

Score	Development	Focus & Organization	Language	Conventions
4	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> utilizes well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient evidence¹ from the stimuli to insightfully support claim(s) and counterclaim(s).² thoroughly and accurately explains and elaborates on the evidence provided, connecting the evidence to claim(s) and counterclaim(s) and demonstrating a clear understanding of the topic and the stimuli. 	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains an effective and relevant introduction. states and maintains a clear and sophisticated argument. utilizes effective organizational strategies to logically order reasons and evidence to create a unified whole. effectively clarifies relationships among claim(s), reasons, evidence, and counterclaim(s)² to create cohesion. contains an effective and relevant concluding statement or section. 	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> illustrates consistent and sophisticated command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate to the task. illustrates sophisticated command of syntactic variety for meaning and reader interest. utilizes sophisticated and varied transitional words and phrases. effectively establishes and maintains a formal style. 	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates consistent and sophisticated command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.³ may contain a few minor errors that do not interfere with meaning.
3	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> utilizes relevant and sufficient evidence¹ from the stimuli to adequately support claim(s) and counterclaim(s).² adequately and accurately explains and elaborates on the evidence provided, connecting the evidence to claim(s) and counterclaim(s) and demonstrating a sufficient understanding of the topic and the stimuli. 	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains a relevant introduction. states and maintains a clear argument. utilizes adequate organizational strategies to logically order reasons and evidence to create a mostly unified whole. clarifies most relationships among claim(s), reasons, evidence, and counterclaim(s),² but there may be some gaps in cohesion. contains a relevant concluding statement or section. 	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> illustrates consistent command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate to the task. illustrates consistent command of syntactic variety for meaning and reader interest. utilizes appropriate and varied transitional words and phrases. establishes and maintains a formal style. 	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates consistent command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.³ contains some minor and/or major errors, but the errors do not significantly interfere with meaning.
2	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> utilizes mostly relevant but insufficient evidence¹ from the stimuli to partially support claim(s) and counterclaim(s).² Some evidence may be inaccurate or repetitive. explains some of the evidence provided, connecting some of the evidence to claim(s) and counterclaim(s) and demonstrating only a partial understanding of the topic and the stimuli. There may be some level of inaccuracy in the explanation. 	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains a limited introduction. states a weak argument. demonstrates an attempt to use organizational strategies to order some reasons and evidence, but ideas may be hard to follow at times. clarifies some relationships among claim(s), reasons, evidence, and counterclaim(s),² but there are lapses in focus. contains a limited concluding statement or section. 	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> illustrates inconsistent command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary. illustrates inconsistent command of syntactic variety. utilizes basic or repetitive transitional words and phrases. establishes but inconsistently maintains a formal style. 	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.³ contains many errors that may significantly interfere with meaning.
1	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> utilizes mostly irrelevant or no evidence¹ from the stimuli, or mostly/only personal knowledge to inadequately support claim(s) and counterclaim(s).² Evidence is inaccurate or repetitive. inadequately or inaccurately explains the evidence provided; evidence, claim(s), and counterclaim(s) appear disconnected, demonstrating little understanding of the topic and the stimuli. 	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains no or an irrelevant introduction. states an unclear argument. demonstrates an unclear organizational structure; ideas are hard to follow most of the time. fails to clarify relationships among claim(s), reasons, evidence, and counterclaim(s);² concepts are unclear and/or there is a lack of focus. contains no or an irrelevant concluding statement or section. 	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> illustrates little to no use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary. illustrates little to no syntactic variety. utilizes no or few transitional words and phrases. does not establish or maintain a formal style. 	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates limited command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.³ contains numerous and repeated errors that seriously impede meaning.

¹ Evidence includes facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information, using accurate and credible sources as appropriate to the task and the stimuli.

² Counterclaim(s) are only expected at grade 8.

³ Conventions of standard written English include sentence structure, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.