

A writing rubric (checklist) for students:

When writing a composition or practicing a PSSA Writing Prompt exercise, does your writing match the scoring rubrics used by the test scorers and your teacher? The compositions are rated on a scale of 1 - 4, four is terrific:

Scenario: You just wrote a composition for your teacher. How well did you do? Fill in the checklist below and print it out. Keep it in your notebook. The next time you have a writing assignment come back to this page and fill in the checklist again. We bet your two point compositions will become four pointers in no time!

In my four point composition: (place a checkmark where you think you did well).

Organization and Content Checklist:	How's My Style:
<input type="checkbox"/> I used important details.	<input type="checkbox"/> I used many different and descriptive words.
<input type="checkbox"/> When I added details, I didn't wander from the main idea. I remembered my Topic Sentence and the subject of the Writing Prompt and stayed on course.	<input type="checkbox"/> I used words that helped people see my meaning. They could use all of their senses to feel and even hear my meaning.
<input type="checkbox"/> I organized my ideas in a logical way.	<input type="checkbox"/> I used different kinds of sentences and didn't start each one with the same word.
<input type="checkbox"/> My composition answered the question in the prompt.	<input type="checkbox"/> I made every effort to make my writing legible. My spelling and grammar were the very best.

My composition scored three points: My writing is good but I could improve. Maybe I needed to add more details or add information.

Organization and Content	How's My Style?
<input type="checkbox"/> I tried to explain my main idea, the one in my Topic Sentence, but I could have added more information or supporting detail.	<input type="checkbox"/> My choice of words was good. My vocabulary choices served a purpose. I didn't use too many extra or unnecessary words.
<input type="checkbox"/> Once in a while my thoughts wandered away from the subject or I didn't totally answer the question in the Writing Prompt.	<input type="checkbox"/> My sentences were pretty good, but they are mostly the same kind of sentence. The sentences could be shorter and more to the point.

<input type="checkbox"/> My story was a little bit disorganized.	<input type="checkbox"/> I could have been a little neater and I know I wasn't watching my spelling and grammar too carefully.
<input type="checkbox"/> My ideas needed to be connected. I don't think every idea I had fit with the topic.	<input type="checkbox"/> The reader can usually see my point.

My composition earned only two points: My writing wasn't very clear. My ideas didn't really support the Topic Sentence and some of my information wasn't accurate. I didn't pay attention to my spelling.

Organization and Content	How's My Style?
<input type="checkbox"/> I need to make my points more clearly. I needed to stay on the subject.	<input type="checkbox"/> My words need to be stronger and more effective.
<input type="checkbox"/> There weren't many details or supporting ideas in my composition.	<input type="checkbox"/> I sometimes repeated the same idea and my writing was choppy. My sentences could have been shorter and to the point.
<input type="checkbox"/> My paragraphs didn't have "flow". My ideas were choppy.	<input type="checkbox"/> My handwriting was sloppy and I didn't check over my spelling.

My composition scored only one point. I know I need to answer the question, stick to the point. I didn't add any details and my spelling and grammar were not up to par. I know I can do better.

Organization and Content	How's My Style?
<input type="checkbox"/> I didn't pay attention to the question. My story wandered.	<input type="checkbox"/> People couldn't tell what my ideas were about the subject.
<input type="checkbox"/> I need to get organized. I could have outlined my ideas before I started to write.	<input type="checkbox"/> I started all of my sentences the same way and didn't use descriptive words.
<input type="checkbox"/> I need to add details and more information.	<input type="checkbox"/> I had so many spelling and grammar mistakes that people were distracted and couldn't pay attention to what I was saying.