

# Understanding the Georgia H.S. Writing Test (GHSWT)



# 3 Part Approach

- 1) Review important GHSWT details
- 2) Explore what the GHSWT assesses:
  - Ideas
  - Organization
  - Style
  - Conventions
- 3) Putting this knowledge to work: Score/discuss several student papers

# Part 1: Important GHSWT Details

- Domains Assessed
- The Score Scale
- Weighting of Domains
- Calculating the Total Raw Score
- Converting Raw Score to Scale Score
- Performance Level Descriptors
- GPS Information about Persuasive Writing
- Understanding the Writing Prompts

# Domains Assessed

## **Georgia High School Writing Test (GPS)**

- Ideas
- Organization
- Style
- Conventions

# The Score Scale

## Georgia High School Writing Test (GPS)

- Five score points in each scoring domain
- A score of “5” represents the highest level of competence in each domain.

# How the Domains are Weighted

Weighting means that the scores in some writing domains will be given more weight than others in determining the total score that a student receives.

<u>Georgia High School Writing Test (GPS)</u>	
<u>Weight</u>	
Ideas	2
Organization	1
Style	1
Conventions	1

# Weighting of Domains

Weighting means that the scores in some writing domains will be given more weight than others in determining the total score that a student receives.

Scoring Domain	Domain Weight	% of total score
Ideas	2 x raters' scores	40%
Organization	1 x raters' scores	20%
Style	1 x raters' scores	20%
Conventions	1 x raters' scores	20%


# Domain Score to Total Weighted Raw Score Conversion

The following table indicates the total weighted raw scores for several domain score combinations. Two raters score each student paper, assigning a score of 1-5 in each of the four domains. The range of total weighted raw scores is 10 – 50.

	Domain Scores				Total Weighted Raw Score
	Ideas (x 2)	Org. (x 1)	Style (x 1)	Conv. (x 1)	
Rater 1 Rater 2	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	<b>10</b>
Rater 1 Rater 2	2 2	2 2	2 2	2 2	<b>20</b>
Rater 1 Rater 2	3 3	3 3	3 3	3 3	<b>30</b>
Rater 1 Rater 2	4 4	4 4	4 4	4 4	<b>40</b>
Rater 1 Rater 2	5 5	5 5	5 5	5 5	<b>50</b>



# Raw Score to Scale Score Conversion

Raw Scores	Scale Scores
10	100
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
↓	
45	
46	
47	
48	
49	
50	350

# Scale Score Range

<b>Scale Score</b>	<b>Performance Level</b>
100 – 199	Does Not Meet Standard
200 – 249	Meets the Standard
250 – 350	Exceeds the Standard

# Performance Level Descriptors for GHSWT

<p><b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b></p> <p>(100 – 199)</p>	<p>•Writing samples that do not meet the standard demonstrate limited focus on the assigned topic or persuasive purpose and may lack an introduction or conclusion. The writer’s position may be unclear. Development is minimal, and ideas are listed rather than developed. Ideas may not be grouped appropriately, and transitions may be limited. The writing shows little awareness of audience or reader concerns. Word choice and sentences are simple and/or repetitive. The writer’s voice is inconsistent or not apparent. Frequent errors in sentence formation, usage, and mechanics may interfere with or obscure meaning. Demonstration of competence may be limited by the brevity of the response.</p>
<p><b>Meets the Standard</b></p> <p>(200 – 249)</p>	<p>•Writing samples that meet the standard are generally focused on the assigned topic and persuasive purpose and contain a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. The writer’s position is clear and sufficiently developed. Supporting ideas are developed with some examples and details, and the writer addresses some reader concerns. Supporting ideas are presented in a generally clear sequence. Related ideas are grouped together and connected with some transitions. Word choice is generally engaging, and there is some variation in sentence length and structure. The writer’s voice is clear, and the writing shows awareness of the audience. Sentence formation, usage, and mechanics are generally correct, and errors do not interfere with meaning. The text is of sufficient length to demonstrate effective writing skills.</p>
<p><b>Exceeds the Standard</b></p> <p>(250-350)</p>	<p>•Writing samples that exceed the standard are consistently focused on the assigned topic, persuasive purpose, and audience, and have an effective introduction, body, and conclusion. The writer’s position is well developed, and the validity of the writer’s position is established. Supporting ideas are fully elaborated with specific examples and details that fully address readers’ concerns and/or counterarguments. The main points of the argument are logically grouped and sequenced within paragraphs and across parts of the paper. Varied transitional elements are used to connect ideas. Word choice is varied and precise throughout the response, and sentences are varied in length and structure. The writer’s voice is distinctive, and the writer demonstrates sustained attention to the audience in the introduction, body, and conclusion. Sentence formation, usage, and mechanics are consistently correct in a variety of contexts. Errors are minor and infrequent. The text is of sufficient length to demonstrate effective writing skills in a variety of contexts.</p>

# Emphasis on Genre: Persuasive Writing

- Defining Persuasive Writing
- Persuasive Writing in the GPS
- What Persuasive Writing Is and Is Not

# Defining Persuasive Writing

Persuasive Writing: Writing that has as its purpose convincing others to accept the writer's position as valid, adopt a certain point of view, or take some action.

## Methods:

- Provides logical appeals, emotional appeals, facts, statistics, narrative anecdotes, humor, and/or the writer's personal experiences and knowledge.

# What Persuasive Writing Is and Is Not

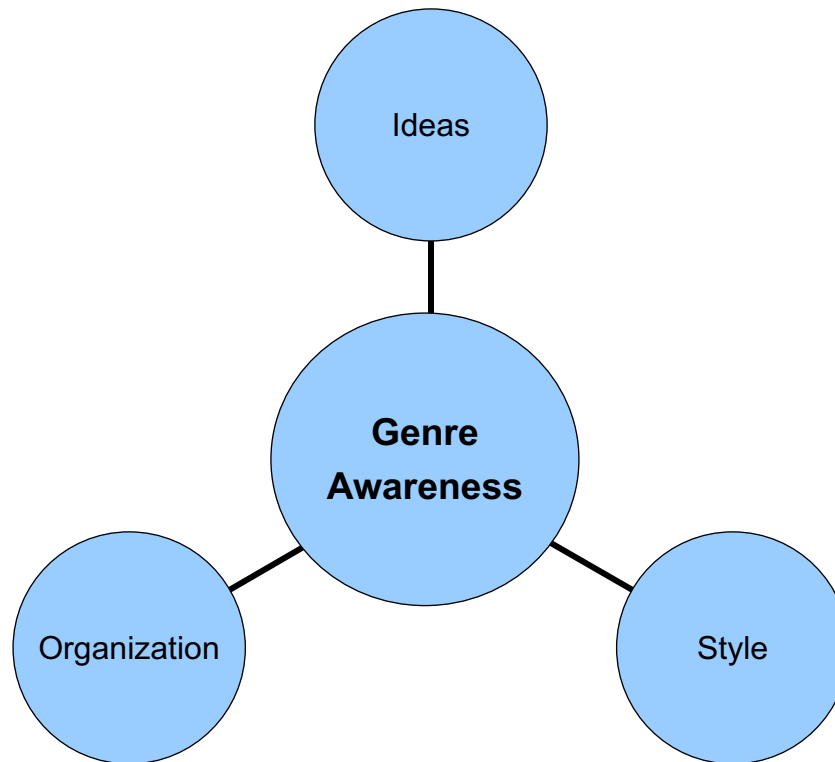
An effective persuasive composition . . .	An effective persuasive composition is NOT:
Clearly establishes a position on the issue and fully develops an argument with specific details and examples	Formulaic writing or a repetitive, standard five-paragraph formula that repeats the writer's position and supporting reasons
Defends the writer's position with relevant evidence that is appropriate for the audience identified in the writing topic	A list of irrelevant ideas or supporting ideas that are inappropriate for the audience identified in the writing topic
Demonstrates that the writer can anticipate and counter the audience's position on the issue	Writing that fails to consider the audience's position on an issue
Uses specific facts, personal experience and knowledge, and/or statistics to support the writer's position	A list of facts, a story, and/or personal anecdotes that are unrelated to the writer's position
Includes appeals to logic and/or emotion	A chance for the writer to simply vent about a topic
Contains an organizational structure appropriate for persuasion	Writing in which ideas are presented in an illogical or confusing order

# What Persuasive Writing Is and Is Not

<b>An effective persuasive composition . . .</b>	<b>An effective persuasive composition is NOT:</b>
Is multi-paragraph writing that supports a specific side of an issue	A single paragraph
Uses appropriate writing voice to engage the reader	Flat, uninteresting writing
Uses precise language and varied sentences	An essay that contains imprecise language and little sentence variety
Introduces the reader to the issue, fully develops a position, and provides a sense of closure	Writing that presents ideas without introducing, developing, and/or providing closure
May contain a short narrative in the introduction or a skillful extended narrative that supports the writer's position	A story that does not address the persuasive purpose of the topic
Contains correct sentences, usage, grammar, and spelling that make the writer's ideas understandable	Incorrect sentences, usage, grammar, and spelling that distract the reader from the writer's ideas

# Genre Awareness

The degree to which the writer selects ideas, an organizational plan, and stylistic devices that are appropriate to the genre of writing.





# Writing Topics (Prompts)

- Sample Writing Topic (Prompt)
- Understanding the Writing Topic
- Format of the Writing Task
- The Writing Checklist

# Persuasive Writing Topic

General Topic

## Writing Situation

Many students do not think the subjects they study in high school prepare them for the real world they will face after graduation. The principal at your school is asking students for their opinions about new courses that could be offered to prepare students for life after high school. What new course do you think should be offered?

Context for Topic

## Directions for Writing

Writer's Task:  
Format, Purpose,  
Audience

Write a letter to convince the principal that your new course should be offered. Be sure to explain why your new course is needed, using specific examples and details.

# The Writing Checklist

## Student Writing Checklist for Persuasive Writing

### **Prepare Yourself to Write**

- Read the Writing Situation and Directions for Writing carefully.
- Brainstorm for ideas.
- Consider how to address your audience.
- **Decide what ideas to include and how to organize them.**
- Write only in English.

### **Make Your Paper Meaningful**

- Use your knowledge and/or personal experiences that are related to the topic.
- Express a clear point of view.
- Fully support your position with specific details, examples, and convincing reasons.
- Include an appeal to logic and/or emotions.
- Organize your ideas in a clear and logical order.
- Write a persuasive paper and stay on topic.

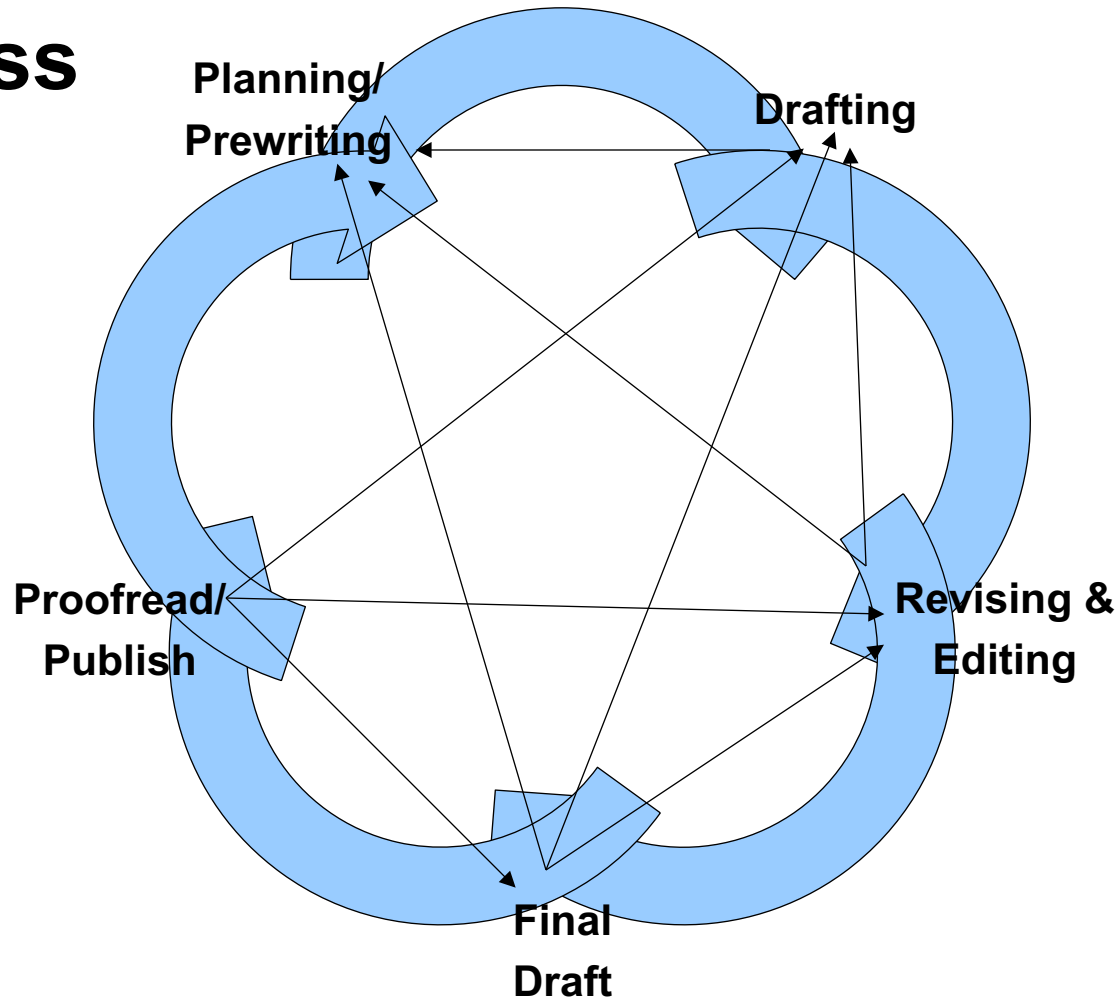
### **Make Your Paper Interesting to Read**

- Use examples and details that would be convincing to your audience.
- Use appropriate voice that shows your interest in the topic.
- Use precise, descriptive, vivid words.
- Vary the type, structure, and length of your sentences.
- Use effective transitions.

### **Edit and Revise Your Paper**

- Consider rearranging your ideas and changing words to make your paper better.
- Add additional information or details to make your paper complete.
- Proofread your paper for usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

# The Writing Process



# Part 2: Understanding What the GHSWT Assesses

- The GHSWT Rubric Top to Bottom
- Overview of Score Points 1 – 5: Five Levels of Competence
- The Domains Assessed and the Components of Each
  - Ideas
  - Organization
  - Style
  - Conventions

# Using the New GHSWT Scoring Rubric: The Rubric Top to Bottom

## Domain Title and Overview

### Georgia High School Writing Test: Scoring Rubric Domain 1: IDEAS

**Domain 1: IDEAS.** The degree to which the writer establishes a controlling idea and elaborates the main points with examples, illustrations, facts, or details that are appropriate to the persuasive genre.

#### Components

- Controlling Idea/Focus
- Supporting Ideas
- Relevance of Detail
- Depth of Development
- Awareness of Persuasive Purpose
- Sense of Completeness

## Domain Components

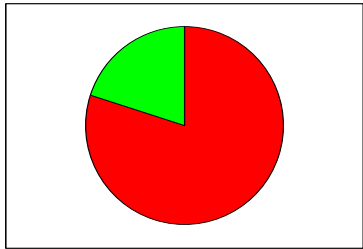
## Level of Competence

1. Little or no control of the components of Ideas.	2. Minimal control of the components of Ideas.	3. Sufficient control of the components of Ideas.	4. Consistent control of the components of Ideas.	5. Full command of the components of Ideas
At each score point, the writing is characterized by most or all of the following:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little or no focus on the assigned topic and/or persuasive purpose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimally focused on the assigned topic and persuasive purpose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sufficiently focused on the assigned topic and persuasive purpose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently focused on the assigned topic and persuasive purpose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully focused on the assigned topic and persuasive purpose</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writer's position may be apparent, but a controlling idea is not established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimally developed controlling idea that addresses some aspect of the writer's position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sufficiently developed controlling idea that establishes the writer's position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well developed controlling idea that establishes the validity of the writer's position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully developed controlling idea that establishes the validity of the writer's position</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideas do not advance the writer's position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some points and details may be irrelevant or inappropriate to the writer's argument</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most supporting ideas are relevant to the writer's argument</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting ideas and elaboration are relevant to the writer's argument</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting ideas and elaboration are relevant to the writer's argument and audience</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideas are unclear, irrelevant, and/or repeated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting ideas are vague, general, and/or undeveloped</li> <li>Some ideas may be partially developed, while others are simply listed without development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting ideas are developed with some examples, details, and/or evidence</li> <li>Some parts of the paper may be well developed, but other parts of the paper are only partially developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting ideas are consistently well developed with specific examples, details, and evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting ideas are fully elaborated throughout the paper with logical examples, details, and evidence (facts, expert opinions, quotations, or commonly accepted beliefs)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response does not demonstrate awareness of the persuasive purpose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response demonstrates minimal awareness of the persuasive purpose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response is generally appropriate to the persuasive purpose and may include some rhetorical devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses some rhetorical devices to support assertions (e.g., appeal to emotion, personal anecdote, analogy, logical reasoning)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses rhetorical devices to support assertions (e.g., appeal to emotion, personal anecdote, analogy, logical reasoning)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lacks a sense of completeness and fails to address reader concerns</li> <li>Insufficient student writing (due to brevity or copying the prompt) to determine competence in Ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response lacks sufficient information (due to incomplete development or the repetition of supporting ideas) to provide a sense of completeness and address reader concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response contains sufficient information to provide a sense of completeness and address some reader concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response contains complete information and addresses readers' concerns, counterarguments, biases, or expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response contains an abundance of information that fully addresses readers' concerns, counterarguments, biases, or expectations</li> </ul>

## Score Point Descriptions (1-5)

# Overview of Score Points 1-5

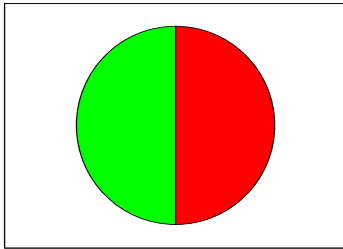
## Five Levels of Competence



Score: 1

**Lack of Control**

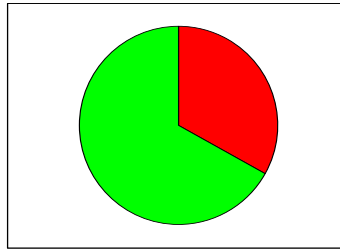
(of the elements of the domain)



Score: 2

**Minimal Control**

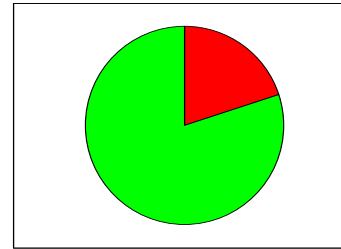
(of the elements of the domain)



Score: 3

**Sufficient Control**

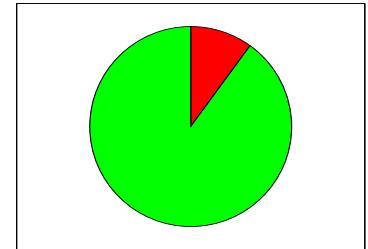
(of the elements of the domain)



Score: 4

**Consistent Control**

(of the elements of the domain)



Score: 5

**Full Command**

(of the elements of the domain)

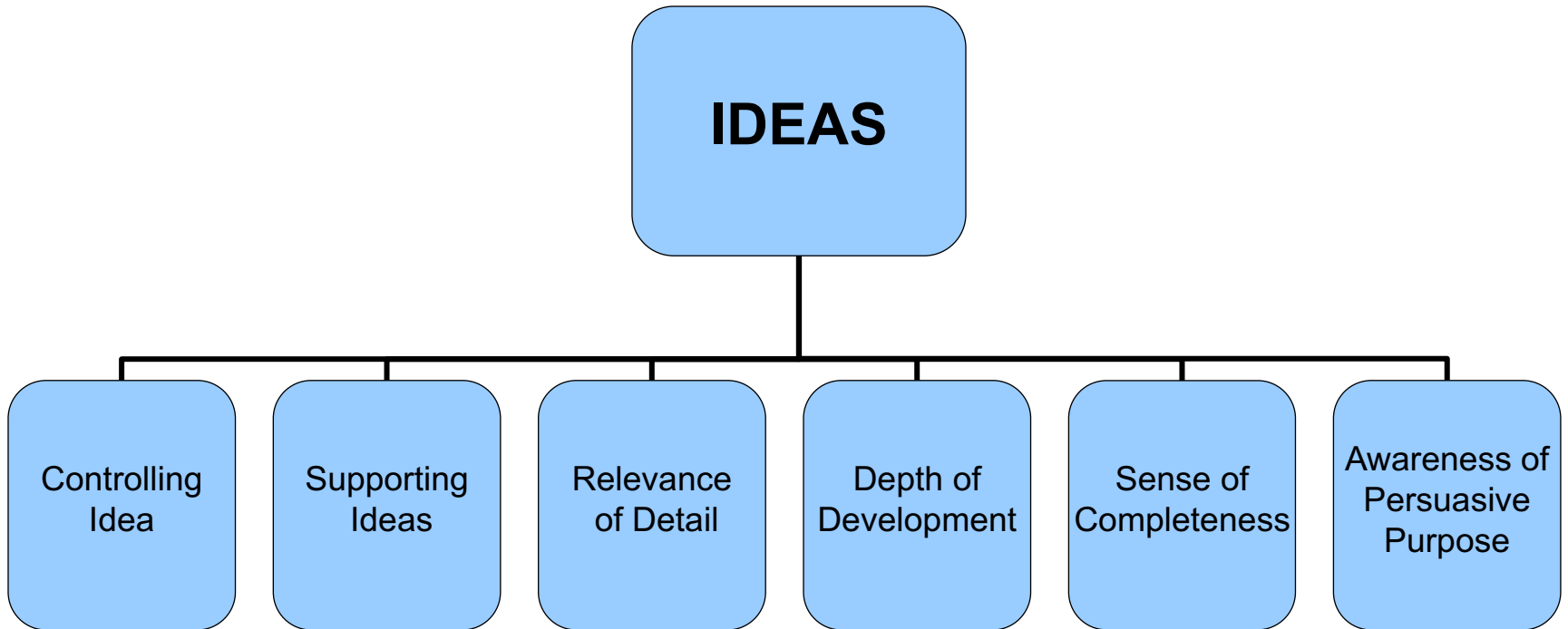
**GREEN** = The degree to which the writer demonstrates control of the components.

# Domain 1: Ideas

- The Components of Ideas
- Controlling Idea
- Development of Ideas
- Depth of Development
  - Depth of Development in a Paragraph
  - Examples of Depth of Development in Score Points 1-5
- [The Bottom Line in Ideas](#)



# The Components of Ideas



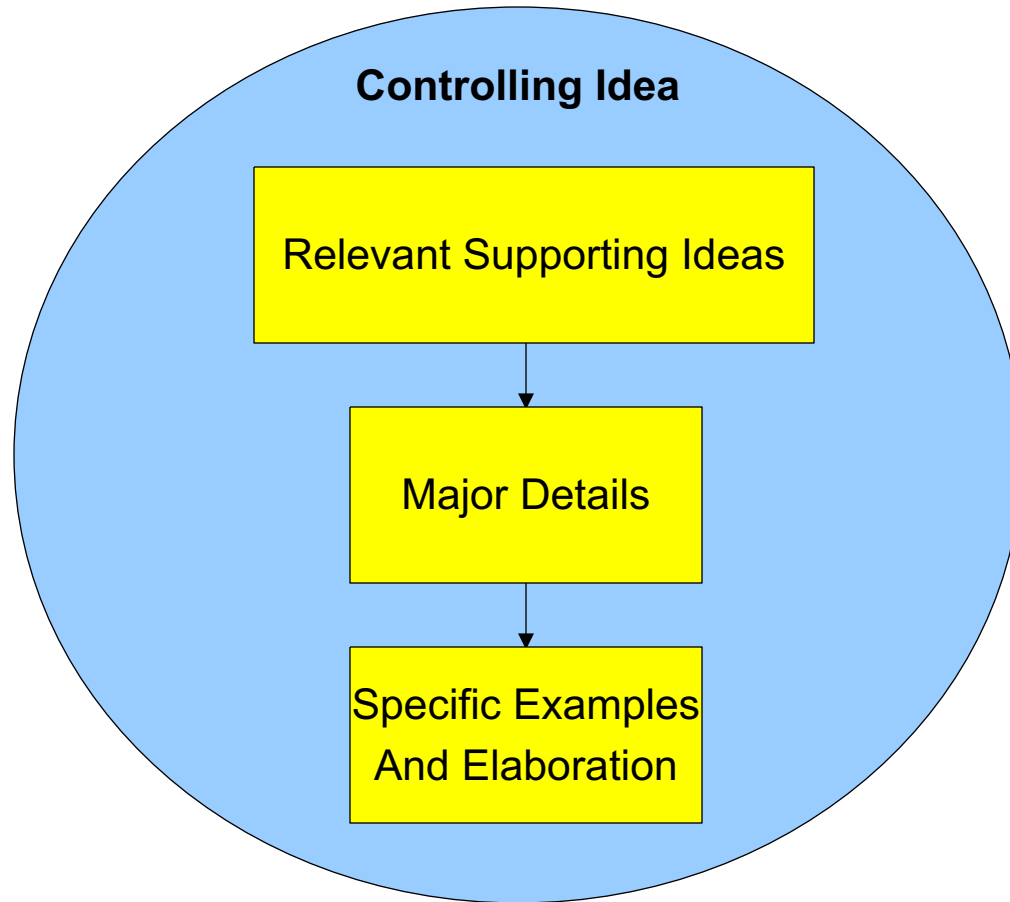
Ideas: The degree to which the writer establishes a controlling idea and elaborates the main points with examples, illustrations, facts, or details that are appropriate to the assigned genre.

# Controlling Idea

An effective controlling idea:

- Serves as the focus of the paper
- Think of it as a **thesis statement** *that the writer supports with evidence.*
- Ties all of the information in the paper to the assigned writing topic and persuasive purpose
- Helps the reader understand the writer's purpose: "What is the writer convincing me to think or do?"
- **May be directly stated but is usually implied**

# Depth of Development: the key to Ideas



# Example of Depth of Development in a Paragraph

## Controlling Idea:

I would recommend a course called “Preparing for Life After High School.”

### Sample Body Paragraph

Supporting Idea

Major Detail

Specific Details and Examples

This new class would be quite an effective way of teaching young adults how and when each basic academic subject will be valuable in everyday life. For example, students must learn that even the most simplistic math skills can become difficult and confusing when applied to real world situations. Think about filing income taxes. Though the addition and subtraction may not be hard, if you can't get everything in the correct column, there will be fines to pay with interest or even jail time. We need specific, how-to advice when it comes to using the correct tax forms, what to include with our returns, and what terms like “standard deduction” and “itemized” mean.

# Examples of Depth of Development in Score Point 1

## Ideas Score 1 Topic: New Course

I think this class is needed. It will help me in many ways like accomplishing my goals and get more job experience for my chosen career. It will help me accomplish my goals by giving me more of an insight on what and how I want to lead my life. So I would know if the career of my choice is right for me. So I can still explore new options. It would give me the experience that I need for what I want and how I want my life to go. The point I am trying to make is without this class I don't know what I want. So please get this class and I will thank you.

# Examples of Depth of Development in Score Points 2

## Ideas Score 2 Topic: New Course

Many people believe that we don't really need a lot of our high school classes. For example, how many of us are going to use algebra or history in real life. That's why I think you should have a course I would call working.

When you are in high school you can get a job and I think they should have a course on that. That way when a student gets a job, they will be more experienced in what they are doing. This class will show students what is expected at work. It will teach us to act like adults when we finish school.

The working class will also teach us how to manage our money and balance a checkbook. We would take field trips to different kinds of jobs. I want to be able to compete for the jobs that I want. I think I am not the only person that feels that way either.

I believe that if you were to do this many people would stay in school and try to get through it so they would have a better life in the future. Students wouldn't think school was a waste of time.

# Example of Depth of Development in Score Point 3

## Ideas Score 3 Topic: New Course

Many of my classmates complain that they will never use any of the subjects they study in school after they graduate because they do not know how to apply school subjects to the real world. That is why I think that an “applying school skills” class should be offered at this school.

This new class would be a good way to teach teenagers how each school subject will be valuable in their everyday lives. Just because students can add and subtract doesn't mean that they can balance a checkbook. Just because students can write a book report doesn't mean they can write a resume. A high school diploma doesn't mean we can take care of ourselves.

Taking field trips to local businesses would show how people use their education in the working world. Students could see how newspaper writers use English skills, engineers use math skills, and doctors use scientific knowledge. This would make students care more about all their other classes because they wouldn't think learning these subjects was wasting their time.

The course could also cover other interests. I would want to learn about money and time management, how to write a resume, and how to take care of a house and a car, but my classmates might have different interests. If you ask them what is important to them, they will tell you.

Please consider this course as an elective for the next school year.

# Example of Depth of Development in Score Point 4

## Ideas Score 4 Topic: New Course

Many things are being said about the academic programs and studies being offered at this school. Being that I am a current student, I hear much more of the complaints and grievances from students than the administration does. A large portion of the students here seem to think that they may never use any of their current studies once they graduate because they are not taught how to apply general knowledge in real world situations. This is why I am proposing that an “applying life skills” class be offered at this school.

This new class would be quite an effective way of teaching young adults how and when each basic academic subject will be valuable in everyday life. For example, students must learn that even the most simplistic math skills can become difficult and confusing when applied to real world situations. Paying bills and filing taxes are two fine examples. Courses such as economics give us a better understanding of how our current economic systems come about, and why we pay taxes, but not how to budget money or complete a tax return.

A great way to persuade people to sign up for this class would be to offer internships with local businesses. These internships would demonstrate how people use their education in the working world. Students would see how newspaper writers use English skills, engineers use math skills, and doctors use scientific knowledge. If the class was worth a core credit, more students would sign up. It is obvious that anyone taking the class would need at least one credit in each core subject in order to further comprehend the life skills. This may encourage students to do well in their other classes.

Applying life skills classes would make high school relevant to the real world we will face in the future. I would want to learn money and time management, how to write a resume, and how to maintain a house and a car, but my classmates may have broader interests. Please consider this course as an elective for the next school year.



## Example of Depth of Development in Score Point 5

Many things are being said about the academic programs and studies being offered at this school. Because I am a current student, I hear much more of the complaints and grievances from students than the administration does. A large portion of the students here seem to think that they may never use any of their current studies once they graduate. The core classes that most high school students are required to take include classes like English, History, Biology, or Algebra. Knowledge of these fields can be important in life, but only if you know how to apply it. This is why I am proposing that an “applying life skills” class be offered at this school.

This new class would be quite an effective way of teaching young adults how and when each basic academic subject will be valuable in everyday life. For example, students must learn that even the most simplistic math skills can become difficult and confusing when applied to real world situations. Filing taxes is a fine example. Though the addition or subtraction itself may not be hard, if you can't get everything in the correct column, there will be fines to pay with interest or possibly even jail time. Courses such as economics and social studies give us a general understanding of how our current economic systems come about, and why we pay taxes, but we need specific “how-to” advice so we can prepare our own tax returns. All of the core subjects could be translated for application to the real world in this new class.

If students seem hesitant to sign up for this class, the benefits and requirements for the course could be advertised ahead of time. A great way to persuade people to sign up is to offer internships with local businesses. These internships would demonstrate how people use their education in the working world. For example, a student might watch an engineer using geometry and physics every day as he designs buildings and bridges. If the class was worth a core credit, more students would sign up. It is obvious that anyone taking the class would need at least one class in each core subject in order to comprehend the life skills addressed. This may encourage students to do well in their core classes.

Applying life skills classes would make high school relevant to the real world we will face in the future. The core classes would expose students to many general fields of knowledge, but they would also leave high school prepared to live on their own as an adult with the practical skills that an adult needs to survive. Our current classes do not teach us to problem solve, so when we graduate, we make many uninformed decisions and mistakes. Personally, I would want to learn money and time management, how to write a resume, and how to maintain a house and a car, but my classmates may have broader interests. Please consider this course as an elective for the next school year.

# The Bottom Line in Ideas

- The more SPECIFIC the development, the better.
- Specificity is a phenomena that few college students and adults exhibit.
- Like anything, getting specific takes practice. Here's a simple drill:

Put this paragraph (or any paragraph lacking in development) on an overhead projector:

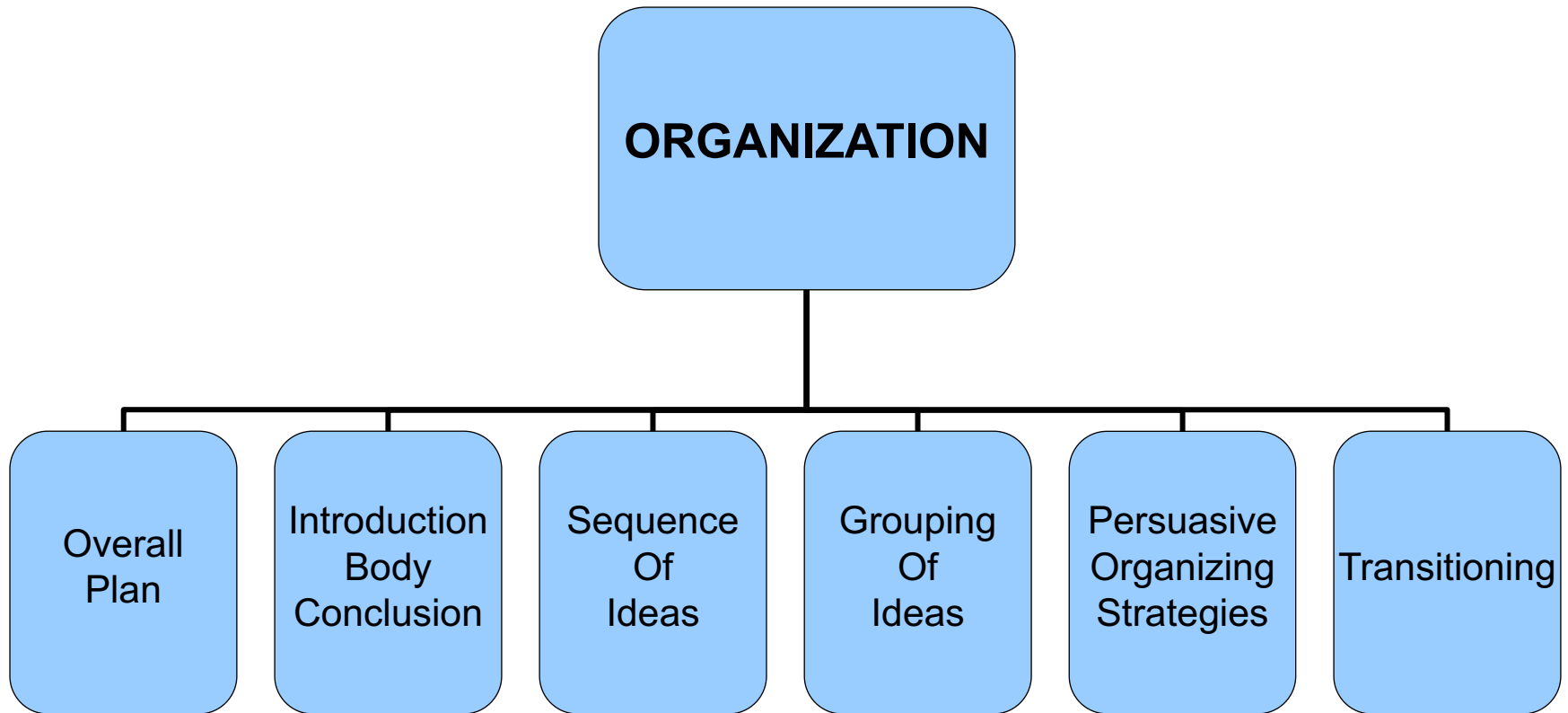
When you are in high school you can get a job and I think they should have a course on that. That way when a student gets a job, they will be more experienced in what they are doing. This class will show students what is expected at work. It will teach us to act like adults when we finish school.

Brainstorm with your students: highlight sentences that could use some more specific elaboration (e.g., why is it important to act like an adult in the workplace?). Make these sentences better as a class. Practicing this technique again and again as a class will pay dividends. This exercise is one I have used with my comp. students at UGA.

# Domain 2: Organization

- The Components of Organization
- Types of Organizational Patterns
- Persuasive Organizing Strategies
- Introduction-Body-Conclusion
- Sequencing of Ideas
- Grouping of Ideas
- Transitions
- Formulaic Writing
  - Sample of Formulaic Writing
- The Bottom Line in Organization

# The Components of Organization



Organization: The degree to which a writer's ideas are arranged in a clear order and the overall structure of the response is consistent with the assigned genre.

# Types of Organizational Patterns

- Chronological Order of Events (when using personal anecdotes to support a position)
- Comparison/Contrast
- Spatial Order
- Order of Importance of Ideas
- Problem/Solution
- Cause/Effect Order
- Classification Order
- Definition/Description

# Persuasive Organizing Strategies

Introduction Supporting ideas Conclusion →

Argument Address counter-argument Conclusion →

Introduction Both sides of the issue Conclusion →

Introduction Anecdote illustrating position Conclusion →

# Introduction-Body-Conclusion: The Overall Plan

Introduction: Sets the stage for the development of the writer's ideas and is consistent with the purpose of the paper

Body: Includes details and examples that support the controlling idea

Conclusion: Signals the reader that the paper is coming to a close

# Sequencing of Ideas

**Sequencing:** The way the writer orders the ideas of the paper to implement the overall plan. Clear sequencing helps the reader understand the writer's ideas.

Effective sequencing: Ideas build logically on one another and lead the reader through the paper.

Ineffective sequencing: The ideas may have little relationship to one another and could be presented in any order.



# Ineffective Sequencing

The working class will also teach us how to manage our money and balance a checkbook. We would take field trips. I want to be able to compete for the jobs that I want. I believe that if you were to do this many people would stay in school and try to get through it so they would have a better life in the future.

# Effective Sequencing

Filing taxes is a fine example. Though the addition or subtraction itself may not be hard, if you can't get everything in the correct column, there will be fines to pay with interest or possibly even jail time. Courses such as economics and social studies give us a general understanding of how our current economic systems come about, and why we pay taxes, but we need specific “how-to” advice so we can prepare our own tax returns. All of the core subjects could be translated for application to the real world in this new class.

# Related Ideas Grouped Together

This new class would be a good way to teach teenagers how each school subject will be valuable in their everyday lives. Just because students can add and subtract doesn't mean that they can balance a checkbook. Just because students can write a book report doesn't mean they can write a resume. A high school diploma doesn't mean we can take care of ourselves.

Taking field trips to local businesses would show how people use their education in the working world. Students could see how newspaper writers use English skills, engineers use math skills, and doctors use scientific knowledge. This would make students care more about all their other classes because they wouldn't think learning these subjects was wasting their time.

The course could also cover other interests. I would want to learn about money and time management, how to write a resume, and how to take care of a house and a car, but my classmates might have different interests. If you ask them what is important to them, they will tell you.

# Transitions

## Making Connections Between Ideas

- Transitions lead the reader through the paper by linking parts of the paper and ideas within paragraphs.
- Transitions are used between sentences, between paragraphs, and within sentences and within paragraphs
- Transitions can signal the type of relationships between ideas
- May be explicit or implicit
  - May be a single word, a pronoun, a phrase, or a logical linking of ideas
  - **Explicit transitional words**: for instance, consequently
  - **Implicit transitional devices**: synonym and pronoun substitution, moving from general to specific or from specific to general

# Transitions in Action

If students seem hesitant to sign up for this class, the benefits and requirements for the course could be advertised ahead of time. A great way to persuade people to sign up is to offer internships with local businesses. These internships would demonstrate how people use their education in the working world. For example, a student might watch an engineer using geometry and physics every day as he designs buildings and bridges. For the English buffs, we could visit the AJC. Newspaper writers must use correct grammar and an engaging style. Otherwise, people wouldn't read the story.

Where are the **explicit transitions**?

Any **transitioning**?

# Formulaic Writing

## Characteristics of A Formulaic Paper

- The writer announces his or her thesis and three supporting ideas in the opening paragraph.
- The writer restates one supporting idea to begin each of the three body paragraphs.
- The writer repeats or restates his/her controlling idea and supporting points in the final paragraph.
- Entire sentences may be repeated verbatim from the introduction, used as topic sentences in each of the body paragraphs, and repeated in the conclusion.

# Sample of Formulaic Writing

I believe we should have a course called Preparing for Life. This course would help us get jobs, it would help us pay our bills, and we could take good field trips. The first reason we should have a course called Preparing for Life is it will help us get a job. We need to know how to apply, what to wear during an interview, and what to say during the interview. So it will help us get a job.

The second reason we should have a course called Preparing for Life is it will help us pay our bills. I have no idea how to pay bills. My friends have no idea how to pay bills. We won't have our parents to help us. So, we need this course to help us pay our bills.

My third and final reason why we we should have a course called Preparing for Life is we could take good field trips. We could go see engineers work. We could go to the AJC. We could go to Starbucks. The field trips in this class will be so cool.

In conclusion, those are my reasons why we should have a course called Preparing for Life. This course would help us get jobs, it would help us pay our bills, and we could take good field trips.

# Repetition in Formulaic Writing

I believe we should have a course called Preparing for Life. This course would help us get jobs, it would help us pay our bills, and we could take good field trips. **The first reason we should have a course called Preparing for Life is it will help us get a job.** We need to know how to apply, what to wear during an interview, and what to say during the interview. **So it will help us get a job.**

**The second reason we should have a course called Preparing for Life is it will help us pay our bills.** I have no idea how to pay bills. My friends have no idea how to pay bills. We won't have our parents to help us. **So, we need this course to help us pay our bills.**

**My third and final reason why we we should have a course called Preparing for Life is we could take good field trips.** We could go see engineers work. We could go to the AJC. We could go to Starbucks. The field trips in this class will be so cool.

In conclusion, those are my reasons why we should have a course called Preparing for Life. **This course would help us get jobs, it would help us pay our bills, and we could take good field trips.**



# The Bottom Line in Organization

- An overall formulaic plan is inappropriate because of repetition.
- Formulaic *elements* are not the same as an overall formulaic plan.
- There are slides that follow (slides 50 – 63) that illustrate examples of more effective ways to introduce and conclude essays.
- You can do grouping and sequencing drills (see slides 64-68).

# Less effective Introductions are those that:

**Repeat or barely paraphrase the writing topic.**

“The school system are considering uniforms for the students to wear.”

**Have a lengthy (1-1 ½ page) narrative that prevents both writer and reader from getting to the point.**

“The struggle to figure out what to write about and finally getting the assignment done.”

**Have a formula thesis and three supporting points that give away all the writer’s ideas and requires the writer to be able to restate the thesis and major supporting points in order to move beyond score point 2.**

“We should not have to wear uniforms at school for three reasons. The first reason is because uniforms...The second reason is because uniforms...The third reason is because uniforms...”

# Types of Introductions That Invite the Reader In and/or Provide a Preview

- Thought-provoking Questions
- Description that Makes the Reader Wonder What's Coming Next
- Directly Addressing the Reader
- Moving from the Broad Topic to the Writer's Subject
- Brief personal narrative (anecdote)

F. Compelling Statement

# Sample Introduction: A Lead that Invites the Reader In

## **A. Thought-Provoking Questions**

“How would you feel waking up every morning and knowing already what to wear? Great, right? But what if it was the same thing you wore yesterday and probably will wear tomorrow? Would it be that great?”

Sample Introduction:  
A Lead that Invites the Reader In

**B. Description that Makes the Reader  
Wonder What's Coming Next**

“Laughing is heard quite often in the hallways of our school. The vast majority of students are laughing because their friends have said something funny, but some students laugh at their fellow classmates.”

# Sample Introduction: A Lead that Invites the Reader In

## **C. Directly Addressing the Reader**

“You are probably asking yourself: Do I take control of what the students wear to school? Is it wise to continue allowing them to choose their apparel?”

“I sincerely hope that you will consider this as an alternative to the status quo.”

“Pretend that you have just moved here from a small, poor town.”

Sample Introduction:  
A Lead that Invites the Reader In

**D. Moving from the Broad Topic to the  
Writer's Subject.**

“Emerson once wrote, “Every heart vibrates to an iron string.” This message of individuality is part of the core of the American mindset. However, a recent controversy has arisen that some see as running completely counter to individuality. Many schools across the country are considering the adoption of uniforms.”

# Sample Introduction: A Lead that Invites the Reader In

## **E. Brief Narrative Related to the Issue**

“When I was at C. Baptist School, we were made to wear uniforms. We were to wear a red or white collared shirt with khaki or navy blue pants. That was the most uncomfortable experience of my life. I was not focused on my school work, but on how goofy I thought I looked. I realized how we all kind of looked the same.”



# Sample Introduction: A Lead that Invites the Reader In

## **F. Compelling Statement**

“Uniforms unify dress, not students and not individual lives.”

“Uniformity does not solve problems; instead it stifles innovation, creativity, and individuality.”

# Types of Conclusions: An Ending that Provides Closure

- Compelling Statement
  - Summary of Key Points without Repetition
  - Reminder of Personal Connections the Reader Has to the Topic
  - Questions for the Reader to Think About
- E. New but Related Issues for the Reader to Think About

# Sample Conclusion

## An Ending that Provides Closure

### **A. Compelling Statement**

“Uniforms unify dress, not students and not individual lives.”

“Uniformity does not solve problems; instead it stunts innovation, creativity, and individuality.”

# Sample Conclusion

## An Ending that Provides Closure

### **B. Summary of Key Points without Repetition**

“Uniforms afford numerous benefits that directly and indirectly improve performance in school. The common arguments against them are generally untrue or exaggerations. Uniforms do no do anything to stop hearts from vibrating to their own iron strings. They actually help amplify the vibrations.”

# Sample Conclusion

## An Ending that Provides Closure

### **C. Reminder of Personal Connections the Reader Has to the Topic**

“I know you have teenage children in public school. Please talk to them about uniforms before you make up your mind. Maybe they can help you understand my feelings and the feelings of all the students in this school. Maybe you can remember what it feels like to be a teenager and every time you turn around, someone is trying to take away your freedom to be yourself. I know if you give the issue a little more consideration that you will be able to make the best decision for our school.”

# Sample Conclusion

## An Ending that Provides Closure

### **D. Questions for the Reader to Think About**

“Would you want to wear the same outfit as every other woman teacher or administrator in our school every day? Would you never tire of looking just the same as everyone else? Wouldn't it make you feel like a robot instead of a human being with personal needs and preferences?”

# Sample Conclusion

## An Ending that Provides Closure

### **E. New but Related Issues for the Reader to Think About**

“Uniforms are only the beginning. If this rule is passed at our school, there is no telling where it will end. Will they tell us how we have to style our hair too? Will they tell us what brand of makeup to use? What kind of toothpaste?”

# Trouble with Grouping? Try this Drill...

highlight all related ideas in a **common color**. Then, have students group the ideas that are coded the same color in a single paragraph.

## Step 1

There are many ways to get to and from school. You can take a bus, ride in a car, or walk or ride a bike. Each kind of transportation has advantages and disadvantages.

The first kind of transportation is the ever popular bus. Buses can be cheaper than driving. Riding a bike or walking can be good too. Walking and biking are cheaper than driving. Buses are also good for the environment because it's like a big car pool.

Cars can be a fantastic way of getting to school. They are private, so you don't have to worry about a person you despise sitting next to you. There are some bad things, though. The bad thing about the school bus is also crowded and cluttered. The buses also run on a schedule, and you would probably miss your bus if you got there late. Car riding can also be inconvenient to your parents though or whoever you ride with. Some parents have to be at work at the time school starts and ends and they just can't drive you there and back.

A bike isn't too expensive, and walking is free. Bike riding or walking can also be inconvenient though. For example, what happens when it rains? Who wants to ride a bike or walk through bad weather?

All these transportation can be a great way to get to school or home from school, but can also be difficult. Maybe someday there will be better means of transportation.



# Trouble with Grouping? Try this Drill...

highlight all related ideas in a **common color**. Then, have students group the ideas that are coded the same color in a single paragraph.

## Step 2

There are many ways to get to and from school. You can take a bus, ride in a car, or walk or ride a bike. Each kind of transportation has advantages and disadvantages.

The first kind of transportation is the ever popular bus. Buses can be cheaper than driving. Buses are also good for the environment because it's like a big car pool. The bad thing about the school bus is also crowded and cluttered. The buses also run on a schedule, and you would probably miss your bus if you got there late.

Cars can be a fantastic way of getting to school. They are private, so you don't have to worry about a person you despise sitting next to you. There are some bad things, though. Car riding can also be inconvenient to your parents though or whoever you ride with. Some parents have to be at work at the time school starts and ends and they just can't drive you there and back.

Riding a bike or walking can be good too. Walking and biking are cheaper than driving. A bike isn't too expensive, and walking is free. Bike riding or walking can also be inconvenient though. For example, what happens when it rains? Who wants to ride a bike or walk through bad weather?

All these transportation can be a great way to get to school or home from school, but can also be difficult. Maybe someday there will be better means of transportation.

# Trouble with Sequencing? Try this Drill...

take a well sequenced paragraph and jumble it up. Then, brainstorm with students about putting the ideas back in the proper sequence.

## **Step 1: Take a well sequenced paragraph**

Although they have some drawbacks, cars are a preferred method of transportation. Cars are private, and you probably won't be bothered. For example, you don't have to worry about some intense coffee drinker breathing down your neck or a person you despise sitting next to you. You can also travel in the comfort of your own seat with the A/C set at your ideal temperature. Unfortunately, there are some problems with cars. They are very expensive and with gas prices at \$3 a gallon, it quickly becomes unaffordable. Car riding can also be inconvenient to your parents or whomever you ride with. Some parents must be at work at the time school starts and ends and they just can't drive you there and back?

# Trouble with Sequencing? Try this Drill...

take a well sequenced paragraph and jumble it up. Then, brainstorm with students about putting the ideas back in the proper sequence.

## **Step 2: Jumble it up**

Although they have some drawbacks, cars are a preferred method of transportation. Cars are private, and you probably won't be bothered. They are very expensive and with gas prices at \$3 a gallon, it quickly becomes unaffordable. Car riding can also be inconvenient to your parents or whomever you ride with. Some parents must be at work at the time school starts and ends and they just can't drive you there and back? Unfortunately, there are some problems with cars. For example, you don't have to worry about some intense coffee drinker breathing down your neck or a person you despise sitting next to you.

# Trouble with Sequencing? Try this

Drill...take a well sequenced paragraph and jumble it up. Then, brainstorm with students about putting the ideas back in the proper sequence.

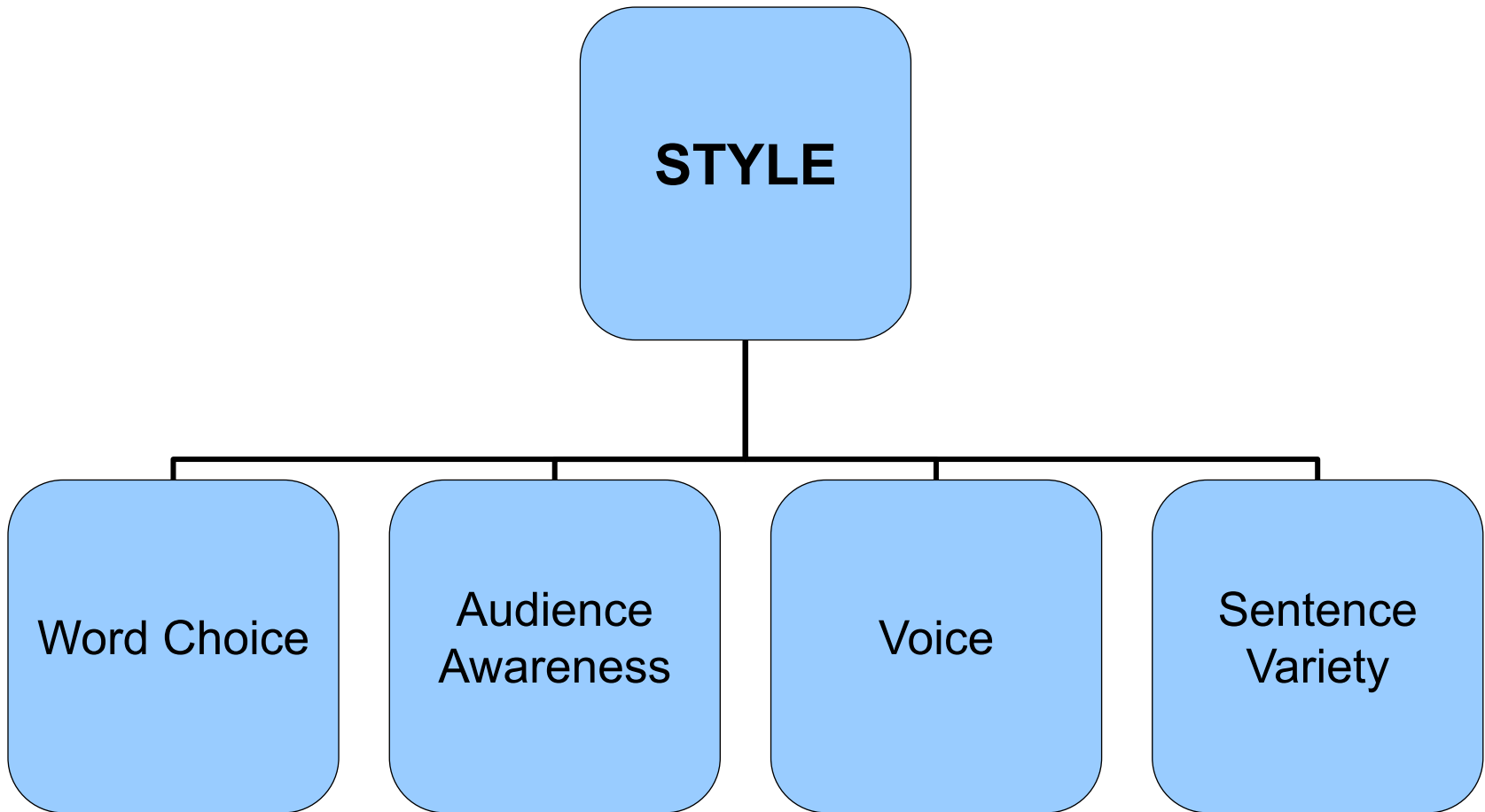
## **Step 3: Work together to put the ideas back in the proper sequence**

Although they have some drawbacks, cars are a preferred method of transportation. Cars are private, and you probably won't be bothered. For example, you don't have to worry about some intense coffee drinker breathing down your neck or a person you despise sitting next to you. You can also travel in the comfort of your own seat with the A/C set at your ideal temperature. Unfortunately, there are some problems with cars. They are very expensive and with gas prices at \$3 a gallon, it quickly becomes unaffordable. Car riding can also be inconvenient to your parents or whomever you ride with. Some parents must be at work at the time school starts and ends and they just can't drive you there and back?

# Domain 3: Style

- The Components of Style
- Word Choice
  - Types of Language
- Audience Awareness and Tone
- Sentence Variety
- Style in Action
- A Style Drill
- The Bottom Line in Style

# The Components of Style



Style: The degree to which the writer controls language to engage the reader.

# Word Choice

- Effective word choice is determined on the basis of subject matter (topic), audience, and purpose.
- Word choice establishes the tone of a piece of writing.
- Word choice involves more than the “correct” dictionary meaning of a word (**denotation**).
- Word choice goes beyond precision to include the **connotations** (the associations, meanings, or emotions a word suggests) of words.

# Types of Language

## (described in the Grade 11 Scoring Rubric)

- *Descriptive*: uses details that appeal to the senses and enables the reader to see, hear, and/or feel what the writer recounts
- *Figurative*: figures of speech or phrases that suggest meanings different from their literal meanings (hyperbole, metaphor, simile, irony)
- *Technical*: precise terms and phrases used to clarify or explain a particular subject matter or process
- *Carefully crafted phrases*: the purposeful selection of vivid words and phrases to create a sustained tone and engage the reader; groups of words that convey a clear meaning and serve a particular rhetorical purpose



# Audience Awareness

## To What Extent Does the Writer Attempt to Engage the Reader?

- Emotional Appeals
- Figurative Language
- Language with Strong Connotative Meanings
- Evocative Voice
- Rhetorical Questions; “How would *you* feel if..”
- Addressing the reader: “You should” or “We all should”

# Tone

- Tone refers to *the attitude* a writer expresses toward the reader, the subject, and sometimes himself/herself.
  - To be effective, tone must be consistent with the writer's purpose.
  - Tone is established through choice of words and details.

# Sentence Variety

## How Sentences Vary:

- **Length**
  - The number of words
  - Word length
- **Structure**
  - Simple
  - Complex
  - Compound
  - Compound-complex
- **Type**
  - Declarative
  - Interrogative
  - Imperative

# Style in action

<u>Level</u>	<u>Example</u>
<p>Effective Word Choice</p> <p>Audience Awareness</p> <p>Appeal to Emotion</p>	<p>This new class would be <b>quite an effective</b> way of teaching young adults how and when each <b>basic academic subject</b> will be valuable in everyday life. For example, students must learn that even <b>the most simplistic math skills can become difficult and confusing when applied to real world situations</b>. <b>Think about filing income taxes</b>. Though the addition and subtraction may not be hard, <b>if you can't get everything in the correct column, there will be fines to pay with interest or even jail time</b>. We need <b>specific, how-to advice</b> when it comes to using the correct tax forms, what to include with our returns, and what <b>terms like "standard deduction" and "itemized"</b> mean.</p> <p>[Good sentence variety and concerned tone.]</p>
Simple and Ordinary:	<p>There are lots of good classes we could add. Students could learn some good things. It is important to learn stuff in school that can be used in life.</p>

# A Good Style Drill

Take a paper from a previous year that has stylistic deficiencies.

Work together as a group to improve it.

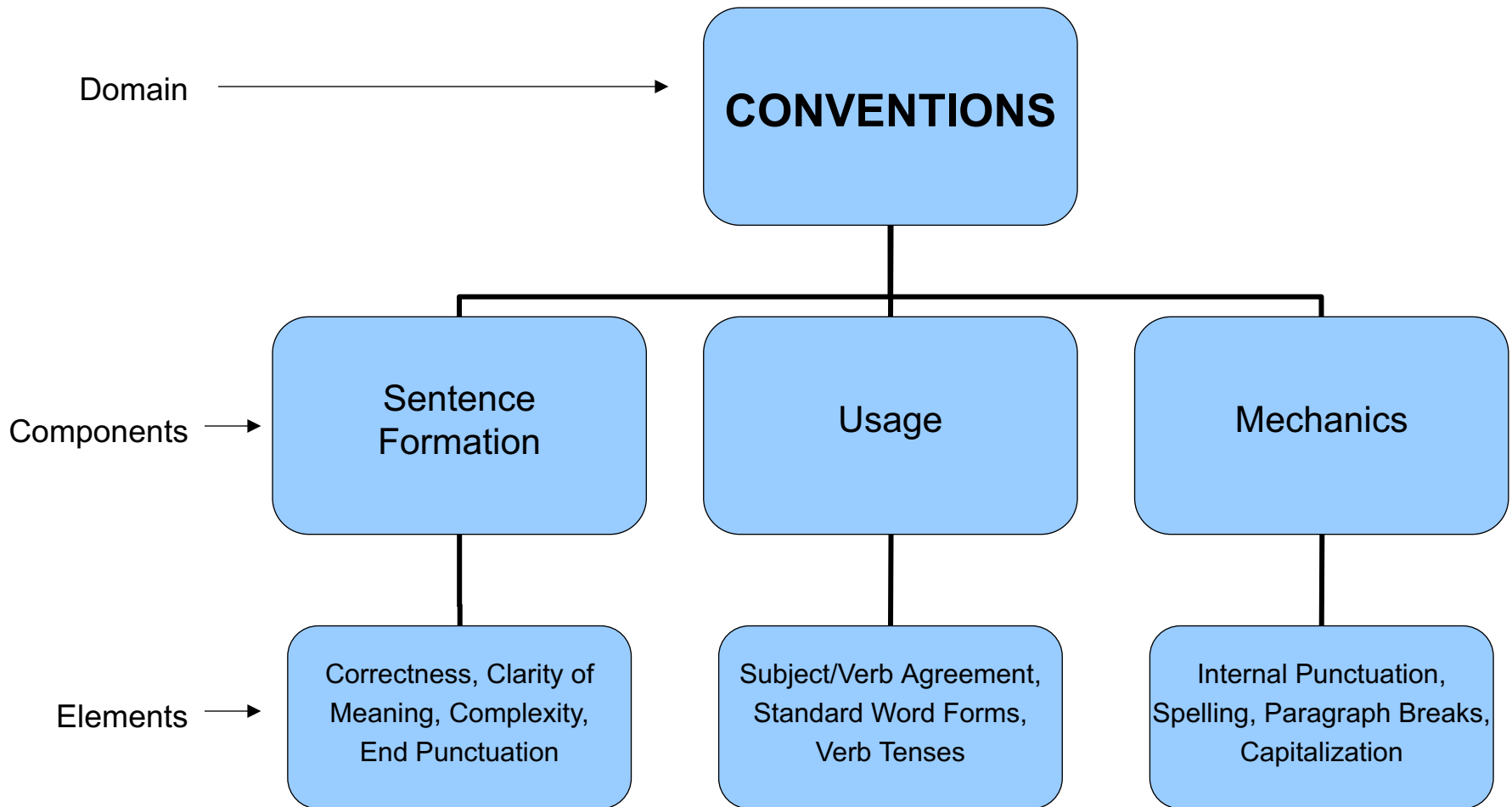
# The Bottom Line in Style

- Word choice is key.
- Doing daily drills (e.g., slide 58) will pay-off.
- You can emphasize different components when doing these drills: word choice, tone, audience awareness

# Domain 4: Conventions

- The Components and Elements of Conventions
- Overview of Score Points 1-5
- Balancing Strengths and Weaknesses in the Components and Elements
- Determining Competence in Conventions
- [Conventions Pie Chart](#)
- [Some Notes About Sentence Formation](#)
- [The Bottom Line in Conventions](#)

# The Components and Elements of Conventions





# Balancing Strengths/Weaknesses in the Components and Elements of Conventions

## Score Point 5

- Correct and varied in all elements of Sentence Formation, Usage, and Mechanics

## Score Point 4

- Correct in most elements of Sentence Formation, Usage, and Mechanics
- Some elements may be weak, missing, or lack variety

## Score Point 3

- Correct in majority of elements of Sentence Formation, Usage, and Mechanics, but there may be some errors in each element.
- Correct in two components but one component may be weak.

## Score Point 2

- Minimal control in all three components or one component may be strong while the other two are weak

## Score Point 1

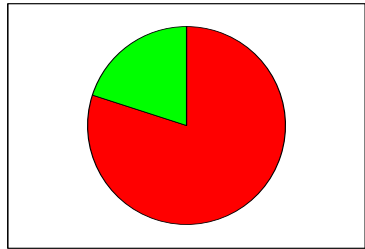
- Overall lack of control in all three components although some *elements* may demonstrate strengths

# Determining Competence in Conventions

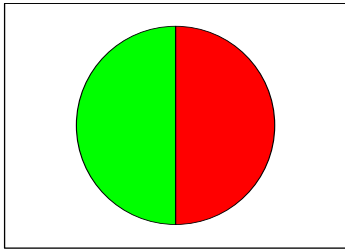
- Using the scoring rubrics appropriately requires reading for competence. This means looking for a demonstration of the writer's ability to control the components, not tallying errors.
- Raters do not "count errors" to determine the Conventions score. It is necessary to evaluate the severity and frequency of errors to determine the level of competence demonstrated by the writer.
- Nearly every student paper contains errors. It is the degree of control – the proportion of correct to incorrect instances and the complexity of what is attempted - that determines the Conventions score.
- Errors in Sentence Formation, Usage, and Mechanics may force the reader to reread a portion of the paper, and may prevent the reader from understanding the writer's meaning.
- Even a "5" level paper may have errors in some of the elements of Conventions, but these errors do not interfere with meaning.

# Overview of Score Points 1-5

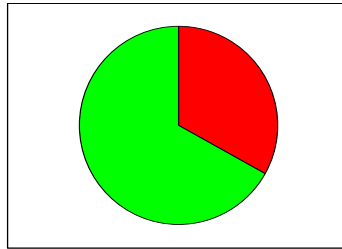
## Levels of Competence in Conventions



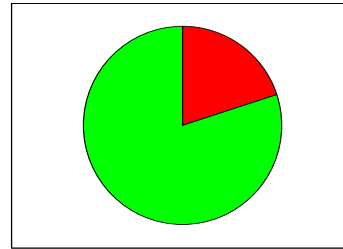
Score: 1  
**Lack of  
Control**



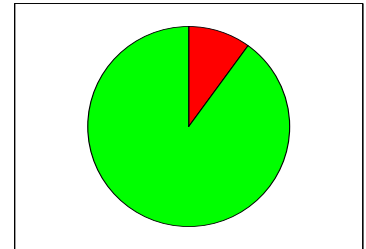
Score: 2  
**Minimal  
Control**



Score: 3  
**Sufficient  
Control**



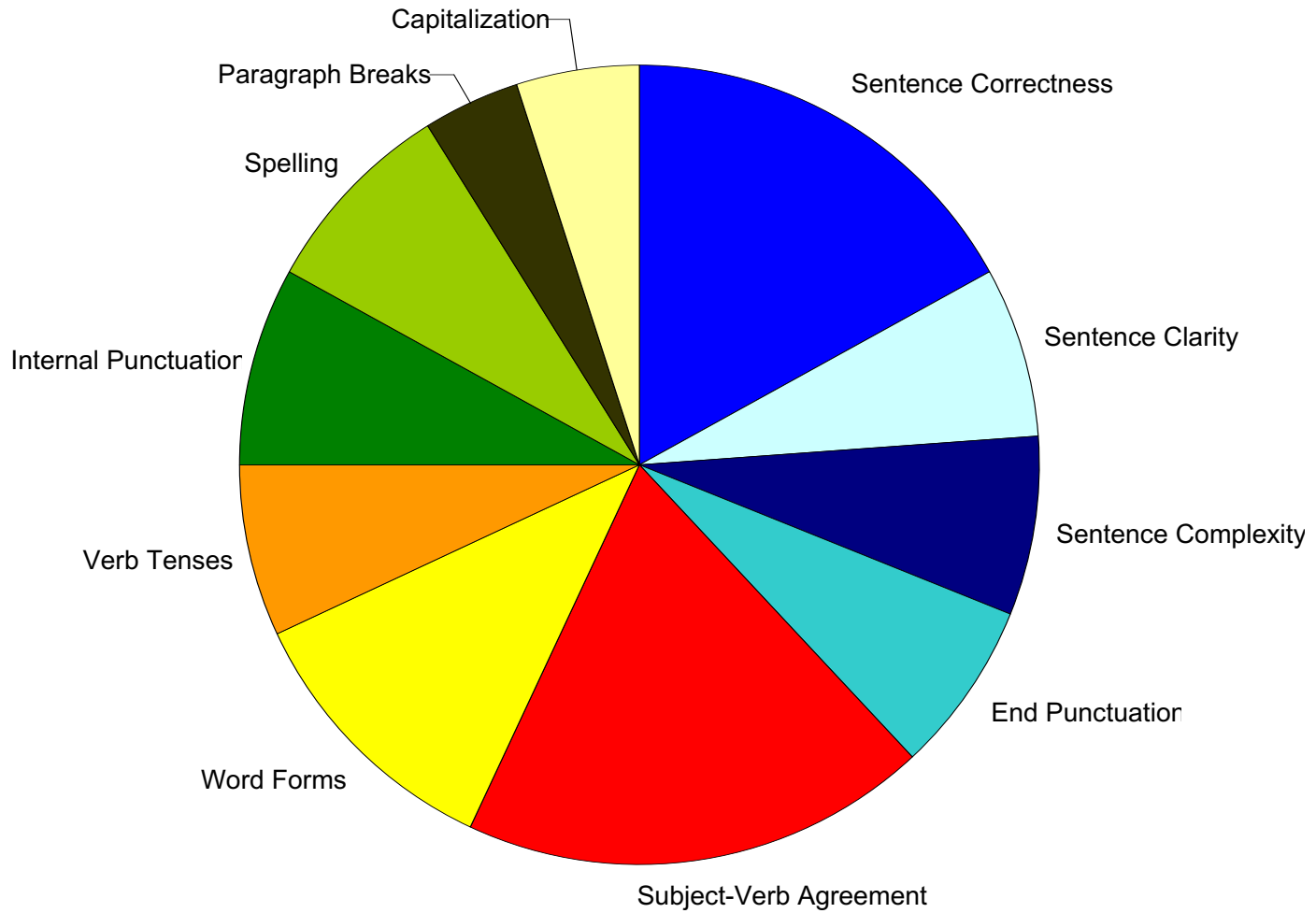
Score: 4  
**Consistent  
Control**



Score: 5  
**Full  
Command**

**GREEN** = The degree to which the  
writer demonstrates control of the  
components of Conventions.

# Conventions: High School



# Some Notes About Sentence Formation

- Coordination (compound sentence) occurs when the writer joins two independent clauses with a **coordinating conjunction** (FANBOYS):
  - “Adding any classes is great, **but** there are some classes that we will benefit from after graduating high school.”
  - *Note too that the state considers sentences that begin with a coordinating conjunctions fragments.*
- Subordination (complex sentence) is the merging of an **independent clause** (can stand alone) and a **dependent clause** (can't stand alone):
  - “**As you decide on what classes to integrate next year**, **please be mindful of my request.**”

# The Bottom Line in Conventions

- Make a push toward more advanced sentence structure (but if your students struggle with forming simple sentences, some remedial work will be necessary first).
- Back to daily drills:

Rewrite a paragraph using more compound and complex sentences:

Something that mostly all kids enjoy are jokes. So I plan to perform practical jokes on people. These jokes will not hurt anybody. Things that can hurt someone aren't funny. You shouldn't show kids how to do things that can hurt people. We will have funny jokes that make kids laugh like throwing pies.

The logic behind this drill is that writers who use more advanced sentence structure show more competence in usage and mechanics; longer sentences require greater control of usage and more internal punctuation.

# Part 3: Scoring Student Writing Samples

- Applying the Analytic Scoring Guidelines
- Scoring Cautions

# Applying the Analytic Scoring Guidelines

- Keep the on-demand testing context in mind. These student responses are essentially first drafts constructed with no resources.
- Read through the entire writing sample.
- Use the scoring rubric to make a tentative score range decision:
  - Score point 1 or 2
  - Score point 2 or 3
  - Score point 3 or 4
  - Score point 4 or 5
- Reread the entire writing sample to collect evidence to determine the score.
- Assign domain scores for Ideas and Organization.
- Repeat the process for Style and Conventions domains.



# Scoring Cautions

- Do not base the score on the single most noticeable aspect of a paper.
- Withhold judgment until you have read the entire response.
- Do not allow the score you assign in one domain to influence the scores you assign in the other three domains.
- Avoid making judgments based on neatness, novelty, or length.
- Base each scoring decision on the assessment sample the writer has produced, not what you think the student's potential competence in writing may be.
- Do not allow your personal opinions to affect the score the writer receives. Whether you agree or disagree with the writer's ideas should not influence your score.

# Part XII. Writing Instruction Resources

The following resources were recommended by Georgia educators.

<b>Author/Publisher</b>	<b>Title</b>
Janet Allen	<i>Tools for Teaching Content Literacy</i>
Jim Burke	<i>Writing Reminders</i>
Ross Burkhardt	<i>Writing for Real: Strategies for Engaging Adolescent Writers</i>
Ruth Culham	<i>6+1 Traits of Writing The Complete Guide Grades 3 and Up</i>
Nancy Dean	<i>Voice Lessons: Classroom Activities to Teach Diction, Detail, Imagery, Syntax, and Tone</i>
Sharon Hamilton	<i>Solving Common Writing Problems</i>
Ralph Fletcher	<i>A Writer's Notebook: Unlocking the Writer Within You</i>
Ralph Fletcher	<i>How Writer's Work: Finding a Process that Works for You</i>
Ralph Fletcher	<i>Live Writing: Breathing Life into Your Words</i>
Ralph Fletcher	<i>Poetry Matters: Writing a Poem from the Inside Out</i>
R. Fletcher & J. Portalupi	<i>Writing Workshop - The Essential Guide</i>
Great Source	<i>Write for College</i>

# Writing Instruction Resources

Author/Publisher	Title
Brock Haussamen	<i>Grammar Alive!</i>
Jane Bell Kiester	<i>Blowing Away The State Writing Assessment Test</i>
Barry Lane	<i>After the End: Teaching and Learning Creative Revision</i>
Linda Rief	<i>100 Quickwrites</i>
Tom Romano	<i>Blending Genre, Altering Style</i>
Tom Romano	<i>Writing with Passion</i>
A. Ruggers & G. Chrisenbury	<i>Writing on Demand</i>
Edgar H. Schuster	<i>Breaking the Rules: Liberating Writers through Innovative Grammar Instruction</i>
V. Spandel & J. Hicks	<i>Write Traits: Advanced</i>
P. Sebranek, V. Meyer, & D. Kemper	<i>Write for College</i>
Constance Weaver	<i>Teaching Grammar in Context</i>
Alan Ziegler	<i>The Writing Workshop Vols. 1 and 2</i>
William Zinsser	<i>On Writing Well</i>

# Writing Websites

Website	URL
Colorado State Universities Online Writing Lab	<a href="http://www.writing.colostate.edu">www.writing.colostate.edu</a>
Exemplars: Developing Writers	<a href="http://www.exemplars.com/materials/rwr/index.html">www.exemplars.com/materials/rwr/index.html</a>
Learning-Focused Writing Assignments K-12	<a href="http://www.learningfocused.com">www.learningfocused.com</a>
Purdue University's Online Writing Lab	<a href="http://www.owl.english.purdue.edu">www.owl.english.purdue.edu</a>
ReadWriteThink	<a href="http://www.readwritethink.org">www.readwritethink.org</a>
Write Source	<a href="http://www.thewritesource.com">www.thewritesource.com</a>
The Writing Site	<a href="http://www.thewritingsite.org">www.thewritingsite.org</a>

# Keep in Touch!

Kevin Raczynski

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- 888.392.8977 (toll-free)
- 706.542.5063 (local direct)

# The GaDOE Website: [www.doe.k12.ga.us](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us)

- To access Grades 3 and 5 Writing resources on the GaDOE website, go to [www.doe.k12.ga.us](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us)
- At the top of the homepage, hover over the CURRICULUM tab, and select TESTING.
- Then, scroll down to the middle of the page and click on the WRITING ASSESSMENTS icon.
- Then, scroll down to the bottom of the page and select the appropriate grade level (Grade 3, 5, 8, or 11).
- Then, look on the right side of the page for the box called RESOURCES. Here, you will find valuable information.
- You can also click on MORE, under the RESOURCE box, to explore additional resources.