Why Government? Power, Public Needs, and Accountability

When does government serve the people, and how can people judge its performance?

Instructional purpose and evidence

Students move from explanation to analysis, application, evaluation, and a qualified written judgment. Require source locators and transparent calculations. Award credit for defensible reasoning rather than agreement with a preferred policy.

Objective

Students will analyze constitutional authority and civic consequences, connect textual and quantitative evidence, and evaluate a claim with stated limits.

Demonstration of learning

Daily responses include an accurate claim, a source detail, and reasoning. Report three separate scores: multiple choice out of 15, Argumentative writing out of 5, and Conventions out of 5. The project and discussions inform feedback but do not add hidden points.

Standards

6.3.8.CivicsPI.1; 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b; RI.CR.6.1; RI.CI.6.2; W.AW.6.1; SL.PE.6.1; RH.6-8.1, 2, 7; WHST.6-8.1, 9; 6.RP.A.3. Codes represent NJ or national CCSS as identified in the student packet. Science, arts, technology, financial literacy, and SEL connections are task integrations rather than claims of complete course coverage.

Prepare and differentiate

Prepare the student packet, highlighters, calculator access after an initial estimate, and chart paper or a shared slide. All needed readings and datasets are included. No paid platform is required. Use offline alternatives for every digital task.

Multilingual learners: preview the six terms with visuals and home language connections; partner read by paragraph; rehearse a claim orally before writing. Emerging language frame: “Source __ shows __. This matters because __.” Expanding frame: “Although __, the evidence suggests __ because __.” These are supports, not WIDA proficiency determinations.

IEP and 504: follow each student’s actual plan; provide accessible text, audio or read aloud when appropriate, reduced copying, extra time, breaks, and assistive technology. Preserve the reasoning target. Advanced learners test an alternative explanation or propose a counterexample. Avoid assigning identities of enslaved or persecuted people in simulations.

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DAY 1

Source A | Purposes and promises

Learning objective

Explain the difference between a stated purpose and evidence that a purpose has been achieved. Cite one phrase and one explanation from Source A. Identify one conclusion the evidence supports and one stronger conclusion it cannot establish.

Demonstration of learning

An accurate response to the source analysis, a completed interdisciplinary product, and an exit answer supported by the reading or model. Look for the specific evidence below.

40 minute lesson • I Do / We Do / They Do

0 to 4 minutes: students complete the Do Now. Ask two students for different initial reasons; record the question that needs evidence.
4 to 11 minutes • I Do: read the opening paragraph aloud. Model identifying the author or custodian, source type, central claim, and one limitation. Distinguish marked primary wording from instructional synthesis.
11 to 19 minutes • We Do: annotate the remaining reading together. Begin the analysis task; require a paragraph locator. For calculations, name the whole, part, units, and rule before computing.
19 to 31 minutes • They Do: teams complete the named interdisciplinary investigation. Assign evidence analyst, calculation or design analyst, discussion facilitator, and access reviewer. Each student records an individual answer.
31 to 37 minutes: students write the Quick Write; partners check the claim, citation, and reasoning.
37 to 40 minutes: collect the Exit Ticket and identify who needs reteaching.

Expected content and calculation check

A purpose such as justice is a criterion, while observed access and fair procedures are evidence. For example, a government can name welfare as a goal without showing that every neighborhood receives safe water. A defensible six cell chart pairs each purpose with an observable indicator and acknowledges that indicators can conflict.

Evidence to press for

Ask: “Which exact detail supports that?” Then ask: “What does it not establish?” Use the source analysis to require explanation rather than copied sentences. For the investigation, check the named artifact against the actual prompt: ELA and visual arts: create a six cell purpose chart for union, justice, peace, defense, welfare, and liberty. Add a symbol and a measurable indicator for each.

Quick Write feedback and next step

Prompt: Which two purposes might come into tension during an emergency? Explain the tension. Score formatively: 3 = accurate judgment, precise source detail, and explained connection; 2 = accurate idea and detail but incomplete reasoning; 1 = unsupported or partly mistaken; 0 = absent or off topic. This scale guides reteaching and is not added to the final assessment. If the class confuses a claim with proof, model a second example before moving on.

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DAY 2

Source B | Consent and the rule of law

Learning objective

Trace the chain from consent to elections to accountability. Identify one weakness if participation ends after election day. Identify one conclusion the evidence supports and one stronger conclusion it cannot establish.

Demonstration of learning

An accurate response to the source analysis, a completed interdisciplinary product, and an exit answer supported by the reading or model. Look for the specific evidence below.

40 minute lesson • I Do / We Do / They Do

0 to 4 minutes: students complete the Do Now. Ask two students for different initial reasons; record the question that needs evidence.
4 to 11 minutes • I Do: read the opening paragraph aloud. Model identifying the author or custodian, source type, central claim, and one limitation. Distinguish marked primary wording from instructional synthesis.
11 to 19 minutes • We Do: annotate the remaining reading together. Begin the analysis task; require a paragraph locator. For calculations, name the whole, part, units, and rule before computing.
19 to 31 minutes • They Do: teams complete the named interdisciplinary investigation. Assign evidence analyst, calculation or design analyst, discussion facilitator, and access reviewer. Each student records an individual answer.
31 to 37 minutes: students write the Quick Write; partners check the claim, citation, and reasoning.
37 to 40 minutes: collect the Exit Ticket and identify who needs reteaching.

Expected content and calculation check

Consent explains why officials may exercise public authority; elections select representatives, while petitions and oversight continue accountability. If participation ends on election day, harmful implementation can escape scrutiny. A decision log needs authority, evidence, affected groups, and a review path; private resident information is unnecessary for public accountability.

Evidence to press for

Ask: “Which exact detail supports that?” Then ask: “What does it not establish?” Use the source analysis to require explanation rather than copied sentences. For the investigation, check the named artifact against the actual prompt: Technology and media literacy: design a public decision log with fields for proposal, authority, evidence, vote, affected groups, and review date. Explain what private information should be excluded.

Quick Write feedback and next step

Prompt: Distinguish the power to win a vote from the authority to remove another person’s rights. Score formatively: 3 = accurate judgment, precise source detail, and explained connection; 2 = accurate idea and detail but incomplete reasoning; 1 = unsupported or partly mistaken; 0 = absent or off topic. This scale guides reteaching and is not added to the final assessment. If the class confuses a claim with proof, model a second example before moving on.

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DAY 3

Source C | A budget is a civic argument

Learning objective

Calculate each category’s budget percentage and cost per household. Explain why the counts cannot be added to determine unique households served. Identify one conclusion the evidence supports and one stronger conclusion it cannot establish.

Demonstration of learning

An accurate response to the source analysis, a completed interdisciplinary product, and an exit answer supported by the reading or model. Look for the specific evidence below.

40 minute lesson • I Do / We Do / They Do

0 to 4 minutes: students complete the Do Now. Ask two students for different initial reasons; record the question that needs evidence.
4 to 11 minutes • I Do: read the opening paragraph aloud. Model identifying the author or custodian, source type, central claim, and one limitation. Distinguish marked primary wording from instructional synthesis.
11 to 19 minutes • We Do: annotate the remaining reading together. Begin the analysis task; require a paragraph locator. For calculations, name the whole, part, units, and rule before computing.
19 to 31 minutes • They Do: teams complete the named interdisciplinary investigation. Assign evidence analyst, calculation or design analyst, discussion facilitator, and access reviewer. Each student records an individual answer.
31 to 37 minutes: students write the Quick Write; partners check the claim, citation, and reasoning.
37 to 40 minutes: collect the Exit Ticket and identify who needs reteaching.

Expected content and calculation check

The same $100 cost per household occurs in water, roads, and library categories, but these services address different needs. Emergency supplies cost $30 per household and cover all 500 households. A lower cost is not proof of greater importance. Any $5,000 increase requires an offsetting reduction under the fixed budget.

Evidence to press for

Ask: “Which exact detail supports that?” Then ask: “What does it not establish?” Use the source analysis to require explanation rather than copied sentences. For the investigation, check the named artifact against the actual prompt: Math and financial literacy: move $5,000 between categories. Produce a updated balanced budget and justify the opportunity cost using a public purpose.

Quick Write feedback and next step

Prompt: Why should officials consider need as well as cost per household? Score formatively: 3 = accurate judgment, precise source detail, and explained connection; 2 = accurate idea and detail but incomplete reasoning; 1 = unsupported or partly mistaken; 0 = absent or off topic. This scale guides reteaching and is not added to the final assessment. If the class confuses a claim with proof, model a second example before moving on.

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DAY 4

Source D | Whose protection counts?

Learning objective

Compare the scope of “any person” with the idea that only voters deserve services. Use both paragraphs 1 and 3. End with one sentence explaining how this source changes or complicates an earlier source in the packet. Identify one conclusion the evidence supports and one stronger conclusion it cannot establish.

Demonstration of learning

An accurate response to the source analysis, a completed interdisciplinary product, and an exit answer supported by the reading or model. Look for the specific evidence below.

40 minute lesson • I Do / We Do / They Do

0 to 4 minutes: students complete the Do Now. Ask two students for different initial reasons; record the question that needs evidence.
4 to 11 minutes • I Do: read the opening paragraph aloud. Model identifying the author or custodian, source type, central claim, and one limitation. Distinguish marked primary wording from instructional synthesis.
11 to 19 minutes • We Do: annotate the remaining reading together. Begin the analysis task; require a paragraph locator. For calculations, name the whole, part, units, and rule before computing.
19 to 31 minutes • They Do: teams complete the named interdisciplinary investigation. Assign evidence analyst, calculation or design analyst, discussion facilitator, and access reviewer. Each student records an individual answer.
31 to 37 minutes: students write the Quick Write; partners check the claim, citation, and reasoning.
37 to 40 minutes: collect the Exit Ticket and identify who needs reteaching.

Expected content and calculation check

“Any person” is broader than eligible voters. The legal promise of equal protection and evidence of actual access answer different questions. Revels’s Senate service demonstrates African American political participation; it cannot establish that exclusion ended. An access survey should reach different neighborhoods and residents without internet service.

Evidence to press for

Ask: “Which exact detail supports that?” Then ask: “What does it not establish?” Use the source analysis to require explanation rather than copied sentences. For the investigation, check the named artifact against the actual prompt: History and data: design a service access survey with three neutral questions. Identify a sampling method that includes residents who lack internet access.

Quick Write feedback and next step

Prompt: Explain why a constitutional amendment can be necessary without immediately solving every injustice. Score formatively: 3 = accurate judgment, precise source detail, and explained connection; 2 = accurate idea and detail but incomplete reasoning; 1 = unsupported or partly mistaken; 0 = absent or off topic. This scale guides reteaching and is not added to the final assessment. If the class confuses a claim with proof, model a second example before moving on.

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DAY 5

Multiple choice • answers and evidence

Correct answers below are keyed to the exact student packet. The evidence locator identifies why the answer is warranted. Distractors typically overstate authority, confuse a denominator, or replace evidence with an unsupported inference.

1. A • Measured improvement in access to a service

Why: A stated goal is not an outcome; measured access tests whether the goal is being met. Evidence: Source A ¶1 to 3.

2. A • Rule of law

Why: Rule of law requires officials as well as residents to follow law. Evidence: Source B ¶2.

3. A • Voting procedures must operate alongside rights protections

Why: A numerical majority does not independently justify removing others’ protected participation. Evidence: Source B ¶3.

4. B • Road repairs

Why: Road repairs receive $25,000 of $100,000, which is 25 percent. Evidence: Source C ¶1.

5. D • Some households lost access when the cost fell

Why: Falling costs may coincide with exclusion, so efficiency alone is an incomplete civic measure. Evidence: Source C and D.

6. B • Consent through voting does not remove obligations to protect persons

Why: Source B limits majority authority; Source D extends equal protection to persons beyond eligible voters. Evidence: Source B and D.

7. C • Other spending must decrease by $5,000

Why: A fixed total requires an offsetting reduction unless additional revenue is available. Evidence: Source C ¶3.

8. A • The benefit sacrificed by choosing another use

Why: The alternative benefit given up is the opportunity cost of the selected use. Evidence: Source C ¶3.

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DAY 5

Multiple choice • answers and evidence

Correct answers below are keyed to the exact student packet. The evidence locator identifies why the answer is warranted. Distractors typically overstate authority, confuse a denominator, or replace evidence with an unsupported inference.

9. B • The total remains balanced but effects on access need investigation

Why: The transfer preserves the total, but the model does not provide evidence of its access effects. Evidence: Source C.

10. C • A milestone in African American political participation

Why: Revels’s service demonstrates participation, while the reading explicitly describes continuing rights struggles. Evidence: Source D ¶2.

11. B • Comparable neighborhoods face different documented barriers

Why: Documented differences in barriers test access more directly than balanced totals or official assurances. Evidence: Source D ¶3.

12. A • Cost evidence together with rights and access evidence

Why: Sources A and D require evaluating public purposes and protected access alongside Source C’s costs. Evidence: Source A and D.

13. A • Sample households across neighborhoods with both online and offline responses

Why: A mixed access sample addresses missing voices; overlapping service lists do not establish unique residents. Evidence: Source C and D.

14. D • It balances but requires further evidence about fairness

Why: The allocations total correctly, but a balanced budget does not establish equitable service delivery. Evidence: Source C and D.

15. B • Evidence of rights protection, access, and meaningful challenge procedures

Why: Accountability requires evidence of how people are served and how they can challenge decisions. Evidence: Source A to D.

Assessment administration and response

Suggested 40 minutes: 2 minutes directions, 12 minutes multiple choice, 3 minutes RACE planning, 20 minutes writing, 3 minutes revision. Provide additional time according to student plans. These are classroom tasks, not standardized norms. Use wrong answer patterns to identify a specific concept for reteaching; do not infer ability from one total.

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DAY 5

Scoring the five paragraph RACE response

Use the two classroom rubrics at the end. Select one best fit score out of 5 for Argumentative writing and one best fit score out of 5 for Conventions. In Teacher Comments, name one strength and one next step. Record the 15 question score separately.

Teacher model • a reasoning anchor, not a script

Efficient services matter, but accountable government also protects rights and provides meaningful participation. Source C shows that a balanced budget can still leave needs unmet. The Preamble in Source A names justice and liberty as purposes, while Source D shows why equal protection matters. A defensible judgment must examine both resource use and who receives benefits. For example, emergency supplies cost $15,000 / 500 = $30 per household (Source C, paragraph 2), compared with $100 for water. That difference alone does not show that water is less necessary. Equal protection covers any person, not only voters (Source D, paragraph 1).

The model demonstrates source locators and quantitative reasoning. Students may develop a different supported judgment. Accept alternative conclusions when accurate evidence and reasoning support them. Do not require students to repeat this model’s policy preference. Three details from one source alone do not satisfy the multiple source requirement.

Calibration and follow up

Read once for the claim and once for evidence and explanation. Use the Argumentative and Conventions rubrics to report two separate scores out of 5. A correct calculation with an invalid civic conclusion still needs reasoning feedback. Conference on one content error and one explanation gap, then allow revision.

Source access

The student packet’s final page contains source references for all four readings. Standards references: https://www.nj.gov/education/standards/socst/docs/2020NJSLS-SS_Grades6-8.pdf ; https://www.nj.gov/education/standards/ela/2023/6.shtml ; https://www.nj.gov/education/standards/math/2023/6.shtml

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Grades 6–8 Argumentative Rubric

Based on the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts

Student Name _____ Date _____ Class Section _____

Argumentative writing encompasses the development of ideas, focus, organization, and language that students demonstrate in their written responses.

Score Point 5	Score Point 4	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1
Ideas and Focus				
The response demonstrates an ability to provide a focused written response to an on-demand prompt. It demonstrates a clear understanding of the task and purpose. A score point 5 response may reflect the following characteristics: • a claim that clearly introduces a topic or issue • relevant and accurate data and evidence that clearly support the claim • logical reasoning that clearly demonstrates understanding of the topic or text • (G7 only) clearly acknowledges an alternate or opposing claim • (G8 only) clearly acknowledges and distinguishes an alternate or opposing claim	The response demonstrates an ability to provide a mostly focused written response to an on-demand prompt. It demonstrates a general understanding of the task and purpose. A score point 4 response may reflect the following characteristics: • a claim that generally introduces a topic or issue • accurate data and evidence that generally support the claim • logical reasoning that generally demonstrates understanding of the topic or text • (G7 only) generally acknowledges an alternate or opposing claim • (G8 only) generally acknowledges and distinguishes an alternate or opposing claim	The response demonstrates an ability to provide a basic written response to an on-demand prompt. It demonstrates some understanding of the task and purpose. A score point 3 response may reflect the following characteristics: • a claim that somewhat introduces a topic or issue • data and evidence that somewhat support the claim (information may be general) • reasoning that somewhat demonstrates understanding of the topic or text • (G7 only) somewhat acknowledges an alternate or opposing claim • (G8 only) somewhat acknowledges or distinguishes an alternate or opposing claim	The response demonstrates an ability to provide a limited written response to an on-demand prompt. It demonstrates partial understanding of the task and purpose. A score point 2 response may reflect the following characteristics: • a claim that attempts to introduce a topic or issue • limited evidence related to the claim (information may be general) • limited or attempted reasoning related to the topic or text • (G7 and G8 only) attempts to acknowledge an alternate or opposing claim	The response demonstrates an ability to provide a minimally written response to an on-demand prompt. It demonstrates minimal understanding of the task and purpose. A score point 1 response may reflect the following characteristics: • a minimal, missing, or unclear claim • minimal, missing, or unclear supporting evidence • minimal, missing, or unclear demonstration of reasoning • (G7 and G8 only) minimal, missing, or unclear acknowledgement of an alternate or opposing claim
Organization				
• a clear introduction that contains clear reasons and relevant evidence to support a claim • a clear organizational structure that presents reasons and evidence logically • a concluding statement or section that clearly follows from the argument presented • (G7 and G8) a conclusion that also clearly supports the argument presented	• a general introduction that contains reasons and relevant evidence to support a claim • an organizational structure that generally presents reasons and evidence logically • a concluding statement or section that generally follows from the argument presented • (G7 and G8) a conclusion that also generally supports the argument presented	• a basic introduction that contains some reasoning and evidence to support a claim • a basic organizational structure that somewhat presents reasons or evidence • a concluding statement or section that somewhat follows from the argument presented • (G7 and G8) a conclusion that also somewhat supports the argument presented	• a limited or attempted introduction to support a claim • a limited or attempted organizational structure that attempts to present reasons or evidence • a concluding statement or section that attempts to relate to the argument presented	• a missing or unclear introduction • a minimal or unclear organizational structure • a missing or unclear concluding statement or section
Expression and Word Choice				
• (G6 only) words, phrases, and clauses that clearly link and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence • (G7 only) words, phrases, and clauses that clearly create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence • (G8 only) words, phrases, and clauses that clearly create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence • establishes and maintains a formal/academic style, approach, and form	• (G6 only) words, phrases, and clauses that generally link and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence • (G7 only) words, phrases, and clauses that generally create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence • (G8 only) words, phrases, and clauses that generally create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence • generally establishes and maintains a formal/academic style, approach, and form	• (G6 only) words, phrases, and clauses that somewhat link or clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, or evidence • (G7 only) words, phrases, and clauses that somewhat create cohesion or clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, or evidence • (G8 only) words, phrases, and clauses that somewhat create cohesion or clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, or evidence • somewhat establishes a formal/academic style, approach, or form	• (G6 only) words, phrases, or clauses that attempt to link claim(s), reasons, or evidence • (G7 and G8 only) words, phrases, or clauses that attempt to relate claim(s), reasons, or evidence • attempts a formal/academic style, approach, or form	• minimal or unclear use of words, phrases, or clauses to link claim(s) or reasons • minimal or missing formal/academic style, approach, or form

Overall Score _____ / 5 Select the score that best fits the response across all three categories.

Teacher Comments_____

Source: NJDOE NJSLA-A and NJGPA-A Writing Rubrics, pp. 12–14

Grades 6–8 Conventions Rubric

Based on the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts

Student Name _____ Date _____ Class Section _____

Conventions encompass language and the mechanical aspects of writing, such as grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, that students demonstrate in their written responses.

Score Point 5	Score Point 4	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1
The response demonstrates command of conventions in a written response to an on-demand prompt. **A score point 5 response may reflect the following characteristics:** • Demonstrates command of the system and structure of the English language • Demonstrates command of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage	**The response demonstrates general command of conventions in a written response to an on-demand prompt.** **A score point 4 response may reflect the following characteristics:** • Demonstrates general command of the system and structure of the English language • Demonstrates general command of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage	**The response demonstrates basic command of conventions in a written response to an on-demand prompt.** **A score point 3 response may reflect the following characteristics:** • Demonstrates partial command of the system and structure of the English language • Demonstrates partial command of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage	**The response demonstrates limited command of conventions in a written response to an on-demand prompt.** **A score point 2 response may reflect the following characteristics:** • Demonstrates limited command of the system and structure of the English language • Demonstrates limited command of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage	**The response demonstrates minimal command of conventions in a written response to an on-demand prompt.** **A score point 1 response may reflect the following characteristics:** • Demonstrates minimal command of the system and structure of the English language • Demonstrates minimal or no command of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage

- The NJSLA-A G6–G8 Conventions Rubric will assess grade-level appropriate conventions skills as outlined in the NJSLS-ELA.
- Not all grade-appropriate conventions skills will be demonstrated in an on-demand written response.

Scoring Guide Select one overall score using the descriptors above.

5 = Command 4 = General command 3 = Basic command 2 = Limited command 1 = Minimal command

Overall Score _____ / 5

Teacher Comments

Source: NJDOE NJSLA-A and NJGPA-A Writing Rubrics, p. 15

Ma’at High School Argumentative Rubric

Classroom adaptation of NJSLA-A Grade 9 and NJGPA-A | NJSLS-ELA W.AW.9-10.1

Student _____ Date _____ Class _____

Select the single score that best describes the response across the criteria.

Criterion	Score 5	Score 4	Score 3	Score 2	Score 1
Ideas and Focus	A precise claim is set apart from an opposing position. The response uses ample, relevant textual evidence and sound reasoning to develop the claim and address counterclaims fairly.	A clear claim is generally distinguished from an opposing position. Relevant textual evidence and generally sound reasoning develop the argument, with some unevenness.	A recognizable claim and some relevant textual evidence are present. Reasoning is uneven or general, and treatment of an opposing position is partial.	A claim is attempted. Evidence is sparse or loosely related, and reasoning or treatment of the opposing position is limited.	The claim, relevant evidence, or supporting reasoning is largely unclear or missing. Opposing positions receive little attention.
Organization	The opening establishes the claim. The sequence and transitions make relationships among positions, reasons, and evidence clear. The conclusion follows from the argument.	The opening and sequence generally establish the argument. Transitions mostly clarify connections, and the conclusion generally follows.	The opening and sequence show a basic plan. Some transitions make links, and the conclusion has a general connection to the argument.	The opening, sequence, or transitions are attempted but unclear. The ending connects weakly to the argument.	An opening or recognizable sequence is largely absent. Connections are unclear and a conclusion is missing or unrelated.
Expression and Word Choice	Style, tone, and wording consistently fit the intended audience and purpose.	Style, tone, and wording usually fit the audience and purpose.	Style and tone fit the task in parts. Wording is sometimes general or uneven.	There is limited control of style, tone, or wording for the task.	Style or tone shows little awareness of the audience or purpose.

Overall Score _____ / 5

Teacher Comments

Source: NJDOE Writing Rubrics for the NJSLA-A and NJGPA-A. Classroom descriptors are paraphrased.

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Ma’at High School Conventions Rubric

Classroom adaptation of NJSLA-A Grade 9 and NJGPA-A | NJSLS-ELA L.SS.9-10.1 and L.KL.9-10.2

Student _____ Date _____ Class _____

Select the single score that best describes the response across the criteria.

Criterion	Score 5	Score 4	Score 3	Score 2	Score 1
Sentence Structure and Grammar	Consistently controls sentence structure, grammar, and the conventions of standard English.	Generally controls sentence structure and grammar. Occasional errors do not substantially affect clarity.	Shows basic control of sentence structure and grammar. Recurring errors sometimes reduce clarity.	Shows limited control of sentence structure and grammar. Frequent errors interfere with meaning.	Shows minimal control of sentence structure and grammar. Errors frequently obscure meaning.
Mechanics and Usage	Consistently applies capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage.	Generally applies capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage with occasional lapses.	Shows basic control of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage, with noticeable inconsistencies.	Applies capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage inconsistently. Errors often distract the reader.	Shows little evidence of control over capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage.

Overall Score _____ / 5

Teacher Comments

Source: NJDOE Writing Rubrics for the NJSLA-A and NJGPA-A. Classroom descriptors are paraphrased.

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