

Informative / Opinion Scoring Guidelines Grade 4

Topic Introduction (W.4.1/2)

Introduce Context Clearly (who/what, did what, time/place or definition)

- At least one sentence provides context in high tide essay. For low tide, may be combined with topic statement:
 - *George overcame important challenges to make changes in the USA long ago.*{For fuller essay, context more developed, but still not a 'retell'. If overdone, subtract ½ point.}

Focused Topic Statement / Opinion

- 1 pt = state topic (**restate prompt**):
 - *G.W. Carver overcame challenges to make changes in the USA.*
- 2 pts = state topic + (**respond to prompt**) central idea(s) about topic:
 - *George overcame obstacles, had to work hard and show persistence.* (List central ideas)
 - *George showed determination in overcoming challenges to make changes.* (States central idea)
- If "because" is in topic statement, it leads to an overview of ideas or reasons, not diving into one idea or reason.

Important Evidence and Detailed Examination / Reasons and Elaborations (W.4.1/2)

Important Evidence / Reason: facts, definitions, concrete details, or quotes inform about (not exhaust) each idea.

- Often has three body sections of categories (sentences or paragraphs). If only two body sections, be clear why.
 - Each body section has **2-3** rich details on par with complexity of text read, or well-explained quote.
 - Each of these sections' 2-3 facts may be woven into one rich sentence (low tide paragraph) or multiple, separate, more detailed full paragraph on each category (high tide essay).
- When more than three groups of ideas / reasons, evaluate the first 3 (or any random 3).
- Structure is gateway to content: Information grouped in related categories to be reader-friendly.

Detailed Examination helps reader make new meanings about central idea. (High tide = more detail)

- 2 pts = synthesizes different parts of text or conveys new insights beyond stating the obvious
- 1 pt = may use stem i.e. "this shows that..." or predictable explanation but no new connection or insight

Ending (W.4.1/2)

- 1 pt = wraps up central idea in novel way. Does not repeat topic statement, but synthesizes. (Low tide = 2 pts):
 - *Determination can accomplish so much.*
- 2 pts = extends to bigger picture. Addresses "so what?":
 - *Without such people, our world might not be getting better all the time.*

Links (W.4.2.C)

- Words and phrases connect similar ideas within a group of information, or link to the topic. .5 if formulaic such as first, next, last-- but begin here if no links, and move ahead soon to repeating central idea.
- In high tide essay, each paragraph begins with a topic sentence or phrase that serves as a link to central idea.

Language (L.4.2.b and L.4.3.a)

- Vocabulary: **Skim 50 body words**. Count strong words. (Exclude fully copied quotes, but do count integrated words lifted from text). Deduct 'banned' words (stuff, things). 5 words (10%) = 1 pt, 8 words (15%) = 2 pts.
 - (In class: students circle all strong words & write # at top; teachers set 1-2 pt criteria for each piece.)
- Varied sentences: **Skim 5 body sentences** for complex sentences, openers, closers, rich adjectives, adverbial or prepositional phrases or clauses. All simple = 0; 2/5 vary = 1 pt; 3/5 or more (some still simple) = 2 pts.
 - (In class: teach mini lessons/reinforce CCSS L standards, then require each after taught - for these 2 pts)

Conventions (L.4.1-L4.2)

- All sentences are complete – no fragments or run on's. 90% or more of sentences have correct grammar. 96% words spelled correctly; Up to 4 words misspelled per 100, or 2 per 50 words, acceptable.