

Middle School Writing Rubric

	5	4	3	2	1	Checklist
Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clear, focused, purposeful main idea with strong evidence -Creative, original ideas, enjoyable to read -Goes beyond the obvious or predictable -Insightful connections to real life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clear and focused ideas, some of which are original -Details explain the main ideas, making it more interesting -Believable, reader is interested -Some connections to real life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ideas are expressed clearly, but simply and are less developed -Most of the details relate to the main idea -Reader is not interested but understands -No obvious connections to real life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The main idea is not clearly expressed and there are some questions -Some details, but may be too general or not related to the main idea -Reader does not entirely understand and has questions -No new ideas presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Is there a main idea? I'm not sure! -Either very few details or too many details that aren't connected -Reader unsure about the topic -Not sure what ideas are expressed 	<p>Response to Literature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Has introduction, body, conclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate number of paragraphs <input type="checkbox"/> Provides controlling thesis <input type="checkbox"/> References title and author <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence from the literature <input type="checkbox"/> Proper citation of direct quotations <input type="checkbox"/> Connect thesis to theme <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent interpretation and analysis of evidence <input type="checkbox"/> Connection of all evidence to thesis <p>Persuasive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Has introduction, body, conclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate number of paragraphs <input type="checkbox"/> Provides controlling thesis <input type="checkbox"/> Compelling audience-specific arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Factual evidence <input type="checkbox"/> Gives background information about the topic <input type="checkbox"/> Opposing viewpoints and reader's concerns are anticipated and addressed <input type="checkbox"/> Concludes with reflection or possible action <p>Narrative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Plot has exposition, climax, resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Provides central conflict <input type="checkbox"/> Creates believable, well-rounded characters <input type="checkbox"/> Uses specific sensory language for setting and characters <input type="checkbox"/> Utilizes dialogue <p>Research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use of varied and multiple credible sources <input type="checkbox"/> Works cited or bibliography page documenting sources <input type="checkbox"/> Uses third person, objective language <input type="checkbox"/> Uses standard MLA format
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Well organized and purposeful -Ideas are clearly linked to support a position -Compelling lead and convincing conclusion -Carefully selected, sophisticated transitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Good organization -Ideas are connected and supported with detail -Strong lead and appropriate conclusion -Strong, clear transitions, occasionally sophisticated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reader can follow the organization of ideas -Details are connected to the main idea -Includes a lead and conclusion -Transitions are present but repetitive and obvious. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reader can usually follow the organization -Details don't always match the main idea -Introduction and/or conclusion may need revision -Transitions sometimes missing, unclear or inappropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Hard to follow -No clear main idea -Too many or not enough details that don't match the main idea -Missing lead and/or conclusion -Transitions missing, points aren't connected 	
Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Unique, individual and confident voice -Passionate about the position, yet never overdone -Uses voice to enhance meaning -Strong, consistently engaging voice for the topic and audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Consistent voice -Interested in topic and conveys purpose to audience -Appropriate voice for the topic and audience, sometimes engaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Little voice or unsure about purpose -Writer sounds interested in topic -Appropriate voice for the topic and audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Voice barely present -Voice changes or seems unsure -Usually appropriate for the topic and audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No voice or voice doesn't match audience -Too informal, chatty, whiney or sarcastic -Not very interested in the topic, just listing facts 	
Word Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Language grabs the reader's attention -Uses vivid, natural language including strong verbs and precise nouns -Uses unexpected phrasing, including alliteration, analogies and metaphors -Varied, original yet appropriate vocabulary for audience and purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Uses interesting words -Uses natural language with strong verbs and nouns -Attempts to use alliteration, similes and metaphors -Appropriate vocabulary, sometimes varied and original 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Uses clear but uninteresting language -Uses some common words -Uses descriptive adjectives and adverbs, good nouns and verbs -Words are very general (e.g., stuff, nice, said, fun), repetitive vocabulary without much attention to writing purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Uses words correctly to only express meaning -Relies on only simple, common language -Needs revision with some words inappropriate to writing purpose -Not descriptive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Words are overly simple or used incorrectly -Words get in the way of meaning -Minimal variety of different words used 	
Sentence Fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Uses a wide variety of sentence lengths -Utilizes several different sentence structures to enhance enjoyment -Uses variety of sentence openers (e.g., prepositional phrases, clauses, modifiers, participles) -Smooth, natural writing begs to be read aloud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Some sentences begin differently and vary in length -A couple of different sentence structures -Different sentence openers used sometimes -Writing is easy to read and clearly has been proofread -Dialogue (if used) is natural at times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sentences begins predictably with very little variety -Same sentence structure is used repeatedly -Some repetition, a few awkward moments in writing -Dialogue (if used) is stiff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Readable, but often requires self-correction -Sentences often begin the same -Some sentences are hard to understand even if reread -Some run-ons or choppy sentences -Dialogue (if used) hard to understand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Short, choppy sentences -Many incomplete or run-on sentences -Difficult to read -No dialogue (in a narrative) 	
Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Practically perfect, never distracts from purpose or meaning -Conventions carefully chosen to enhance meaning -Complex text requires wide use of sophisticated punctuation and conventions -Ready to publish with nearly flawless citation (when appropriate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A few minor errors that don't affect meaning -Attempts and uses sophisticated conventions, not always successfully -Almost ready to publish with few citation errors (when appropriate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Obvious, but minor errors that don't affect meaning -Simple conventions are fine -Some errors in difficult spelling or sophisticated conventions -Easily edited -Little citation or incorrect citation (when appropriate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Obvious distracting errors that may affect meaning -Only attempts simple use of conventions -Errors on basic spelling, usage and punctuation -Needs editing -No citation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Many obvious, distracting errors -Lots of spelling, punctuation and usage errors -Serious problems with subject/verb agreement -Line by line editing required -The appearance of plagiarism 	