WIDA Writing Scoring Scale
Grades 1–12

Use this scoring scale to score writing responses for **WIDA Screener** only. The score points described below are **not** equivalent to WIDA English language proficiency levels.

Score point	Descriptors
5+	**Score Point 6** D: Sophisticated organization of text that clearly demonstrates an overall sense of unity throughout, tailored to context (e.g., purpose, situation, and audience) S: Purposeful use of a variety of sentence structures that are essentially error–free W: Precise use of vocabulary with just the right word in just the right place **Score Point 5** D: Strong organization of text that supports an overall sense of unity, appropriate to context (e.g., purpose, situation, and audience) S: A variety of sentence structures with very few grammatical errors W: A wide range of vocabulary, used appropriately and with ease
4+	
3+	**Score Point 4** D: Organized text that presents a clear progression of ideas, demonstrating an awareness of context (e.g., purpose, situation, and audience) S: Complex and some simple sentence structures, containing occasional grammatical errors that don't generally interfere with comprehensibility W: A variety of vocabulary beyond the stimulus and prompt, generally conveying the intended meaning **Score Point 3** D: Text that shows developing organization including the use of elaboration and detail, though the progression of ideas may not always be clear S: Simple and some complex sentence structures, whose meaning may be obscured by noticeable grammatical errors W: Some vocabulary beyond the stimulus and prompt, although usage is noticeably awkward at times

2+	**Score Point 2** D: Text that shows emerging organization of ideas but with heavy dependence on the stimulus and prompt and/or resembles a list of simple sentences (which may be linked by simple connectors) S: Simple sentence structures; meaning is frequently obscured by noticeable grammatical errors when attempting beyond simple sentences W: Vocabulary primarily drawn from the stimulus and prompt
1+	**Score Point 1** D: Minimal text that represents an idea or ideas S: Primarily words, chunks of language, and short phrases rather than complete sentences W: Distinguishable English words that are often limited to high frequency words or reformulated expressions from the stimulus and prompt

D: Discourse Level   S: Sentence Level   W: Word/Phrase Level

Scoring process

The 11 possible score points are as follows:

1   1+   2   2+   3   3+   4   4+   5   5+   6

After reading the entire response, make an initial decision about which score point best captures the response as a whole (e.g., Score Point 3). Then, check the three descriptors (discourse, sentence, and word/phrase) for that score point.

- If all three descriptors are a good fit for the response, award the whole score point (e.g., Score Point 3).

- If there is clear evidence that one or two descriptors at a higher score point are a better fit, award a plus score point (e.g., Score Point 3+).

- If there is clear evidence that one or two descriptors at a lower score point are a better fit, go down one score point and award a plus score point (e.g., Score Point 2+).

Additional scoring rules

Nonscorable: The response is blank; consists only of verbatim copied text; consists only of text that is completely off task; or is entirely in a language other than English.

Completely off-task response: The entire response shows no understanding of or interaction with the prompt. It may be a memorized, previously practiced response or appear to answer another, unrelated prompt. A response that is entirely off task is **nonscorable**.

Completely off-topic response: The entire response shows a misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the prompt. An off-topic response is related to the prompt, but does not seem to address it as intended. However, the response is clearly not a memorized, previously practiced response. These responses are scored in their entirety using the scoring scale; however, **the maximum holistic score for a completely off-topic response is 2+.**

Partially off-task response: The response contains both off-task and on-task writing. These responses are scored by ignoring the off-task portion (which may be memorized and previously practiced) and scoring only the on-task portion using the scoring scale.

Partially off-topic response: The response contains both off-topic and on-topic writing (i.e., a portion of the response shows a misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the prompt). These responses are scored in their entirety using the scoring scale.

Glossary

Awareness of audience: Words, sentence structures, and text forms that are deliberately selected to suit the intended readers of a response

Awareness of purpose: Words, sentence structures, and text forms that are deliberately selected to serve the purpose of a writing task

Awareness of situation: Words, sentence structures, and text forms that are deliberately selected for the situation in which the writing task is taking place

Chunks of language: Memorized strings of very simple language

Complex sentence structures: Sentences with more than a subject, verb, and possible object (for more information, see the *Sentence Complexity Guidelines)*

Discourse: Extended written language conveying multiple connected ideas

Minimal text: Letters, words, or chunks of language

Overall sense of unity: Unity within text and across ideas

Reformulated expressions: Paraphrasing and adaptation of language used in the prompt and stimulus

Simple sentence structures: Subject and verb, may include a direct or indirect object (for more information, see the *Sentence Complexity Guidelines*)

Vocabulary: Words and phrases