



Argumentative Writing Scoring Rubric

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CONTENT SELECTION AND ORGANIZATION (15) (What is said and whether it is said where it corresponds)

TOPIC SENTENCE / INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH (4.5) The TS/IP clearly establishes the topic to be discussed along the paragraph/essay and DOES NOT provide the writer's opinion(s).

The TS/IP opens the paragraph/essay effectively (i.e., it clearly introduces the topic), grabs attention, and invites to continue reading. Personal opinion is not included in this part of the text. 4.5
The TS/IP does not effectively introduce the topic (i.e., it is not clear what the rest of the paragraph/essay is going to be about), is dull and uninviting, and/or includes the opinion(s) of the writer. 2.5
There is no TS/IP establishing the topic. Instead, the writer jumps directly into argumentation. 0

SUPPORTING SENTENCES / SUPPORTING PARAGRAPHS (6) The body of the paragraph: SSs/SPs develop TS/IP with facts, details, and/or examples. All SSs/SPs must relate to TS/IP (i.e., no irrelevant facts, details, or examples should be included). Relationship of each SS/SP to TS/IP must be clearly indicated with connecting words. Same applies to relationship of one SS/SP to next (or previous) one.

There are between three and six fully developed SSs covering both sides of the argument (e.g., 2 in favor and 1 against; 1 pro and 2 cons, etc., depending on the formulation of the writing prompt), or two fully developed paragraphs, one on either side of the argument, with relevant facts, details, and/or examples. The relationship of each SS/SP to the TS/IP and to other SSs/SPs (prior or next) is clearly established via the corresponding connecting words. 6
The SSs/SPs are unequally developed. Some are neatly packed with relevant facts, details, and/or examples while others resemble neutral statements instead of arguments in favor or against the issue being discussed. The candidate has aimed at establishing a relationship between the SSs/SPs and the TS/IP and among the SSs/SPs themselves, successfully in some cases and unsuccessfully in others (i.e., correct or incorrect use of connecting words). 4.5
There are seven or more SSs or more than two SPs, and they are not sufficiently or clearly developed with relevant facts, details, and/or examples. There is no attempt (i.e., no use of connecting words) to establish the relationship between the SSs/SPs and the TS/IP or among the SSs/SPs themselves. 3
The body of the paragraph/essay is constituted by one or two, excessively long SSs or only one, excessively long SP or, on the contrary, a series of short and/or disconnected SSs/SPs (e.g., no connecting words or incorrect connecting words are used). The SS(s)/SP(s) do not provide enough facts, details, or examples to develop the TS/IP or they seem unrelated to it. The relationship of each SS/SP and the TS/IP and among the different SSs/SPs is not established or is not clear. 1.5

CLOSING SENTENCE / CLOSING PARAGRAPH (4.5) The CS/CP must leave the reader with some final thoughts (not new ideas) on the issue discussed and the supporting points included in the paragraph/essay.

The CS/CP a) restates the issue introduced in the TS/IP in a new, more insightful manner and new words; b) includes the writer's opinion with appropriate justification, and c) does not include new ideas. It neatly ends the paragraph/essay and leaves the reader with a sense of closure. 4.5
The CS/CP a) fails to link back to the TS/IP, or does it mainly by repeating it (TS/IP) with very similar words; b) does not provide the writer's opinion, or an opinion is included but not conveniently justified; and/or c) includes one or more new ideas. 2.5



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There is no CS/CP. The paragraph/essay ends while still providing information about the different arguments put forward in the paragraph/essay. Thus, there is no sense of closure to the paragraph/essay whatsoever.	0
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USE OF ENGLISH (20) Grammar and vocabulary

GRAMMAR (G) (10) Candidates must demonstrate mastery of A1, A2, and B1 grammar topics. Two (or more) instances of the same error will be penalized only once.	
No "penalizable" errors.	10
One, two or three "penalizable" errors.	8
Four, five or six "penalizable" errors.	6
Seven, eight or nine "penalizable" errors.	4
Ten or more "penalizable" errors.	2

VOCABULARY (V) (10) Candidates must use a variety of lexical items.	
A wide variety of topic-related words/phrases is used. These w/p draw pictures in the reader's mind and linger there. Their placement in the sentence seems accurate, natural, and not forced.	10
A variety of topic-related words/phrases is used. These w/p draw pictures in the reader's mind and may even linger there. Occasionally, however, some of those w/p are used inaccurately or seem overdone.	7.5
Topic-related words/phrases have not been sufficiently developed (i.e., there are not enough of them to capture the reader's interest, or their use is incorrect). Word choice is vague and/or repetitive (i.e., w/p communicate clearly, but the paragraph lacks variety, punch, and/or flair).	5
No topic-related words/phrases are used, or they are used incorrectly. Word choice is bland, repetitive, limited, and fails to accurately present the arguments in favor or against the issue being discussed. It also fails to communicate meaning at the denotative/representative level.	2.5

MECHANICS (5) (Spelling, Punctuation & Capitalization)

SPELLING (3) Supposedly already acquired words (A1, A2, B1) must be correctly spelled (i.e., A1, A2 and B1 lexical items are considered "penalizable").	
No "penalizable" errors.	3
One or two "penalizable" errors.	2
Three or four "penalizable" errors.	1
Five or more "penalizable" errors.	0

PUNCTUATION (1) Common punctuation marks (1. Sentence endings (period, question mark, and exclamation mark); 2. Within-sentence marks (comma, semicolon, and colon); 3. Other marks (parentheses, double quotation marks, and ellipses) must be correctly used.	
No errors.	1
One or two errors.	0.75
Three or four errors.	0.5
Five or more errors.	0.25

CAPITALIZATION (1) Capital initial letters must be used in: brand names, companies, days, months, historical episodes and eras, holidays, institutions, manmade structures, manmade territories, landmarks, nicknames, organizations, planets, races/nationalities/tribes, religions and names of deities, special occasions, streets and roads.	
No errors.	1
One or two errors.	0.75
Three or four errors.	0.5
Five or more errors.	0.25

TOTAL MARKS:	<input type="text"/>
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NOTE 1: To use this rubric correctly, a level of performance (left column) for each sub-criterion (e.g., Grammar, within “Use of English”) must be selected and its corresponding score (right column) added up. No intermediate scores can be awarded.

NOTE 2: This specific scoring rubric is to be used with candidate answers which meet the requirements of Task 5 in terms of number of words (*between 150 and 175 words*). To score answers between 120 and 150 words and answers shorter than 120 words, users will have to apply the corresponding modifications in the allowance of marks in the different sections of the rubric, following indications provided in the document “[Criterios de corrección](#)”.

NOTE 3: In the exam, **paragraphs/essays which do not discuss** (i.e., provide arguments on one side of the argument and the opposite) **will be scored with 0 marks** for lack of task accomplishment. “0 marks. Task not accomplished” will be written below the candidate’s answer on the answer sheet.