



**ISASP** IOWA STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT of  
STUDENT PROGRESS

**ISASP Writing**  
Released Writing Prompt,  
Sample Student Essays, and  
Scoring Notes

**Grade 11**

## **ISASP Writing**

### Released Writing Prompt, Sample Student Essays, and Scoring Notes

This document contains the following information:

- 1) A released ISASP Writing prompt that was previously administered to students in the relevant grade as part of the ISASP Language/Writing test.
- 2) A copy of the scoring rubric that was used to guide scoring.
- 3) Five samples of actual student responses to the prompt that illustrate a range of scores.
- 4) For each writing sample, a set of scoring notes created at the time of scoring that provide articulations around score point decisions.

Released responses can be examined to better understand how well students are demonstrating writing skills with respect to the four traits that are evaluated as part of the ISASP Writing test. Responses can also be used to gain a better understanding of how ISASP is scored and the application of the rubric to the individual response.

# ISASP Writing Grade 11

## Sample Writing Prompt

The community you live in is considering closing its public library. Community members have provided information about public libraries to people interested in the issue. Read the information. Then, write an essay for the mayor to explain why continuing to provide public libraries for their citizens is important to communities across the United States.

You should use details from the information you are given when you write your explanation. Remember to use your own words. Do not copy. You may also add your own ideas. The Writing Checklist will help you remember important parts of a piece of writing.

### Writing Checklist

As you write, remember to:

- Communicate your main ideas clearly.
- Use reasons, details, and examples from the information you are given to develop your writing. You may also add your own ideas.
- Provide clear and logical organization. Include an opening and closing. Use paragraphs and linking words.
- Use precise words and language appropriate for your audience.
- Check your work for correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

## **A History of Public Libraries**

There was only one free public library in the United States in 1790. It was in Franklin, Massachusetts. All other “public” libraries were subscription-based. Their use was restricted to members only. Membership required paying dues or buying shares of the library. This cost meant that, generally, many people did not have access to libraries.

The growth of free public libraries occurred in the late 1800s. This was thanks in large part to the efforts of Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie was a wealthy American businessman and public patron. His personal experiences formed his belief that everyone deserved the opportunity to learn and better themselves, regardless of income or background.

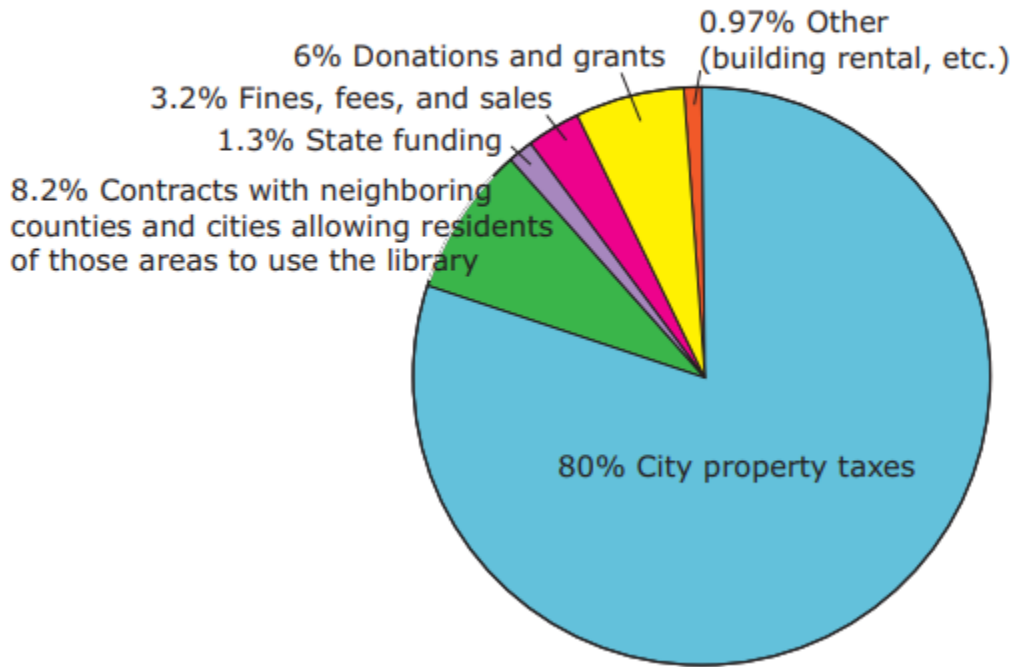
Carnegie never had a formal education. Instead, he educated himself by borrowing books from a generous employer’s vast personal library. From his first job changing bobbins in a cotton factory, Carnegie rose to become a steel baron. When he sold his company at age 66, he was the richest man in the United States. Yet he never forgot how he had been helped along the way. By the time he died, Carnegie had given away ninety percent of his fortune for charitable reasons.

Some of Carnegie’s most enduring donations were libraries. He personally founded 1,689 public libraries in the United States. Many were in small towns for which the library quickly became the center of the community. The architecture of each library was decided by the local community. However, almost all Carnegie libraries shared two design elements in common. Stairs led up to the front entrance to represent elevation through learning. A lamp post stood out front as a symbol of enlightenment.

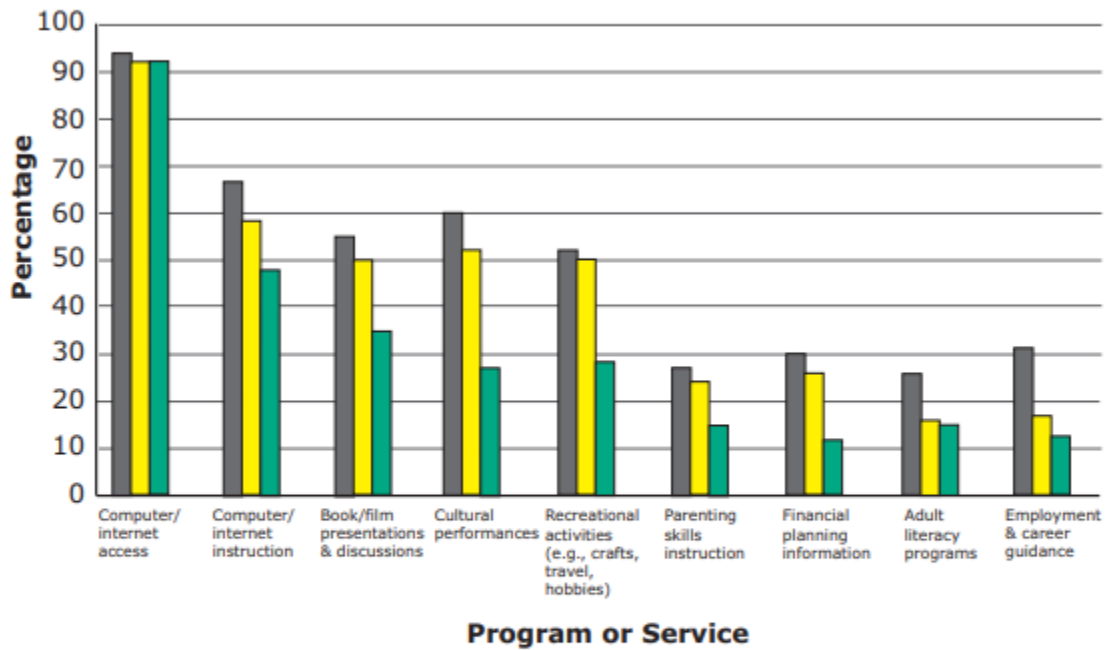
Today, the total number of public libraries in the United States is 16,536. Anyone can enter and use a public library. All you need is the motivation to enrich yourself. As Carnegie once said, “There is not such a cradle of democracy upon the earth as the Free Public Library...where neither rank, office, nor wealth receives the slightest consideration.”

**2016 Funding Sources for  
One Midwestern City Public Library**

Size of population served: 99,277



## Percent of U.S. Public Libraries that Offered Specific Types of Programs & Services in 2000



- Urban libraries** (libraries located within the city limits of the central city of a metropolitan area; 16% of all public libraries in the U.S.)
- Suburban libraries** (libraries located in a metropolitan area but not within the central city limits; 29% of all public libraries in the U.S.)
- Rural libraries** (libraries not located in a metropolitan area; 55% of all public libraries in the U.S.)

**Grade 11 Informative/Explanatory Rubric**

	<b>Prompt Task</b>	<b>Development of Explanation</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Language Use</b>
<b>5</b>	Provides a thoughtful 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. Uses clear and appropriate paragraphing within a coherent whole. Demonstrates clear logical sequencing throughout the explanation to indicate connections between ideas. Consistently uses effective and varied transitions and syntax to link sections of text and enhance coherence.	Uses precise and varied word choice. Employs topic-specific vocabulary successfully. Effectively varies sentence length and complexity. Establishes and maintains an objective tone and a formal style appropriate for the designated audience and purpose throughout the explanation.
<b>4</b>	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. Uses appropriate paragraphing. Demonstrates some evidence of logical sequencing of ideas. Consistently uses appropriate 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 an objective tone and a formal style appropriate for the designated audience and purpose and maintains them through most of the explanation.
<b>3</b>	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. Generally groups related ideas together in paragraphs but the relationship among ideas may at times be unclear. Demonstrates a little logical sequencing of ideas, though parts of the explanation may seem out of place. Sometimes uses transitions within and/or between sections of text.	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 an objective tone and a formal style appropriate for the designated audience and purpose but fails to maintain them throughout the explanation.

**Grade 11 Informative/Explanatory Rubric**

	<b>Prompt Task</b>	<b>Development of Explanation</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Language Use</b>
<b>2</b>	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. No sequencing of ideas is demonstrated. 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. Demonstrates limited understanding of an objective tone or a formal style appropriate for designated audience and purpose; tone or style is somewhat distracting.
<b>1</b>	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). No sequencing of ideas is demonstrated. Transitions are not used.	Uses awkward, incorrect, and/or confusing word choice and sentence structure. Fails to achieve an objective tone and/or a formal style appropriate for the designated audience and purpose; tone or style is distracting.



## **ISASP Writing Grade 11**

### **Sample Essay 1**

Libraries are great for the community, because it offers an abundance of knowledge and plenty of excitement and fun. Many Americans had lots of leisure time. Too many people and children were slightly uneducated when outside of school. Once people realized how fun reading could be, most people began to flood into libraries all over the country.

## ISASP Writing Grade 11

### Sample Essay 1 – Scoring Notes

Trait	Score	Scoring Notes
<b>Prompt Task</b>	<b>1</b>	The response briefly alludes to the benefits of libraries ( <i>Libraries are great for the community</i> ), but fails to address the prompt task of explaining why communities should continue to provide public libraries for their citizens and offers no textual evidence in support.
<b>Development</b>	<b>1</b>	The response explains the topic very superficially (. . . <i>it offers an abundance of knowledge and plenty of excitement and fun</i> ) and with some information that is not clearly relevant ( <i>Many Americans had lots of leisure time</i> ).
<b>Organization</b>	<b>2</b>	A minimal introductory statement is evident, as well as a bit of original sequencing ( <i>Once people realized</i> ).
<b>Language Use</b>	<b>2</b>	Sentences are few but generally correct, and the response demonstrates a limited understanding of an objective tone.

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### Sample Essay 2

My public library is a place that I love to go to. I consider it to be my second home. I go to read and to freely further my education. A free public library is useful to so many people such as a family with little money for books, the poor college student, a kid that just likes to read, and many more.

Pubic libraries are a great tool for all students. The library gives access to thousands of useful and educational books that a student can use. The library can provide a quiet place to study and is perfect to avoid the distractions of studying at school or at home. It also provides a good spot for students to meet for group projects or study groups. Any student would say that a free public library is a useful tool in thier learning.

Public libraries not only help students but also adults. Over 90% of public libraries offer internent access. Any adult that needs to use the internet for a work project or to help them find a job can access it for free at a public library. Some libraries even offer programs to help with employment guidance. Some even offer financial planning and parenting skills. Adults that need internent access or help with issues can turn to a public library.

In conclusion keeping a public library open is very useful. Giving students a place to further their education, adults a place to find help, and anybody who just likes to read a place to do so.

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### Sample Essay 2 – Scoring Notes

Trait	Score	Scoring Notes
<b>Prompt Task</b>	<b>2</b>	While the response discusses the benefits of libraries, the purpose of the writing as an essay for the mayor remains unclear ( <i>In conclusion keeping a public library open is very useful</i> ). A few details from the source materials are used in support of the explanation ( <i>internet access, employment guidance, financial planning, parenting skills</i> ).
<b>Development</b>	<b>2</b>	The topic is given superficial explanation using a few of the writer's own ideas ( <i>a great tool for all students</i> ), and a short list of information taken from the provided sources ( <i>Over 90% of public libraries offer internet access. Any adult that needs to use the internet for a work project or to help them find a job can access it for free at a public library</i> ).
<b>Organization</b>	<b>3</b>	The response has an introduction and brief conclusion, and related ideas are grouped together. A little logical sequencing of ideas is evident ( <i>Public libraries not only help students but also adults</i> ), as is the use of a transition between sections ( <i>In conclusion</i> ).
<b>Language Use</b>	<b>3</b>	Word choice is general ( <i>and many more, help with issues</i> ); sentences are mostly controlled and demonstrate a little variety. Some understanding of an objective tone is evident ( <i>Any student would say that a free public library is a useful tool in their learning</i> ).

## ISASP Writing Grade 11

### Sample Essay 3

Public libraries have furthured this nation by educating and enlightening those who are not fortunate enough to be able to buy books on their own. Public libraries allow people to learn new things without having to worry about using their hard earned money on something other than their bills. Without public libraries the country will no longer advocate for easy access to education resources and allowing everyone an oppotunity to better themsleves.

Regardless of income or background, everyone deserves an opportunity to better themselves. Those who can not afford a formal education or can not afford the books they need in their class can go to the library and check out the books they need. This could potentially save the student hundreds of dollars they could be using to pay off loans or just simply their bills. An extremely successful and wealthy business man, Andrew Carnegie, educated himself by borrowing books from his employers vast personal library. When Carnegie donated a library to a small town it quickly became the center of the community. The people could go and devour as much information as they pleased to further their knowledge. Andrew Carnegie once said, "There is not such a cradle of democracy upon the earth as the Free Public Library...where neither rank, office, nor wealth receives the slightest consideration." He was explaining that the public library system is what this country stands for, freedom for all no matter what background.

Public libraries have key resources for those who can not purchase the access of them on a regular basis. Almost 95% of all public libraries have access to the computer or internet. This allows people to apply for jobs online and allows kids to use the internet for school projects. Libraries also offer financial planning information, adult literacy programs, and employment & career guidance services. These programs and services allow the community to have access to resources they could not have gotten on their own.

Public libraries are crucial for every town or city. Libraries improve people's everyday lives and further their knowledge. Wealthy and successful people would not be where they are now without libraries. Without public libraries the country will no longer advocate for easy access to education resources and allowing everyone an oppotunity to better themsleves.

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### Sample Essay 3 – Scoring Notes

Trait	Score	Scoring Notes
<b>Prompt Task</b>	<b>3</b>	The topic and purpose of the writing is evident in the response as a whole, emphasized by a repetition in introduction and conclusion ( <i>Without public libraries the country will no longer advocate for easy access to education resources and allowing everyone an opportunity to better themselves</i> ). Limited use is made of evidence from the passage to describe Carnegie’s contribution and include information taken from the bar graph.
<b>Development</b>	<b>3</b>	Ideas are explained unevenly, with general statements or brief details that don’t go far beyond the provided sources. The idea of public libraries serving people without wealth is repeated several times.
<b>Organization</b>	<b>3</b>	The response shows some, although partially repeated, development of introduction and conclusion. Related ideas are grouped, although movement from one group to the next is sometimes abrupt and transitions are few.
<b>Language Use</b>	<b>4</b>	Word choice is specific and somewhat varied ( <i>hard earned money, advocate, potentially, devour</i> ). Sentences are controlled and show some variety in length and structure. An appropriate tone and formal style are mostly maintained in the writing ( <i>Libraries improve people’s everyday lives and further their knowledge</i> ).

# ISASP Writing Grade 11

## Sample Essay 4

Dear Mayor,

As a citizen of this community, I believe it is unacceptable to take away the privilege of our access to public libraries. These libraries provide opportunities for less fortunate kids to still experience the power of a book. In some low income areas, children are not given the same chances for success and therefore create another generation of less fortunates, and the circle is never broken. If we were to keep libraries available, children would be able to have help getting the education they are not able to receive otherwise.

Andrew Caregie was never given the option of having a formal education. He taught himself everything he needed to know by borrowing from an employer's personal library. He once was not able to afford an education, but because of the time he put in, he became the richest man in the united states by the age of 66. Carnegie then personally opened 1,689 public libraries, in hopes of inspiring the generations behind him to follow in his lead. Why should we not give our community the same chances? Some children in our area are not able to afford an education, but if they can get help at a public library, they may be able to turn their life path in a different direction, and help turn their families' chain of misfortune as well.

Public libraries are at little expense to the state. They require little-to-no funding at all from the state. Over 80% of the money that goes into building libraries, comes straight from the citizen's pockets. The state will pay at most 1.3% of what is necessary. In fact, they are more than likely to make money off of these programs. They also offer resources other than books. For example, internet access. This is something that is not readily available to everyone, but it is something that everyone may need at some point. Public libraries are a great way to supply the people in the community with something they may not have ever had the chance of using.

Along with internet access, they also offer important lifestyle lessons, such as parenting skills, financial planning, and also employment guidance. These are some resources that may change someone's life for the better and it may make a world of difference to someone who isn't as fortunate as other.

Please reconsider your decision, as I hope this has opened your mind to the vast opportunities that public libraries offer. Thank you for taking your time to read this.

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## Sample Essay 4 – Scoring Notes

Trait	Score	Scoring Notes
<b>Prompt Task</b>	<b>4</b>	The response clearly and immediately establishes its topic and purpose in the first sentence, and uses appropriate evidence from each of the source materials to support the explanation.
<b>Development</b>	<b>4</b>	Ideas are adequately explained, expanded with specific, relevant details ( <i>Public libraries are at little expense to the state. . . . Over 80% of the money . . . comes straight from the citizen’s pockets</i> ).
<b>Organization</b>	<b>4</b>	The response has a clear and developed introduction and a brief but clear concluding section. Paragraphing is appropriate and demonstrates logical sequencing of ideas, with consistent use of transitional phrasing within and between sections of text ( <i>Along with internet access, they also offer . . . . These are some resources that</i> ).
<b>Language Use</b>	<b>4</b>	Word choice is mostly specific ( <i>citizen, unacceptable, the power of a book, turn their life path in a different direction, chain of misfortune, vast</i> ), and sentences show control and some variety ( <i>Along with internet access, they also offer important lifestyle lesson, such as parenting skills, financial planning and also employment guidance</i> ). An objective tone and formal style appropriate for the audience is established in the explanation ( <i>Please reconsider your decision, as I hope this has opened your mind to the vast opportunities that public libraries offer</i> ).



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### Sample Essay 5

Hours drift by as one grows lost in an enthralling book. A child recites knowledge gained through a fascinating class. An adult gets the help needed to jumpstart a career. Access to one of the worlds most useful commodities - the internet. Very few places present the amount of opportunities available at public libraries. Public libraries are a source of literature and resources available to all people for free. They do not require a paid subscription, rather, you only need a free library card to find access to a massive collection of knowledge. Found in nearly every city and town within the United States, public libraries are crucial to the learning and development of a civilized society. Public libraries present opportunities and are a source of culture, recreation, and information and are paid for primarily by the people they serve.

In the 1790s, there was just one public library in the United States. Very few people had access to vast quantities of information, which slowed growth within the United States. A famous philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie, witnessed this problem in the late 1800s and committed himself to finding a solution. A self made businessman, Carnegie receive no formal education as a child. Instead, he taught himself the skills and knowledge needed to find success through the private collection of an employer. Mr. Carnegie, after selling his business Carnegie Steel and becoming the richest man in the United States, invested in educational institutions. He helped to found 1,689 different libraries across the entire United States. Although the styles of his libraries varies, they all utilise similar elements to emphasize the learning that occurs within. By the time of Andrew Carnegie's death, he had donated 90% of his fortune to charities, including a large sum to the public library system. Such a generous man should be remembered through the continued existence of our own library.

Our library is crucial to our community. As a community, we do not always have access to the nicest goods, nor the highest quality resources. Despite this, the library provides a chance for many people to learn and find a solution to their problems. The library is almost entirely funded by taxpayers and donations, making up 86% of the total costs. The city does not need to invest much into the maintenance of libraries, and this presents a low risk-high reward scenario. Minimal work is required for an incredible long-term outcome.

Libraries are a source of culture, recreation, information, and instruction. Throughout the United States, public libraries offer a chance to see the world and truly understand what the people are witnessing in their surroundings. Libraries provide both computer instruction and internet access to lower income families who may not be able to afford such a resource. They allow people to discuss and review books and movies they have in common. Libraries provide a place for people to follow their passions of learning, art, or even travel. Finally, they help train the community to become a better place, with classes on parenting, finances, literacy, and career guidance. Few institutions provide this many services, and therefore, our library is a blessing.

Due to the opportunities provided by the library, it is our responsibility to keep our library open. Libraries provide a easily maintained source of information and education that does more good for the library than harm. Although the city does have to contribute a little bit of money to update and protect libraries, the majority of the funds come from the taxpayers who are using and learning from the libraries. Therefore, it is in our city's best interest to keep our libraries open to the public!

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## Sample Essay 5 – Scoring Notes

Trait	Score	Scoring Notes
<b>Prompt Task</b>	<b>5</b>	Topic and purpose are clearly established from the beginning of the response, with relevant evidence used from each of the source materials ( <i>Public libraries present opportunities and are a source of culture, recreation, and information and are paid for primarily by the people they serve</i> ). Thoughtful context and relevant evidence for the explanation are included ( <i>Although the city does have to contribute a little bit of money to update and protect libraries, the majority of the funds come from the taxpayers who are using and learning from the libraries</i> ).
<b>Development</b>	<b>5</b>	The topic is completely explained with specific facts and details that are used to extend ideas and support the purpose of the explanation ( <i>By the time of Andrew Carnegie’s death, he had donated 90% of his fortune to charities, including a large sum to the public library system. Such a generous man should be remembered through the continued existence of our own library</i> ).
<b>Organization</b>	<b>5</b>	The introduction is well-developed, and the conclusion is developed and logical ( <i>Therefore, it is in our city’s best interest to keep our libraries open to the public</i> ). Paragraphing is clear and appropriate, with ideas logically sequenced throughout, indicating the connections between them ( <i>Our library is crucial to our community. As a community, we do not always have access to the nicest goods, nor the highest quality resources. Despite this, the library provides a chance for many people to learn</i> ). Effectively varied syntax enhances coherence.
<b>Language Use</b>	<b>5</b>	Word choice is varied and precise ( <i>civilized, witness, solution, invest, contribute, update</i> ) and successfully uses topic-specific vocabulary ( <i>a low risk-high reward scenario</i> ). Sentences are effectively varied in complexity, and a formal style appropriate for the designated audience is established and maintained ( <i>Due to the opportunities provided by the library, it is our responsibility to keep our library open</i> ).