General Guidelines:

The grade seven and eight written responses are first drafts written by students in forty-five minutes in reaction to a prompt designed to elicit persuasive writing.

Errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage are should be ignored as part of the criteria for scoring samples. Also, assign the score based on the work the student did complete even if they seem to be unfinished. Because the writing sample is a timed response, it is generally assumed that these errors and omissions could have been corrected if the student had been given an opportunity to revise and edit.

This rubric outlines a six-point scale. Each score point on that scale is described by an overall statement which captures the essence of the response. The elements of the response (elaboration, organization, fluency and audience awareness) that are typical for that score point are described below the overall statement. Individual responses may be stronger in one feature and weaker in another. In other words, the list of features at each score point, while helpful, cannot perfectly describe every response in a score-point category.

Score Point 1: An undeveloped response that may take a position but offers no more than very minimal support.

Typical elements:

Contains few or vague details.

Is awkward and fragmented.

May be difficult to read and understand. May show no awareness of audience.

Score Point 2: An under-developed response that may or may not take a position. Typical elements:

Contains only general reasons with unelaborated and/or list-like details.

Shows little or no evidence of organization.

May be awkward and confused or simplistic. May show little awareness of audience.

Score Point 3: A minimally-developed response that may take a position, but with inadequate support and details. Typical elements:

Has reasons with minimal elaboration and more general than specific details. o Shows some organization.

May be awkward in parts with few transitions. o Shows some awareness of audience.

Score Point 4: A somewhat-developed response that takes a position and provides adequate support.

Typical elements:

Has adequately elaborated reasons with a mix of general and specific details. Shows satisfactory organization.

May be somewhat fluent with some transitional language. ' Shows adequate awareness of audience.

Score Point 5: A developed response that takes a clear position and provides reasonably persuasive support. Typical elements:

Has moderately well elaborated reasons with mostly specific details.

Exhibits generally strong organization.

May be moderately fluent with transitional language throughout. May show a consistent awareness of audience.

Score Point 6: A well-developed response that takes a clear and thoughtful position and provides persuasive support. Typical elements:

Has fully elaborated reasons with specific details.

Exhibits strong organization.

Is fluent and uses sophisticated transitional language. May show a heightened awareness of audience.