Score	Development	Focus & Organization	Language	Conventions
4	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: • utilizes well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient evidence[1] from the stimuli to insightfully support claim(s) and counterclaim(s).[2] • thoroughly and accurately explains and elaborates on the evidence provided, connecting the evidence to claim(s) and counterclaim(s) and demonstrating a clear understanding of the topic and the stimuli.	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: • contains an effective and relevant introduction. • states and maintains a clear and sophisticated argument. • utilizes effective organizational strategies to logically order reasons and evidence to create a unified whole. • effectively clarifies relationships among claim(s), reasons, evidence, and counterclaim(s)[2] to create cohesion. • contains an effective and relevant concluding statement or section.	The writing: • illustrates consistent and sophisticated command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate to the task. • illustrates sophisticated command of syntactic variety for meaning and reader interest. • utilizes sophisticated and varied transitional words and phrases. • effectively establishes and maintains a formal style.	The writing: • demonstrates consistent and sophisticated command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.[3] • may contain a few minor errors that do not interfere with meaning.
3	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: • utilizes relevant and sufficient evidence[1] from the stimuli to adequately support claim(s) and counterclaim(s).[2] • adequately and accurately explains and elaborates on the evidence provided, connecting the evidence to claim(s) and counterclaim(s) and demonstrating a sufficient understanding of the topic and the stimuli.	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: • contains a relevant introduction. • states and maintains a clear argument. • utilizes adequate organizational strategies to logically order reasons and evidence to create a mostly unified whole. • clarifies most relationships among claim(s), reasons, evidence, and counterclaim(s),[2] but there may be some gaps in cohesion. • contains a relevant concluding statement or section.	The writing: • illustrates consistent command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate to the task. • illustrates consistent command of syntactic variety for meaning and reader interest. • utilizes appropriate and varied transitional words and phrases. • establishes and maintains a formal style.	The writing: • demonstrates consistent command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.[3] • contains some minor and/or major errors, but the errors do not significantly interfere with meaning.
2	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: • utilizes mostly relevant but insufficient evidence[1] from the stimuli to partially support claim(s) and counterclaim(s).[2] Some evidence may be inaccurate or repetitive. • explains some of the evidence provided, connecting some of the evidence to claim(s) and counterclaim(s) and demonstrating only a partial understanding of the topic and the stimuli. There may be some level of inaccuracy in the explanation.	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: • contains a limited introduction. • states a weak argument. • demonstrates an attempt to use organizational strategies to order some reasons and evidence, but ideas may be hard to follow at times. • clarifies some relationships among claim(s), reasons, evidence, and counterclaim(s),[2] but there are lapses in focus. • contains a limited concluding statement or section.	The writing: • illustrates inconsistent command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary. • illustrates inconsistent command of syntactic variety. • utilizes basic or repetitive transitional words and phrases. • establishes but inconsistently maintains a formal style.	The writing: • demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.[3] • contains many errors that may significantly interfere with meaning.
1	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: • utilizes mostly irrelevant or no evidence[1] from the stimuli, or mostly/only personal knowledge to inadequately support claim(s) and counterclaim(s).[2] Evidence is inaccurate or repetitive. • inadequately or inaccurately explains the evidence provided; evidence, claim(s), and counterclaim(s) appear disconnected, demonstrating little understanding of the topic and the stimuli.	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: • contains no or an irrelevant introduction. • states an unclear argument. • demonstrates an unclear organizational structure; ideas are hard to follow most of the time. • fails to clarify relationships among claim(s), reasons, evidence, and counterclaim(s);[2] concepts are unclear and/or there is a lack of focus. • contains no or an irrelevant concluding statement or section.	The writing: • illustrates little to no use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary. • illustrates little to no syntactic variety. • utilizes no or few transitional words and phrases. • does not establish or maintain a formal style.	The writing: • demonstrates limited command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.[3] • contains numerous and repeated errors that seriously impede meaning.

[1] Evidence includes facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information, using accurate and credible sources as appropriate to the task and the stimuli.
[2] Counterclaim(s) are only expected at grade 8.
[3] Conventions of standard written English include sentence structure, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.