

## **Excellent**

Students at this achievement level generally have exhibited the ability to

1. develop essays that skillfully integrate evidence from more than one source to support a clear and defensible position;
2. write with a compelling voice, purposeful language, and varied and fluent sentences;
3. demonstrate consistent control of sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling;
4. recognize the correct use of hyphens and dashes;
5. analyze the development and interaction of two themes or central ideas;
6. analyze how an author's choice of structure affects the meaning and tone of a text;
7. determine the impact of an author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story (setting, characters, plot);
8. evaluate arguments and reasoning in a complex informational text;
9. synthesize information from multiple resources; and
10. carefully select and integrate source information, maintaining the flow of ideas and avoiding plagiarism.

## **Good**

Students at this achievement level generally have exhibited the ability to

1. write well-organized essays that include a central idea and appropriate evidence from at least one source;
2. write essays with a consistent voice and a variety of sentence structures and word choices;
3. demonstrate control of sentence formation, usage, and mechanics;
4. identify and correct errors in verb tense and mood;
5. interpret the figurative and connotative meanings of words and phrases in a complex text;
6. determine the overall purpose of historically important U.S. documents and literary texts;
7. summarize a complex text and examine how ideas build on one another;
8. use textual evidence to make inferences and support analysis of the text;
9. evaluate the usefulness and objectivity of information resources; and
10. determine the relevance of source information to a given research topic.

## Fair

Students at this achievement level generally have exhibited the ability to

1. write generally organized essays that address a given task and provide adequate evidence;
2. write essays that include simple vocabulary and some variation in sentence structure;
3. demonstrate control of spelling and mechanics;
4. identify errors in parallel structure and basic grammar;
5. cite evidence to clarify what a text says explicitly;
6. identify how an author develops the relationships between characters;
7. use context clues to determine the literal meanings of words and phrases;
8. assess the strengths of information resources; and
9. conduct research by choosing and narrowing inquiry questions.

## Needs Improvement

Students at this achievement level are generally working toward the ability to

1. write essays that address a given task and provide adequate evidence;
2. write essays that include simple vocabulary and some variation in sentence structure;
3. demonstrate acceptable control of spelling and mechanics;
4. cite evidence to clarify what a text says explicitly;
5. use context clues to determine the meanings of words and phrases; and
6. conduct research by choosing and narrowing inquiry questions.