

SUGGESTED GENERAL SCORING PROCEDURE

1. Each scoring session should begin with an opportunity for individual raters to calibrate themselves to the rubric by rating and discussing (using key words from the rubric) a set of common scored sample papers. The KSDE 6-TRAIT Scoring Training Manual is available online for these purposes.
2. The rating of student writing should be completed by teams of two readers, each working independently. Individual readers should be encouraged to review and discuss their ratings of student papers that are emerging as particularly strong, weak, or problematic with other readers throughout each scoring session.
3. Each team of two readers should take a set (or class) of papers and divide them into two piles. Within each team, each reader should rate all of the student writing in one of the two piles, then switch piles with the other reader, and rate all of the writing in the second pile.
4. While scoring the first pile of student writing, ratings should be covered with a sticky-note (or in some other manner) and those scores should not be revealed until the second reader has completed his or her rating of the same piece of student writing.
5. Throughout the scoring process (it is suggested at least the first five papers of each set and at least every tenth paper thereafter), readers should physically mark copies of the rubric to verify in their own minds the accuracy of their rating and their adherence to the qualities described by the rubric.
6. Any discrepancies that are discovered during the second reader's scoring (rating separation between the first and second raters of more than one point) should first be discussed between the two readers—reaching consensus is NOT necessary—and then the student writing should be passed on to a third experienced reader to rate the discrepant area(s). (Note: only traits on which there are discrepancies are evaluated by the third rater.)
7. When all of the student writing in a particular set has been read and rated by both independent scorers and when all discrepancies have been discussed and rated by a third reader, the team of two readers should move on to the next set (or class) of student writing until all essays are scored.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE FOR RATING AN INDIVIDUAL ESSAY

After reading each piece of student writing, a reader should rate the essay on each of the six traits separately. Thus, each paper receives six scores—one for each trait. And while each trait is certainly discreet, the traits themselves are not mutually exclusive and do overlap to some extent, suggesting that a piece of writing is much more than just the sum of its parts and traits. To arrive at a score for each trait, the reader should first examine the four criteria (arranged hierarchically) and the descriptors listed therein (see figure below) and then decide upon a single rating using the following procedure:

1. Begin with the first listed criterion and place a checkmark beside the set of descriptors (5, 4, 3, 2, or 1) that best describes the essay.

For example, under Organization, the scorer would first look at the various descriptors for the criterion “Structure” at the 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 point levels and consider which set best characterizes the essay. If a reader believes the essay is clearly a 4, he or she would check that box. Or, if a reader decides the essay “fits” somewhere between a 3 and 4, the scorer would check BOTH the 3 box and the 4 box and possibly even underline the particular descriptors within each of these two sets that fit this particular essay.

2. Then move on to the next criterion and repeat this process until all four criteria are rated.
3. Once all four criterion have been rated, take a metaphoric step back to see where the checkmarks and underlined descriptors seem to fall on the rubric. (There may be only four checkmarks; there may be more than four checkmarks.) Using these markings on the rubric as a guide, decide upon a single rating for this trait that takes into account the criterion and the various descriptors that “fit” this particular essay, keeping in mind that any piece of writing is much more than just the sum of its parts.

For example, if all the checkmarks are at the 4 level, the score would be a 4. If there are two checkmarks at the 4 level and two at the 3 level, the score would likely be 3.5. For other combinations of markings, the scorer would then have to weigh the relative importance of the marked criteria and descriptors in comparison (their point value and hierarchical placement on the rubric provides guidance) and arrive at a final rating for this trait.

4. Repeat this procedure for each of the remaining traits.

| ORGANIZATION | | |
|---|--|---|
| Rating of 4— Polishing: | Rating of 3— Drafting: | Rating of 2— Shaping: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structure [1.4.7]: effective, but not compelling; balance of ideas and relationships among ideas could be improved; paragraphing is appropriate and effective but may be overly obvious | <input type="checkbox"/> Structure [1.4.7]: functional; gets the job done; may be so dominant or predictable that it smothers the ideas; paragraphing is mostly effective, could maybe be revised in one or two spots | <input type="checkbox"/> Structure [1.4.7]: beginning to take shape, but not yet functional; feels more random than purposeful, often leaving a reader with a sense of being adrift; paragraphing is not effective |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pacing & Sequencing [1.4.9]: details fit naturally and effectively where they are placed, making the text easy to follow and understand, but is overly-obvious | <input type="checkbox"/> Pacing & Sequencing [1.4.9]: main ideas are arranged appropriately and with purpose but could be improved | <input type="checkbox"/> Pacing & Sequencing [1.4.9]: very rough; main ideas should be more effectively arranged and delivered |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction & Conclusion [1.4.8]: both present; one is truly effective, one is only functional | <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction & Conclusion [1.4.8]: both are recognizable and functional | <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction & Conclusion [1.4.8]: one present, not both |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transitions [1.4.10]: present throughout but not necessarily strong or natural; help to weave together threads of info. but may be occasionally awkward | <input type="checkbox"/> Transitions [1.4.10]: usually present, but may be too obvious, too structured, or awkward | <input type="checkbox"/> Transitions [1.4.10]: occasionally present, but connections between some ideas seem confusing |