## Smarter Balanced Informative-Explanatory Writing Rubric (Grades 6-11)

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<th>Score</th>
<th>Statement of Purpose/Focus and Organization</th>
<th>Development: Language and Elaboration of Evidence</th>
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| **4** | The response is fully sustained and consistently purposefully focused:  
- controlling idea or main idea of a topic is focused, clearly stated, and strongly maintained  
- controlling idea or main idea of a topic is introduced and communicated clearly within the context  
- The response has a clear and effective organizational structure creating unity and completeness:  
  - use of a variety of transitional strategies  
  - logical progression of ideas from beginning to end  
  - effective introduction and conclusion for audience and purpose  
  - strong connections among ideas, with some syntactic variety  
- The response provides thorough and convincing support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details. The response achieves substantial depth that is specific and relevant:  
  - use of evidence from sources is smoothly integrated, comprehensive, and concrete  
  - effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques | The response clearly and effectively expresses ideas, using precise language:  
- use of academic and domain-specific vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose  
- The response demonstrates a strong command of conventions:  
  - few, if any, errors are present in usage and sentence formation  
  - effective and consistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling |
| **3** | The response is adequately sustained and generally focused:  
- focus is clear and for the most part maintained, though some loosely related material may be present  
- some context for the controlling idea or main idea of the topic is adequate  
- The response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected:  
  - adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety  
  - adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end  
  - adequate introduction and conclusion  
  - adequate, if slightly inconsistent, connection among ideas  
- The response provides adequate support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes the use of sources, facts, and details:  
  - some evidence from sources is integrated, though citations may be general or imprecise  
  - adequate use of some elaborative techniques | The response adequately expresses ideas, employing a mix of precise with more general language:  
- use of domain-specific vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose  
- The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:  
  - some errors in usage and sentence formation may be present, but no systematic pattern of errors is displayed  
  - adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling |
| **2** | The response is somewhat sustained and may have a minor drift in focus:  
- may be clearly focused on the controlling or main idea, but is insufficiently sustained  
- controlling idea or main idea may be unclear and somewhat unfocused  
- The response has an inconsistent organizational structure, and flaws are evident:  
  - inconsistent use of transitional strategies with little variety  
  - uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end  
  - conclusion and introduction, if present, are weak  
  - weak connection among ideas  
- The response provides uneven, cursory support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes partial or uneven use of sources, facts, and details:  
  - evidence from sources is weakly integrated, and citations, if present, are uneven  
  - weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques | The response expresses ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:  
- use of domain-specific vocabulary that may at times be inappropriate for the audience and purpose  
- The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:  
  - frequent errors in usage may obscure meaning  
  - inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling |
| **1** | The response may be related to the topic but may provide little or no focus:  
- may be very brief  
- may have a major drift  
- focus may be confusing or ambiguous  
- The response has little or no discernible organizational structure:  
  - few or no transitional strategies are evident  
  - frequent extraneous ideas may intrude | The response provides minimal support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes little or no use of sources, facts, and details:  
- use of evidence from the source material is minimal, absent, in error, or irrelevant  
- The response expression of ideas is vague, lacks, clarity, or is confusing:  
  - uses limited language or domain-specific vocabulary  
  - may have little sense of audience and purpose  
- The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions:  
  - errors are frequent and severe and meaning is often obscure |
| **0** | A response gets no credit if it provides no evidence of the ability to [fill in with key language from the intended target.] | | |