PSSA GRADES 3–5 INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY SCORING GUIDELINES

Score Point	Description
4	• Sharp, distinct topic introduced, developed, and concluded with evident awareness of task, purpose, and audience • Effective order and organizational structure that develop a topic • Substantial and relevant content that demonstrates an understanding of the purpose • Thorough elaboration with clearly presented information that is consistently supported with facts, examples, and concrete details • Effective transitions that connect ideas and concepts • Established and consistently maintained formal style with effective control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety* • Consistent control of sentence formation • Few errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning
3	• Clear topic introduced, developed, and concluded with general awareness of task, purpose, and audience • Adequate order and organizational structure that develop a topic • Adequate and relevant content that demonstrates an understanding of the purpose • Sufficient elaboration with clearly presented information that is supported with facts, examples, and concrete details • Clear transitions that connect ideas and concepts • Established and maintained formal style with appropriate control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety* • Adequate control of sentence formation • Some errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning
2	• Vague topic introduced, developed, and concluded with limited awareness of task, purpose, and audience • Inconsistent order and organizational structure that somewhat develop a topic • Inadequate, vague content that demonstrates a weak understanding of the purpose • Underdeveloped and/or repetitive elaboration that is inconsistently supported with facts, examples, and details • Inconsistent/limited transitions that somewhat connect ideas and concepts • Inconsistently maintained formal style with limited control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety* • Inconsistent control of sentence formation • Errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning
1	• Minimal topic introduced, developed, and concluded with little awareness of task, purpose, and audience • Minimal order and organizational structure • Minimal content that demonstrates little or no understanding of the purpose • Undeveloped writing with little support; may be a bare list • Minimal transitions that may or may not connect ideas and concepts • Ineffective formal style with little control of language* • Minimal control of sentence formation • Many errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning

*This bullet point does not apply at grade 3.