<table>
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<tr>
<th>Focus/Opinion</th>
<th>Above Grade Level</th>
<th>Achieving Standards (At Grade Level)</th>
<th>Approaching Standards</th>
<th>Developing Standards (Below Grade Level)</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| CCSS*: W - 1  | Responds skillfully to all parts of the prompt  
| States an opinion that demonstrates an insightful understanding of topic/text | Responds to all parts of the prompt  
| States an opinion that demonstrates an understanding of topic/text | Responds to most parts of the prompt  
| States an opinion that demonstrates limited understanding of topic/text | Responds to some or no parts of the prompt  
| Does not state an opinion and/or demonstrates little to no understanding of topic/text |
| Organization | Introduces the topic, states the opinion, and creates an organizational structure  
| Supplies insightful reasons that support the opinion  
| Uses linking words and phrases to connect opinion to reasons  
| Provides a skillful concluding statement or section | Introduces the topic and states a clear opinion  
| Supplies reasons that support the opinion  
| Uses linking words to connect opinion to reasons  
| Provides a concluding statement or section | Introduces the topic and states an unclear opinion  
| Supplies reasons that may not all support the opinion  
| Uses at least one linking word but it may be incorrect or ineffective  
| Provides an unclear concluding statement | Does not introduce the topic and/or does not state an opinion  
| Does not supply reasons to support the opinion  
| Uses no linking words  
| Provides no conclusion |
| Support/Evidence | Supports opinion with substantial and relevant reasons | Supports opinion with relevant reasons | Supports opinion with minimal and/or irrelevant reasons | Does not support opinion with relevant reasons |
| CCSS: RIT - 1 | Uses a variety of prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns correctly, including irregular forms  
| Produces correct simple, compound, and complex sentences | Uses prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly (e.g., I, me, my, they, them, their, myself)  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns correctly, including some irregular forms (e.g., is/was; child/children)  
| Produces correct simple and compound sentences | Uses prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly some of the time  
| Uses some regular verb tenses and common plural nouns correctly  
| Produces mostly correct and complete sentences | Uses pronouns incorrectly or not at all  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns incorrectly  
| Produces mostly incorrect sentences |
| Language–Conventions of Grammar and Usage | Capitalizes correctly and consistently with no errors: first word in a sentence, “I,” proper nouns, and titles  
| Uses commas, apostrophes, and end punctuation correctly all the time  
| Applies above grade-level spelling rules and patterns correctly, including irregular high-frequency words; no errors | Capitalizes correctly and consistently with a minor error: first word in a sentence, “I,” proper nouns, and titles  
| Uses commas, apostrophes, and end punctuation correctly most of the time  
| Applies grade-level spelling rules and patterns correctly (reference core sound/spelling resources); few to no errors | Capitalizes correctly and consistently with some errors: first word in a sentence, “I,” proper nouns, and titles  
| Uses commas, apostrophes, and end punctuation correctly some of the time  
| Applies some grade-level spelling rules and patterns correctly; some errors and phonetic spelling interfere with readability | Capitalizes incorrectly with many errors  
| Uses commas, apostrophes, and end punctuation incorrectly or not at all  
| Misapplies grade-level spelling rules through phonetic spelling; excessive errors interfere with readability |
| CCSS: L – 1b  
| L – 1e  
| L – 1g | Uses a variety of prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns correctly, including irregular forms  
| Produces correct simple, compound, and complex sentences | Uses prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly (e.g., I, me, my, they, them, their, myself)  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns correctly, including some irregular forms (e.g., is/was; child/children)  
| Produces correct simple and compound sentences | Uses prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly some of the time  
| Uses some regular verb tenses and common plural nouns correctly  
| Produces mostly correct and complete sentences | Uses pronouns incorrectly or not at all  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns incorrectly  
| Produces mostly incorrect sentences |
| Language – Conventions of Capitalization, Punctuation, and Spelling | Uses a variety of prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns correctly, including irregular forms  
| Produces correct simple, compound, and complex sentences | Uses prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly (e.g., I, me, my, they, them, their, myself)  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns correctly, including some irregular forms (e.g., is/was; child/children)  
| Produces correct simple and compound sentences | Uses prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly some of the time  
| Uses some regular verb tenses and common plural nouns correctly  
| Produces mostly correct and complete sentences | Uses pronouns incorrectly or not at all  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns incorrectly  
| Produces mostly incorrect sentences |
| CCSS: L – 2 | Uses a variety of prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns correctly, including irregular forms  
| Produces correct simple, compound, and complex sentences | Uses prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly (e.g., I, me, my, they, them, their, myself)  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns correctly, including some irregular forms (e.g., is/was; child/children)  
| Produces correct simple and compound sentences | Uses prior and current grade-level pronouns correctly some of the time  
| Uses some regular verb tenses and common plural nouns correctly  
| Produces mostly correct and complete sentences | Uses pronouns incorrectly or not at all  
| Uses verb tenses and plural nouns incorrectly  
| Produces mostly incorrect sentences |

*CCSS – Common Core State Standards alignment ("W" = Writing strand; "RIT" = Reading – Informational Text; "L"= Language strand)