

**Grade 8 Informative/Explanatory Rubric**

	Prompt Task	Development of Explanation	Organization	Language Use
5	Provides a context for the explanation. Topic(s) and purpose of explanation are clear from the start. Successfully uses ample relevant evidence from provided texts to support the explanation.	Explains topic(s) completely. Effectively uses ample specific and relevant facts, definitions, details, examples, and/or other appropriate information in the explanation.	Has a clear, well-developed introduction. Provides a logical concluding statement or section. Organizes ideas effectively, using clear and appropriate paragraphing throughout the response. Consistently uses effective and varied transition words, phrases, and clauses within and between text sections.	Uses precise and varied word choice. Employs topic-specific vocabulary successfully. Effectively varies sentence length and complexity. Establishes and maintains a style appropriate for the designated audience and purpose throughout the explanation.
4	Topic(s) and purpose of explanation are clear. Appropriately uses some evidence from provided texts to support the explanation.	Explains topic(s) adequately. Explanation includes some specific and relevant facts, definitions, details, examples, and/or other appropriate information.	Has a clear, somewhat-developed introduction. Provides a clear concluding statement or section. Organizes ideas adequately, using appropriate paragraphing. Consistently uses simple and/or repetitive transitions within and between sections of text.	Uses mostly specific and somewhat varied word choice. Occasionally employs topic-specific vocabulary successfully. Demonstrates adequate control of sentences with some variety in length and structure. Establishes a style appropriate for the designated audience and purpose and maintains it through most of the explanation.

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3	Topic(s) and purpose of explanation are apparent within the response as a whole. Evidence from provided texts is used but is limited, overused, or misrepresented.	Explains topic(s) to a limited extent or the explanation is developed unevenly. Explanation includes few or only general facts, details, and examples. Some information may be repetitious or may not be clearly relevant.	Provides a basic introduction and basic concluding statement or section. Groups related ideas together but the relationship among ideas may at times be unclear or parts of the explanation may seem out of place. Sometimes uses transitions.	Uses general word choice. Attempts to employ topic-specific vocabulary may be unsuccessful. Demonstrates a little variety in sentence structure, although there may be a few long, uncontrolled sentences. Demonstrates some understanding of style appropriate for the designated audience and purpose but fails to maintain it throughout explanation.
2	Topic(s) and purpose of explanation are unclear or otherwise confusing. Attempts to use evidence from provided texts are unsuccessful (text sections are lifted exactly, misunderstood, or not relevant to the explanation they are used in support of).	Explains topic(s) by providing some information but explanation is minimal and/or superficial, and parts may be repetitious or not relevant.	Has minimal evidence of an introduction and/or a concluding statement or section. Groups a few related ideas together within the response but overall demonstrates weak paragraphing skills. Use of transitions is not controlled and may cause confusion.	Uses simple and/or repetitive word choice. Uses repetitive sentence structure and/or long, uncontrolled sentences. Style is not appropriate for the designated audience and/or purpose and is sometimes distracting.
1	Topic(s) and purpose of explanation are never indicated. No attempt is made to use evidence from provided texts to support the explanation.	Development of topic(s) lacks explanation of ideas, only repeats ideas, or most ideas are not relevant. May demonstrate a lack of understanding of the purpose of explanatory writing.	Lacks an introduction and a concluding statement or section. Demonstrates no understanding of paragraphing (or response may be too short to assess). Transitions are not used.	Uses awkward, incorrect, and/or confusing word choice and sentence structure. Style is inappropriate for the designated audience and/or purpose and is distracting.