

# Writing: Quick Guide for Grading

by April Thome

As a teacher or a parent-teacher, you are called upon to “grade papers.” The more experience you have, the better. But there are practical helps, too. When you use the simplified Writing Quick Guide below, you will ease the stress of scoring writing assignments.

Writing Quick Guide	
<u>8</u>	Central idea
<u>7</u>	Content quality
<u>8</u>	Followed directions
<u>8</u>	Proper word usage
<u>7</u>	Organization
<u>8</u>	Proper sentences
<u>9</u>	Punctuation
<u>9</u>	Capitalization
<u>7</u>	Spelling
<u>9</u>	Language precision
<u>7</u>	Appearance
<u>8</u>	Relevant information
Total points earned <u>85</u>	
Grade for this work <u>B</u>	

Writing Quick Guide tells your students what you are looking for.  
Writing Quick Guide reminds you what you are looking for.

- Who?** Everyone benefits when they know what to expect, when they know what the rules are.
- What?** This little “Quick Guide” assigns 8 points for each item you reviewed.
- When?** When the students wonder what you are looking for, they will know.
- Where?** Attach this little score card to the paper you corrected.  
Let them see it and know where points were awarded
- Why?** Let them know exactly why you scored it the way you did.
- How?** When your student asks, “How did you get that score?” You will have an answer.

Remember, experience matters. Keep using it -- use it to guide you as you correct a paper. Use it to tell the students what you scored. Writing Quick Guide provides consistency and is easily understood. Permission is granted to copy the little Quick Guides below and on the facing page. Cut them up, and use them as often as you like. Attach one to each paper you grade and return it to the student for his or her observation.

Each item is worth 8 points (8 points x 12 areas = 96 points. Use the 4 “bonus points” to award an area that’s exceptional).

**EVALUATING STUDENT WORK**

Writing Quick Guide

- Central idea
- Content quality
- Followed directions
- Proper word usage
- Organization
- Proper sentences
- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Spelling
- Language precision
- Appearance
- Relevant information

Total points earned \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade for this work \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Quick Guide

- Central idea
- Content quality
- Followed directions
- Proper word usage
- Organization
- Proper sentences
- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Spelling
- Language precision
- Appearance
- Relevant information

Total points earned \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade for this work \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Quick Guide

- Central idea
- Content quality
- Followed directions
- Proper word usage
- Organization
- Proper sentences
- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Spelling
- Language precision
- Appearance
- Relevant information

Total points earned \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade for this work \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Quick Guide

- Central idea
- Content quality
- Followed directions
- Proper word usage
- Organization
- Proper sentences
- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Spelling
- Language precision
- Appearance
- Relevant information

Total points earned \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade for this work \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Quick Guide

- Central idea
- Content quality
- Followed directions
- Proper word usage
- Organization
- Proper sentences
- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Spelling
- Language precision
- Appearance
- Relevant information

Total points earned \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade for this work \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Quick Guide

- Central idea
- Content quality
- Followed directions
- Proper word usage
- Organization
- Proper sentences
- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Spelling
- Language precision
- Appearance
- Relevant information

Total points earned \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade for this work \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Quick Guide

- Central idea
- Content quality
- Followed directions
- Proper word usage
- Organization
- Proper sentences
- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Spelling
- Language precision
- Appearance
- Relevant information

Total points earned \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade for this work \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Quick Guide

- Central idea
- Content quality
- Followed directions
- Proper word usage
- Organization
- Proper sentences
- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Spelling
- Language precision
- Appearance
- Relevant information

Total points earned \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade for this work \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Quick Guide

- Central idea
- Content quality
- Followed directions
- Proper word usage
- Organization
- Proper sentences
- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Spelling
- Language precision
- Appearance
- Relevant information

Total points earned \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade for this work \_\_\_\_\_

# One Way to Evaluate a Composition

by Maureen Marchetti Martin

Try using this form to grade a general composition. These point values total a maximum of 100.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Composition Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Required Items	Possible total points	Points earned this time
Title (appropriate and eye-catching)	5	_____
Introductory paragraph		
Introduction with thesis statement	6	_____
Sentence to introduce main idea #1	2	_____
Sentence to introduce main idea #2	2	_____
Sentence to introduce main idea #3	2	_____
Grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation	7	_____
First paragraph in the body of the composition		
Restate the main idea #1 (topic sentence)	5	_____
At least three sentences supporting main idea #1	6	_____
Grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation	7	_____
Second paragraph in the body of the composition		
Restate the main idea #2 (topic sentence)	5	_____
At least three sentences supporting main idea #2	6	_____
Grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation	7	_____
Third paragraph in the body of the composition		
Restate the main idea #3 (topic sentence)	5	_____
At least three sentences supporting main idea #3	6	_____
Grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation	7	_____
Conclusion		
Restate the thesis from the introduction	6	_____
Restate main idea #1	2	_____
Restate main idea #2	2	_____
Restate main idea #3	2	_____
Concluding sentence	3	_____
Grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation	7	_____
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>100</b>	_____

Comments / Suggestions

---



---

Signature of the Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Composition Rating Scale

Categories and Indicators for Rating Written Compositions

## CONTENT

### CENTRAL IDEA

- 5 Provides a clear focus on the central idea
  - States a clear topic or thesis sentence
  - Purpose is neither too broad not too narrow
- 3 Contains recognizable central idea
  - Topic sentence or thesis s vague
  - Purpose is too broad or too specific
- 1 Lacks a definable central idea
  - Has no topic sentence or thesis
  - Purpose of the paper is not clear

### RELEVANT INFORMATION

- 5 Develops central idea effectively
  - Contains sufficient supporting information
  - Focuses consistently on the central idea
  - Contains effective information that supports the central idea
- 3 Develops central idea adequately
  - Contains some supporting information
  - Generally focuses on the central idea
- 1 Inadequately develops central idea
  - Content does not focus on central idea
  - Details are too specific or too general

### ORGANIZATION

- 5 Divides central idea into supporting ideas well
  - Arranges material in an effective sequence
  - Divides topic effectively into paragraphs
  - Makes suitable connections between ideas
  - Provides a clear introduction and conclusion
- 3 Divides central ideas into supporting details
  - Generally arranges material sequentially
  - Attempts to divide topic into paragraphs
  - Makes suitable connections between ideas
  - Provides a weak instruction and conclusion
- 1 Ineffectively divides central ideas into supporting details
  - Arranges material in a confusing sequence
  - Does not use paragraphing successfully
  - Does not connect ideas effectively
  - Lacks introductions and/or conclusion

## IN DEPTH/DIVERGENT THINKING

- 5 Paper is unique in its approach
  - Utilizes higher level thinking process analysis, synthesis, evaluations, application
- 3 Successful but ordinary approach to the subject
  - Remains at knowledge and understanding levels of thinking
- 1 Obvious and routine in approach to subject

## CONTENT SUMMARY

5	3	1	Central Idea
5	3	1	Relevant Information
5	3	1	Organization
5	3	1	In Depth / Div. Thinking

CONTENT TOTAL

## MECHANICS

### SENTENCES

- 5 Sentence construction adds to readability
  - Writes complete sentences
  - Structures sentences clearly
  - Uses a variety of sentence forms
- 3 Sentence constructions does not interfere with readability
  - Usually writes complete sentences
  - Usually structures sentences clearly
- 1 Sentence constructions makes paper difficult to read

### USAGE

- 5 Employs appropriate usage
  - Uses appropriate subject/verb & pronoun / antecedent agreement
  - Uses consistent verb tense
  - Effectively uses adjectives and verbs
- 3 Usually employs appropriate usage
  - Usually uses appropriate subject / verb & pronoun / antecedent agreement
  - Usually uses consistent verb tense
  - Usually uses modifiers effectively
- 1 Usage errors interfere with meaning

**EVALUATING STUDENT WORK**

\_\_\_ Makes frequent errors in subject / verb and pro-noun / antecedent agreement

**PUNCTUATION**

- 5 Uses correct & appropriate punctuation
- 3 Usually uses punctuation marks correctly
- 1 Inappropriate punctuation marks

**CAPITALIZATION**

- 5 Appropriately observes capitalization rules
- 3 Usually observes capitalization rules
- 1 Frequently makes errors in capitalization

**SPELLING**

- 5 All words spelled correctly
- 3 Usually spells words correctly
- 1 Frequently makes errors in spelling

**LANGUAGE VARIETY & PRECISION**

- 5 Chooses words precisely
  - \_\_\_ Uses variety in word choices
  - \_\_\_ Uses language that is alive and vivid
  - \_\_\_ Uses words that are appropriate to the audience
- 3 Generally selects appropriate words
  - \_\_\_ Usually uses a variety in word choice
  - \_\_\_ Occasionally lacks precision in word-choice
  - \_\_\_ Limits uses of cliches and slang
- 1 Demonstrates an inadequate vocabulary
  - \_\_\_ Frequently repeats words unnecessarily
  - \_\_\_ Frequently uses language inappropriate to the audience
  - \_\_\_ Frequently omits words that affect meaning

**MECHANICS SUMMARY**

5	3	1	Sentences
5	3	1	Usage
5	3	1	Punctuation
5	3	1	Capitalization
5	3	1	Spelling
5	3	1	Lang. Variety & Precision
			___ MECHANICS TOTAL

**APPEARANCE**

- 5 Contributes to readability
  - \_\_\_ Uses correct format
  - \_\_\_ Writes clearly and legibly
- 3 Does not interfere with readability
  - \_\_\_ Uses prescribed format with few errors
  - \_\_\_ Generally writes clearly and legibly
- 1 Makes paper difficult to read
  - \_\_\_ Fails to follow prescribed format
  - \_\_\_ Writes illegibly

**APPEARANCE**

5      3      1      Readability

**COMPOSITION FINAL GRADE**

\_\_\_\_\_ CONTENT

\_\_\_\_\_ MECHANICS

\_\_\_\_\_ APPEARANCE

\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL /divide by 55 possible

\_\_\_\_\_ FINAL GRADE

Comments:

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

**SCORING WORKSHEET**

# Composition Assignment

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Composition Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Suggested Criteria: Select 10 criteria from the list below. Write them on the graph and assign a value. Tally the columns and use the conversion table to assign a score. One strategy is to provide this scoring worksheet to the student before the assignment. With the criteria spelled out, the student can carefully work on the items that will be used to score the work.

- well-developed introduction
- easy to follow organization
- variety of sentence patterns used
- satisfying conclusion
- all key points are related to topic
- main point supported with detail
- correct grammar and structure used
- expresses creative thought
- sentences flow well together
- details are relevant to key points
- paragraph construction is correct
- quotes others appropriately
- well-developed body
- well-developed conclusion
- expresses thought in own words
- punctuation & spelling are correct
- attractive appearance and layout
- demonstrates clear thinking
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- other \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria: Select 10 criteria from the "Suggested Criteria" above. Write them on the lines below and assign a value.	NOT Done at All 0	Does Not Meet Standards 1	Meets the Standards 2	Goes Beyond the Standards 3	Absolutely Excellent 4
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
Totals (total each column)					

CONVERSION TABLE	RAW SCORE	% SCORE
	40	= 100 %
	35 - 39	= 95 %
	31 - 34	= 90 %
	26 - 30	= 85 %
	21 - 25	= 80 %
	16 - 20	= 75 %
	13 - 15	= 70 %
	9 - 12	= 65 %
	5 - 8	= 60 %

RAW SCORE: Grand Total of all Columns = \_\_\_\_\_

FINAL SCORE: Percentage Score Awarded = \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**EVALUATING STUDENT WORK**

# Research Paper Evaluation

by Maureen Marchetti Martin

Try using this form to grade a more formal research paper. These point values total a maximum of 100.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Composition Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Required items	Possible total points	Points earned this time
Title page	3	_____
Outline	7	_____
Introductory paragraph and presentation of the thesis	10	_____
Body of the paper	30	_____
Conclusion paragraph	10	_____
In-text citation or End Notes	10	_____
Works Cited Page or Bibliography	10	_____
Mechanics (grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation)	10	_____
Logical organization and presentation of the ideas	10	_____
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>100</b>	_____

Comments / Suggestions

---

---

---

---

---

Signature of the Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

© 1999 Maureen Marchetti Martin. Permission is granted to the original purchasers of this book to copy this form and use it for members of their families. All other rights reserved.

**SCORING WORKSHEET**

# Research Paper

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Suggested Criteria: Select 10 criteria from the list below. Write them on the graph and assign a value. Tally the columns and use the conversion table to assign a score. One strategy is to provide this scoring worksheet to the student before the assignment. With the criteria spelled out, the student can carefully work on the items that will be used to score the work.

- interest-catching introduction
  - detail of content
  - visual appeal
  - creatively written
  - followed directions
  - accurate information
  - overall logical structure
- good organization
  - original writing
  - bibliography
  - quotes others appropriately
  - good mechanics (grammar, punctuation)
  - documentation
- easy to understand
  - issues or topic clearly developed
  - conclusive summary
  - other \_\_\_\_\_
  - other \_\_\_\_\_
  - other \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria: Select 10 criteria from the "Suggested Criteria" above. Write them on the lines below and assign a value.	NOT Done at All 0	Does Not Meet Standards 1	Meets the Standards 2	Goes Beyond the Standards 3	Absolutely Excellent 4
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
Totals (total each column)					

CONVERSION TABLE	RAW SCORE	% SCORE
	40	= 100 %
	35 - 39	= 95 %
	31 - 34	= 90 %
	26 - 30	= 85 %
	21 - 25	= 80 %
	16 - 20	= 75 %
	13 - 15	= 70 %
	9 - 12	= 65 %
	5 - 8	= 60 %

RAW SCORE: Grand Total of all Columns = \_\_\_\_\_

FINAL SCORE: Percentage Score Awarded = \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_