to the level of detail you provide to color and enlarge your ideas. Good writers incorporate and arrange ample details and examples to support the focus of the essay.

❑ TIME TO STEP IT UP

- ☐ Support is not present or is irrelevant to topic.
- ☐ Support is insubstantial or nonexistent.
- ☐ Details do not explain the topic.

❑ YOU'RE ALMOST THERE

- ☐ Support is evident and somewhat relevant to topic.
- ☐ Limited support is provided.
- ☐ Details explain the topic.

❑ YOU'VE MADE IT!

- ☐ Support is well-chosen and relevant to topic (e.g., facts, quotations, graphics, etc.).
- ☐ Ample support is provided to inform the reader.
- ☐ Details effectively explain and strengthen the topic.

STYLE

"Style" refers to the uniqueness and appropriateness of your writing voice throughout the essay. While good writers select words and construct sentences that reflect an appropriate voice for the writing occasion, they also use vivid, colorful language to convey personality and tone.

❑ TIME TO STEP IT UP

- ☐ Voice is too loose or sounds like "talk."
- ☐ Tone is too subjective or distracting.
- ☐ Word choice is basic or repetitive.
- ☐ Lacks variety of sentence style or structure.

❑ YOU'RE ALMOST THERE

- ☐ Voice is not always suitable.
- ☐ Tone is inconsistent.
- ☐ Word choice is generic or simplistic.
- ☐ A limited variety of sentence styles is used.

❑ YOU'VE MADE IT!

- ☐ Voice is suitable to purpose, audience, content area, and assignment.
- ☐ Tone is consistently objective.
- ☐ Word choice is effective and precise.
- ☐ A variety of sentence styles is used (e.g., simple, complex, compound, and compound-complex).

MECHANICS

"Mechanics" refers to the "nuts and bolts" within the machinery of the essay. Good writers pay close attention to the proper use of punctuation, grammar, words, phrases, spelling, and sentence formation.

❑ TIME TO STEP IT UP

- ☐ Spelling errors cause confusion for the reader.
- ☐ Writing show minimal control of Standard English usage and grammar.
- ☐ Errors in punctuation and capitalization confuse the reader.

❑ YOU'RE ALMOST THERE

- ☐ Spelling errors sometimes interfere with the reader's understanding.
- ☐ Writing shows inconsistent control of Standard English usage and grammar.
- ☐ Errors in punctuation and capitalization sometimes interfere with the reader's understanding.

❑ YOU'VE MADE IT!

- ☐ Spelling errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding.
- ☐ Writing shows confident, consistent control of Standard English usage and grammar.
- ☐ Basic punctuation and capitalization rules are followed.