

PSSA GRADES 3-5 OPINION SCORING GUIDELINES

Score Point	Description	
4 Advanced	Focus Content Organization Style Conventions	Sharp, distinct opinion introduced, developed, and concluded with evident awareness of task, purpose, and audience Substantial and relevant content that demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose Thorough elaboration with clearly presented reasons that are consistently supported with facts and details Effective order and organizational structure that support reasons and evidence Effective transitions that connect opinions and reasons Established and consistently maintained formal style with effective control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety* Consistent control of sentence formation Few errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning
3 Proficient	Focus Content Organization Style Conventions	Clear opinion introduced, developed, and concluded with general awareness of task, purpose, and audience Adequate and relevant content that demonstrates an understanding of the purpose Sufficient elaboration with clearly presented reasons that are supported with facts and details Logical order and organizational structure that supports reasons and evidence Clear transitions that connect opinions and reasons Established and maintained formal style with appropriate control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety* Adequate control of sentence formation Some errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning
2 Basic	Focus Content Organization Style Conventions	Vague opinion introduced, developed, and concluded with limited awareness of task, purpose, and audience Inadequate, vague content that demonstrates a weak understanding of the purpose Underdeveloped and/or repetitive elaboration that is inconsistently supported with facts and details Inconsistent order and organizational structure that somewhat support reasons and evidence Inconsistent/limited transitions that somewhat connect opinions and reasons Inconsistently maintained formal style with limited control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety* Inconsistent control of sentence formation Errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning
1 Below Basic	Focus Content Organization Style Conventions	Minimal evidence of an opinion introduced, developed, and concluded with little awareness of task, purpose, and audience Minimal content that demonstrates little or no understanding of the purpose Undeveloped opinion with little support; may be a bare list Minimal order and organizational structure Minimal transitions that may or may not connect opinions and reasons Ineffective formal style with little control of language* Minimal control of sentence formation Many errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning

*This bullet point does not apply to grade 3.