

Definitions of LDC Informational/Expository Scoring Elements

Teacher Resource

Focus	The scoring element “focus” is initiated by the teacher prompt and addresses how clearly and completely the author responds to the prompt and maintains focus on developing all aspects of the prompt steadily throughout the piece.
Controlling Idea	The scoring element “controlling idea” addresses how well the thesis statement is established and how clearly the purpose is maintained and developed. It would be possible for the student to establish and develop a controlling idea but completely miss the focus by not responding to the prompt.
Reading/Research	The scoring element “reading/research” addresses the effective use of the resources provided or researched to support the establishment and development of the controlling idea and also addresses the accuracy of quotation and paraphrasing. At level two, the research element also addresses the credibility of sources.
Development	The scoring element “development” addresses whether there are enough appropriate and effective facts, reasons, examples, and details provided to support the thesis statement and whether the author explicitly explains how the evidence supports the thesis statement. Also addressed by this element are, at level two, implications suggested by the information and, at level three, recognition of information gaps and unanswered questions.
Organization	The scoring element “organization” addresses how well an appropriate text structure is used to address the prompt and develop the controlling idea; how logically and effectively ideas are grouped and sequenced to support explanation and reasoning within the text structure; and how well terms related to the text structure (transition words) are used to support the organization.
Conventions	The scoring element “conventions” addresses correctness of grammar, usage, mechanics, tone and language. It also addresses the match of conventions to fit with the prompt, purpose, and audience and the effectiveness of conventions in supporting the coherent expression of ideas and reasoning. The appropriate use and correct formatting of citations is also included as a convention.
Content Understanding	The scoring element “content understanding” addresses the synthesis of relevant and accurate disciplinary content appropriate to the prompt and the presentation of that information in a way that demonstrates understanding. For example, understanding would be demonstrated through explanation and expansion on the information from the sources.