<table>
<thead>
<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>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Focus/Opinion** | • 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 |
| **CCSS**:  
➢ W – 1a  
➢ W – 1b  
➢ W – 4 | | | | |

| Organization | • Organizes ideas and information into logical, coherent paragraphs that are clear to the reader  
• Uses linking words and phrases skillfully to connect reasons to opinion | • Organizes ideas and information using a clear topic sentence, details, explanation, and concluding sentence  
• Uses linking words and phrases to connect reasons to opinion | • Organizes ideas and information in an incomplete paragraph structure (e.g., missing conclusion)  
• Uses some linking words to connect reasons to opinion but simplistically or ineffectively | • Organizes with no evidence of paragraph structure  
• Uses no linking words |
| **CCSS**:  
➢ W – 1a  
➢ W – 1c  
➢ W – 1d  
➢ W – 4 | | | | |

| Support/Evidence | • Supports opinion skillfully with substantial and relevant facts, details, and/or reasons  
• Provides explanation/analysis of how evidence supports opinion | • Supports opinion with relevant reasons  
• Provides clear explanation of how reasons support opinion | • Supports opinion with minimal and/or irrelevant reasons  
• Provides some explanation of how reasons support opinion | • Does not support opinion with reasons  
• Provides no or inaccurate explanation of how reasons support opinion |
| **CCSS**:  
➢ RIT – 1  
➢ W – 1b | | | | |

| Language | • Uses purposeful and varied sentence structures  
• Demonstrates creativity and flexibility when using conventions (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling) to enhance meaning  
• Uses precise and sophisticated academic and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate for the audience and purpose | • Uses correct and varied sentence structures  
• Demonstrates grade level appropriate conventions; errors are minor and do not obscure meaning | • Uses some correct but repetitive sentence structures  
• Demonstrates some grade level appropriate conventions, but errors may obscure meaning | • Uses little to no correct sentence structure  
• Demonstrates limited understanding of grade level appropriate conventions, and errors interfere with the meaning  
• Uses no academic or domain-specific vocabulary |}

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