

**ISTEP +
Writing Rubrics
Grades 3-5**

Ideas and Content - ISTEP+ Writing Applications Rubrics Grades 3-5

SCORE POINT 6

A Score Point 6 paper is rare. It fully accomplishes the task and has a distinctive quality that sets it apart as an outstanding performance.

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing stay fully focused? Does it:

- Stay on the topic?
- Avoid rambling and/or repeating information?

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing sample include thorough and complete ideas? Does it:

- Include in-depth information and supporting details?
- Fully explore many facets of the topic?

SCORE POINT 5

A Score Point 5 paper represents a solid performance. It fully accomplishes the task but lacks the overall level of sophistication and consistency of a Score Point 6 paper.

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing stay focused? Does it:

- Stay on the topic?
- Very seldom ramble and/or repeat information?

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing sample include many relevant ideas? Does it:

- Provide some in-depth information?
- Provide supporting details?
- Explore many facets of the topic?

SCORE POINT 4

A Score Point 4 paper represents a good performance. It accomplishes the task but generally needs to exhibit more development, better organization, or a more sophisticated writing style to receive a higher score.

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing stay mostly focused?

- Does it mostly stay on the topic? (Writing may include minor tangents.)
Writing may include some rambling and/or repetition.

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing sample include some relevant ideas and information?

- Does it present related information?
- Writing may not fully develop details; it may list ideas with some detail.

SCORE POINT 3

A Score Point 3 paper represents a performance that minimally accomplishes the task. Some elements of development, organization, and writing style are weak.

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing stay somewhat focused?

- Does it stay minimally focused on topic? (Writer may get distracted; may have a lapse in focus.)
- Writing may ramble and/or repeat information.

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing sample include some relevant ideas? Does it:

- Provide minimal information and not begin to exhaust the possibilities?
- Provide minimal details but does not develop details?

SCORE POINT 2

A Score Point 2 paper represents a performance that only partially accomplishes the task. Some responses may exhibit difficulty maintaining a focus. Others may be too brief to provide sufficient development of the topic or evidence of adequate organizational or writing style.

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing exhibit less than minimal focus?

- Writer may get distracted or drift away from topic.
- Topic may not be developed.

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing sample include few relevant ideas?

- Writing may include unfinished/fragmented ideas.
- Writing may include only one or two bits of information.

SCORE POINT 1

A Score Point 1 paper represents a performance that fails to accomplish the task. It exhibits considerable difficulty in areas of development, organization, and writing style. The writing is generally either very brief or rambling and repetitive, sometimes resulting in a response that may be difficult to read or comprehend.

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing have little or no focus on topic?

- Content may convey little meaning.

IDEAS AND CONTENT - Does the writing sample include almost no relevant ideas and information?

- Writing may contain unfinished ideas.
- Writing is likely to be brief.

Organization - ISTEP+ Writing Applications Rubrics Grades 3-5

SCORE POINT 6

A Score Point 6 paper is rare. It fully accomplishes the task and has a distinctive quality that sets it apart as an outstanding performance.

ORGANIZATION - Does the writing have clear order? Does it:

- Follow a clear sequence with a beginning, a middle, and an end?
- Have a logical progression of main ideas and support?

SCORE POINT 5

A Score Point 5 paper represents a solid performance. It fully accomplishes the task but lacks the overall level of sophistication and consistency of a Score Point 6 paper.

ORGANIZATION - Does the writing have clear order? Does it:

- Follow a clear sequence with a beginning, a middle, and an end?
- Have a logical progression of main ideas and support?

SCORE POINT 4

A Score Point 4 paper represents a good performance. It accomplishes the task but generally needs to exhibit more development, better organization, or a more sophisticated writing style to receive a higher score.

ORGANIZATION - Does the writing have order? Does it:

- Follow a sequence but possibly show a lapse (e.g., may start out with a clear beginning, but wander; may be missing a beginning but have a conclusion)?
- Have a logical progression of main ideas and support? (Writing may have lapses.)

SCORE POINT 3

A Score Point 3 paper represents a performance that minimally accomplishes the task. Some elements of development, organization, and writing style are weak.

ORGANIZATION - Does the writing have some order? Does it:

- Show minimal evidence of logical sequence (e.g., may be missing a beginning, a middle, or an end)?
- Require the reader to fill in gaps in the sequence?

SCORE POINT 2

A Score Point 2 paper represents a performance that only partially accomplishes the task. Some responses may exhibit difficulty maintaining a focus. Others may be too brief to provide sufficient development of the topic or evidence of adequate organizational or writing style.

ORGANIZATION - Does writing have little order? Does it:

- Show little evidence of logical sequence (e.g., have no clear beginning, middle, or end)?
- Have some ideas that may not be related to each other?

SCORE POINT 1

A Score Point 1 paper represents a performance that fails to accomplish the task. It exhibits considerable difficulty in areas of development, organization, and writing style. The writing is generally either very brief or rambling and repetitive, sometimes resulting in a response that may be difficult to read or comprehend.

ORGANIZATION - Does writing have little or no order?

- Does it lack the sequence of a beginning, a middle, and an end?
- Writing may have ideas that are not related to each other.

Style - ISTEP+ Writing Applications Rubrics Grades 3-5**SCORE POINT 6**

A Score Point 6 paper is rare. It fully accomplishes the task and has a distinctive quality that sets it apart as an outstanding performance.

STYLE - Does the writing sample exhibit exceptional word usage? Does it:

- Include dynamic words and provide rich details, strong verbs, and/or vivid descriptions?
- Demonstrate control of a challenging vocabulary?

STYLE - Is the writing fluent and easy to read? Does it:

- Sound natural?
- Include varied sentence patterns? (Writing may include complex sentence patterns.)

STYLE - Does the writing sample display a strong sense of audience? Does it:

- Have a unique perspective? It may be original, lively, authoritative, and/or interesting (i.e., have a clear voice).

SCORE POINT 5

A Score Point 5 paper represents a solid performance. It fully accomplishes the task but lacks the overall level of sophistication and consistency of a Score Point 6 paper.

STYLE - Does the writing sample exhibit more than adequate word usage? Does it:

- Include dynamic words and use vivid or challenging words?

STYLE - Is the writing fluent and easy to read? Does it:

- Sound natural?
- Include varied sentence patterns? (Writing may include complex sentences.)

STYLE - Does the writing sample display a sense of audience?

- Writing may have a unique perspective. It may be original, lively, authoritative, and/or interesting (i.e., have voice).

SCORE POINT 4

A Score Point 4 paper represents a good performance. It accomplishes the task but generally needs to exhibit more development, better organization, or a more sophisticated writing style to receive a higher score.

STYLE - Does the writing sample exhibit adequate word usage? Does it:

- Include mostly ordinary/common words (although some vivid or challenging words may be used)?

STYLE - Is the writing readable? Does it:

- Flow naturally most of the time (although it may be choppy or repetitive or may have run-on sentences/fragments in spots)?
- Generally lack varied sentence patterns (although it may include some complex sentences)?

STYLE - Does the writing sample display some sense of audience?

- Is there an attempt to develop a unique perspective—original, authoritative, and/or interesting (i.e., have some voice)?

SCORE POINT 3

A Score Point 3 paper represents a performance that minimally accomplishes the task. Some elements of development, organization, and writing style are weak.

STYLE - Does the writing sample exhibit minimal word usage? Does it:

- Contain ordinary/common words?
- Exhibit minimal evidence of word choice?

STYLE - Is the writing mostly readable?

- Writing may be difficult to follow in some sections.
- Writing may be hard to understand; the connection of ideas and information may be unclear.
- Does the writing lack sentence variety?

STYLE - Does the writing display little sense of audience?

- Writing may be repetitive, predictable, and/or dull (i.e., have minimal voice).

SCORE POINT 2

A Score Point 2 paper represents a performance that only partially accomplishes the task. Some responses may exhibit difficulty maintaining a focus. Others may be too brief to provide sufficient development of the topic or evidence of adequate organizational or writing style.

STYLE - Does the writing sample exhibit less than minimal word usage? Does it:

- Contain ordinary/common words?
- Show no evidence of attention to word choice?

STYLE - Is the writing hard to read?

- Reader may have to fill in gaps or guess what the writer was trying to say.
- Does the writing lack sentence variety?

STYLE - Does the writing sample display little sense of audience?

- Text may be flat, lifeless (i.e., have no voice)?

SCORE POINT 1

A Score Point 1 paper represents a performance that fails to accomplish the task. It exhibits considerable difficulty in areas of development, organization, and writing style. The writing is generally either very brief or rambling and repetitive, sometimes resulting in a response that may be difficult to read or comprehend.

STYLE - Does the writing sample exhibit less than minimal word usage? Does it:

- Contain a very limited and simple vocabulary?

STYLE - Is the writing hard to read?

- Is sentence construction frequently incorrect?

STYLE - Does the writing sample display little or no sense of audience?

- Writing may be flat and lifeless (i.e., have no voice).

ISTEP+ Language Conventions Rubric

Grades 3–5

Score	Does writing exhibit a very good command of language skills?
4	<p>In a Score Point 4 paper, there are no errors that impair the flow of communication. Errors that appear will generally be of the first-draft variety; they have a minor impact on the overall communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there few or no errors in beginning capitalization? • Are there few or no errors in capitalization of proper nouns? • Are there few or no errors in ending punctuation? • Are there few or no errors in subject and verb agreement? • Are there few or no errors in the spelling of grade-level-appropriate words? • Does writing have few or no run-on sentences or sentence fragments?
Score	Does writing exhibit an adequate command of language skills?
3	<p>In a Score Point 3 paper, errors are occasional but do not impede the flow of communication; the writer's meaning is not seriously obscured by language-in-use errors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is most beginning capitalization correct? • Are most proper nouns capitalized correctly? • Do most sentences end with correct punctuation? • Do most sentences have correct subject and verb agreement? • Are most grade-level-appropriate words spelled correctly? • Writing may have run-on sentences or sentence fragments.
Score	Does writing exhibit a minimal command of language skills?
2	<p>In a Score Point 2 paper, errors are generally frequent and may cause the reader to stop and reread part of the writing. While some aspects of the writing may be more consistently correct than others, the existing errors do impair communication. With a little extra effort on the reader's part, it is still possible to discern most, if not all, of what the writer is trying to communicate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is some beginning capitalization correct? • Are some proper nouns capitalized correctly? • Do some sentences end with correct punctuation? • Do some sentences have correct subject and verb agreement? • Are some grade-level-appropriate words spelled correctly? • Writing may have run-on sentences or sentence fragments.
Score	Does writing exhibit a less than minimal command of language skills?
1	<p>In a Score Point 1 paper, errors are serious and numerous; they cause the reader to struggle to discern the writer's meaning. Errors are frequently of a wide variety. There may be sections where it is impossible to ascertain what the writer is attempting to communicate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there many errors in beginning capitalization? • Does writing have little or no evidence of capitalization of proper nouns? • Is end punctuation missing or incorrect? • Are there many errors in subject and verb agreement? • Are there many errors in the spelling of grade-level appropriate words? • Are there run-on sentences or sentence fragments?

ISTEP+ Writing Applications Overview
Grades 3–5

Score Level	Ideas and Content	Organization	Style
	Does the writing sample:	Does the writing sample:	Does the writing sample:
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay fully focused? • Include thorough and complete ideas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have clear order? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit exceptional word usage? • Exhibit writing that is fluent and easy to read? • Display a strong sense of audience?
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay focused? • Include many relevant ideas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have clear order? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit more than adequate word usage? • Exhibit writing that is fluent and easy to read? • Display a sense of audience?
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay mostly focused? • Include some relevant ideas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have order? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit adequate word usage? • Exhibit writing that is readable? • Display some sense of audience?
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay somewhat focused? • Include some relevant ideas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have some order? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit minimal word usage? • Exhibit writing that is mostly readable? • Display little sense of audience?
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit less than minimal focus? • Include few relevant ideas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have little order? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit less than minimal word usage? • Exhibit writing that is hard to read? • Display little sense of audience?
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have little or no focus? • Include almost no relevant ideas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have little or no order? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit less than minimal word usage? • Exhibit writing that hard to read? • Display little or no sense of audience?