



Literacy at Hartford Public High School

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Scoring Student Writing

Adapted from Florida School for the Deaf and Blind

When you develop a writing prompt, you need to have in mind how you will score it and students need to know what is expected of them. Rubrics serve this purpose well and provide the students with a clear expectation of what you want in response to the question.

Definition of Holistic Scoring

Holistic scoring is a method by which trained readers evaluate a piece of writing for its overall quality. Readers evaluate the work as a whole, while considering four elements: *focus*, *organization*, *support*, and *conventions*. This method is sometimes called focused holistic scoring. In this type of scoring, readers make a judgment about the entire response rather than focusing exclusively on any one aspect.

Focus

Focus refers to how clearly the paper presents and maintains a main idea, theme, or unifying point.

Organization

Organization refers to the structure or plan of development (beginning, middle, and end) and the relationship of one point to another. Organization refers to the use of transitional devices (terms, phrases, and variations in sentence structure) to signal

- (1) the relationship of the supporting ideas to the main idea, theme, or unifying point and
- (2) the connections between and among sentences.

Support

Support refers to the quality of details used to explain, clarify, or define. The quality of the support depends on word choice, specificity, depth, credibility, and thoroughness.

Conventions

Conventions refer to the punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and sentence structure. Student writing for the CAPT is not judged on conventions. As long as the intent of the writer is clear, the work is judged for its content.

Using a Rubric

During a Professional Development activity in October, a simple scoring rubric was presented to the teachers. The rubric is based on the scoring format of the CAPT Reading for Information subtest.

Using a scale of 0, 1, and 2, this rubric allows students to know exactly what the teacher expects to see in a piece of bell work. Similarly, it provides the teacher with a format for quickly checking student work.

These numbers can easily be converted to a check system. A score of zero (0) counts as a check minus: $\sqrt{-}$; a score of one (1) counts as a check: $\sqrt{\quad}$; a score of two (2) counts as a check plus: $\sqrt{+}$.

It is important to familiarize our students with the manner in which their writing on the Reading for Information subtest will be scored. By adopting the rubric presented at the PD session, you will help your students to become comfortable with the test that will determine whether they graduate.