

# High School Standards of Learning Writing Rubric

<p><b>Composing: Secondary</b> <b>4 = Consistent Control</b></p> <p><b>Consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of composing features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All parts contribute to dominant impression.</li> <li>• Sharply focused central idea</li> <li>• Full elaboration with key examples, illustrations, reasons, events, or details</li> <li>• Logical transitions to complete strong organizational plan</li> <li>• Consistent point of view, e.g. not switching from “I” to “you”</li> <li>• Lack of digressions</li> <li>• Presence of careful logic and of strong lead and closure</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 = Reasonable Control</b></p> <p><b>Reasonable, but not consistent, control of composing features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some features may exhibit more control than others</li> <li>• Clearly focused central idea purposefully elaborated with examples, illustrations, reasons, events, or details</li> <li>• Some thinness or unevenness may occur</li> <li>• Organizational plan is apparent with few digressions</li> <li>• Lapses of organization or unity do not significantly detract</li> <li>• Appropriate transitions</li> <li>• Some skill but not the sophistication of a 4 writing</li> </ul>
<p><b>2 = Inconsistent Control</b></p> <p><b>Inconsistent control of several features, indicating significant weakness in composing domain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideas often compete with no clear central idea</li> <li>• Little or no elaboration</li> <li>• Paper may be lists or undeveloped generalizations</li> <li>• Persuasive writing may be unelaborated reasons accompanied by inappropriate attempts such as pleading or negotiating.</li> <li>• Chunks of irrelevant material may appear</li> <li>• Opening /closing may be present but lack sophistication</li> <li>• Transitions weak or missing with little logical unity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1 = Little or No Control</b></p> <p><b>Little or no control of domain’s features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus of paper is lacking or the elaboration is so sparse that the focus is insufficient</li> <li>• May jump from point to point with no logic or transitions</li> <li>• No overall organizational strategy</li> <li>• Writing is haphazard and bare statement the norm</li> <li>• No purposeful elaboration even if several pages long.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Written Expression: Secondary</b> <b>4 = Consistent Control</b></p> <p><b>Consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of written expression domain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purposefully crafted ideas</li> <li>• Memorable for reader because precise information and vocabulary resonate with reader</li> <li>• Highly specific word choice and information create purposeful tone and enhance writer’s voice</li> <li>• Appropriate figures of speech</li> <li>• Varied sentences for purposeful effect</li> <li>• Appropriately subordinates ideas and embeds modifiers to create rhythm.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 = Reasonable Control</b></p> <p><b>Reasonable, but not consistent, control of domain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific word choice and information create a clear message</li> <li>• A few general statements or vague words may flatten tone somewhat</li> <li>• Effective use of normal word order and competent variation in sentence length and complexity</li> <li>• Occasional awkward construction or lack of structural complexity is not distracting</li> </ul>
<p><b>2 = Inconsistent Control</b></p> <p><b>Inconsistent control of several features, indicating significant weakness in written expression domain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally written in imprecise, bland language.</li> <li>• Writer’s voice rarely emerges</li> <li>• Selection of information uneven: too little or too much</li> <li>• Lack of sentence variety makes reading monotonous</li> <li>• Occasional awkward constructions distract from meaning</li> <li>• Overall sense of rhythm not present</li> </ul>
<p><b>1 = Little or No Control</b></p> <p><b>Little or no control of most of the features in the written expression domain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General, vague, and/or repetitive word choice and information</li> <li>• Lack of sentence variety makes paper monotonous</li> <li>• Existence of several very awkward constructions</li> <li>• Lack of control of vocabulary and information prevents both tone and voice from emerging</li> </ul>

<p><b>Usage and Mechanics: Secondary</b> <b>4 = Consistent Control</b></p> <p><b>Consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of domain’s features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough understanding of usage and mechanics as found in VA K-11 SOLs</li> <li>• Uses standard principles for spelling, capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence formation</li> <li>• A few errors may be present but the control of the domain’s many features is too strong to let these errors detract from the writing</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 = Reasonable Control</b></p> <p><b>Reasonable, but not consistent, control of most of the domain’s features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic understanding of usage and mechanics as specified in VA K-11 SOLs</li> <li>• Appropriately applies rules of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence formation</li> <li>• Most of errors in piece are not elementary ones</li> </ul>
<p><b>2 = Inconsistent Control</b></p> <p><b>Inconsistent control of several features, indicating significant weakness in the domain of usage/mechanics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent errors</li> <li>• Inconsistently applies rules of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence formation as specified in VA K-11 SOLs</li> <li>• Lack of control of tense consistency or meaningful punctuation and spelling often make it difficult to follow writer’s thought</li> <li>• Density of errors outweighs the feature control present in paper</li> </ul>
<p><b>1 = Little or No Control</b></p> <p><b>Little or no control of most of the domain’s features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent and severe errors in mechanics and usage as specified in VA K-11 SOLs distract reader and limit meaning</li> <li>• Even if meaning not significantly affected, density of errors overwhelms paper to keep it from meeting minimum standards of competence</li> </ul>