

GRADE 8 – INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING TEACHER RUBRIC

	4 (Exceeds expectations)	3 (Meets expectations)	2 (Partially meets expectations)	1 (Does not yet meet expectations)
Focus on Task and Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides thorough responses to all elements of the prompt (ns) Maintains a tone that is appropriate to the task and audience; maintains focus throughout (ns) Demonstrates insight into a topic or text(s) by discussing relevant details, events, facts, and ideas, and comparing alternate ideas or concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides complete responses to all elements of the prompt (ns) Establishes a tone that is appropriate to the task and audience (ns) Demonstrates insight into a topic or text(s) by discussing relevant details, events, facts, and ideas, and making connections between multiple resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to only some elements of the prompt, or provides partial responses to all elements of the prompt (ns) Establishes a tone that is appropriate at times to the task and audience (ns) Demonstrates insight into a topic or text(s) by discussing relevant details, events, facts, ideas, and/or other elements (W.6.1.A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not respond to any elements of the prompt; off-topic (ns) Establishes a tone that is appropriate at times to the task and audience (ns) Demonstrates comprehension of topic or text(s) by discussing relevant details, events, and facts (W.5.1.A)
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces the a complex topic clearly and thoroughly, previewing what is to follow by presenting an engaging lead (L.9–10.2.A) Organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information; uses various strategies to make important connections and distinctions Includes formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension (L.9–10.2.A) Uses appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships among ideas and concepts (W.9–10.2.C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces the topic clearly by giving insightful context and information that previews what is to follow (W.8.2.A) Organizes ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; uses strategies, such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect (W.8.2.A) Includes formatting (e.g., headings), graphics, and multimedia when useful to aiding in comprehension (W.8.2.A) Uses appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts (W.8.2.C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces the topic by clearly stating a topic; incorporates context as a hook; provides a vague preview for what is to follow (W.8.2.A) Organizes ideas, concepts, and information inconsistently; uses some strategies, such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect (W.8.2.A) Includes formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia to help the reader understand how information connects (W.8.2.A) Uses transitions to connect ideas and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts, few with errors (W.8.2.C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces the topic; provides a partial preview of what is to follow (W.8.2.A) Organizes information into multiple paragraphs; uses limited strategies to group related information together within and across paragraphs (W.8.2.A) Includes inconsistent formatting, illustrations, and multimedia to aid comprehension, with errors (W.8.2.A) Inconsistently uses transitions to connect ideas (W.8.2.C)

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Organization (cont.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ability to weave complex ideas while maintaining a fluent progression of ideas (W.9–10.2.C) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a conclusion that follows from, supports, and expands on the focus, articulating implications or the significance of the topic (W.9–10.2.F)	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates coherence, clarity, and cohesion, making it easy to follow the writer’s progression of ideas (W.8.2.C) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (W.8.2.F)	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion, making the writer’s progression of ideas discernible (W.8.2.C) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a conclusion that generally follows from the information presented, with several errors (W.8.2.F)	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates limited coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion; attempts to connect ideas but with gaps and errors or confusion (W.8.2.C) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a conclusion that relates to the explanation presented but is incomplete (W.8.2.F)
Development and Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Develops the topic with four or more well- chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic (W.9–10.2.B) <input type="checkbox"/> Selects compelling evidence that supports topic development without distraction, assessing the usefulness of each source; integrates information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation, as needed (W.8.2.B; W.9–10.8)	<input type="checkbox"/> Develops the topic with three or more well-chosen, relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples to further explain the topic and central ideas (W.8.2.B) <input type="checkbox"/> Draws evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, assessing the credibility and accuracy of each source; quotes or paraphrases the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation, as needed (W.8.2.B; W.8.8)	<input type="checkbox"/> Develops the topic with two or more facts, definitions, details, or quotations; some evidence may be insufficient or irrelevant (W.8.2.B) <input type="checkbox"/> Draws evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research; quotes or paraphrases the information and conclusions of others and following a standard format for citation, as needed (W.7.8; W.8.2.B)	<input type="checkbox"/> Attempts to develop the topic, albeit inadequately, using too few pieces of evidence from text(s), with some errors (W.8.2.B) <input type="checkbox"/> Draws evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, with errors; quotes or paraphrases the information and conclusions of others, with some errors; attempts to follow a standard format for citation, as needed (W.8.2.B; W.7.8)

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Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and maintains a formal style and objective tone; maintains consistency in style and tone, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline (W.9–10.2.D) Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate to the task and audience to manage the complexity of the topic (L.9–10.6) Varies sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style; uses different sentence lengths; uses simple sentences, compound or complex sentences, and complex-compound sentences (ns) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and maintains a formal style that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (W.8.2.D) Uses precise language and academic and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate to the task and audience to inform about or explain the topic (L.8.6) Varies sentence patterns for clarity and interest; uses simple sentences, at least three compound or complex sentences, and complex-compound sentences (ns) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a formal style, with occasional departures, that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (W.8.2.D) Uses precise language and academic and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate to the task and audience, with minimal errors (L.8.6) Varies sentence patterns occasionally for clarity or interest; uses mostly simple sentences and compound or complex sentences (ns) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates an inconsistent formal style with frequent departures or an informal style W.8.2.D) Uses mostly precise language; academic and domain-specific vocabulary is general, with minimal errors (L.8.6) Varies sentence structure inconsistently; sentence patterns are basic and repetitive (ns)
Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows proficient command of above-grade level grammar, mechanics, and usage, with few errors that do not impede readability or comprehension (L.9–10.1) Shows proficient command of above-grade level capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, with minimal or no errors (L.9–10.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows proficient command of grade level grammar, mechanics, and usage, with few errors that do not impede readability or comprehension; correctly uses verbs in a variety of moods and voice (L.8.1) Shows consistent command of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling; occasional errors do not significantly impede meaning or readability (L.8.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows consistent command of grammar, mechanics, and usage; may include errors that do not significantly impede meaning or readability; uses phrases and clauses to effect, avoiding dangling modifiers (L.8.1) Shows inconsistent command of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling; some errors interfere with meaning and/or readability (L.8.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows poor command of grammar, mechanics, and usage; includes errors that significantly impede overall meaning and readability (L.8.1) Shows poor command of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling; errors significantly impede overall meaning and readability (L.8.2)