ACT College & Career Readiness Standards

▶ WRITING

ACT®

These Standards describe what students who score in specific score ranges on the writing section of the ACT® college readiness assessment are likely to know and be able to do.

SCORE RANGE	Ideas and Analysis (I&A)
3–4	**I&A 201.** Understanding the task and writing with purpose A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Generate a thesis that is unclear or not entirely related to the given issue — Respond weakly to other perspectives on the issue **I&A 202.** Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Provide analysis that is incomplete or largely irrelevant
5–6	**I&A 301.** Understanding the task and writing with purpose A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Generate a somewhat clear thesis that establishes a perspective on a contemporary issue — Respond to other perspectives on the issue **I&A 302.** Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Establish a limited or tangential context for analysis — Provide analysis that is simplistic or somewhat unclear
7–8	**I&A 401.** Understanding the task and writing with purpose A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Generate a clear thesis that establishes a perspective on a contemporary issue — Engage with other perspectives on the issue **I&A 402.** Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Establish and employ a relevant context for analysis — Recognize implications, complexities and tensions, and/or underlying values and assumptions
9–10	**I&A 501.** Understanding the task and writing with purpose A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Generate a precise thesis that establishes a perspective on a contemporary issue — Engage productively with other perspectives on the issue **I&A 502.** Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Establish and employ a thoughtful context for analysis — Address implications, complexities and tensions, and/or underlying values and assumptions
11–12	**I&A 601.** Understanding the task and writing with purpose A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Generate a nuanced, precise thesis that establishes a perspective on a contemporary issue — Engage critically with other perspectives on the issue **I&A 602.** Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Establish and employ an insightful context for analysis — Examine implications, complexities and tensions, and/or underlying values and assumptions

Scores below 3 do not permit useful generalizations about students' writing abilities.

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SCORE RANGE	Development and Support (D&S)
3–4	**D&S 201.** Building and strengthening the argument A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Arrive at a weak understanding of the issue and differing perspectives on it through inadequate reasoning and examples — Offer a rationale that fails to clarify the argument — Provide elaboration of ideas and analysis that is illogical, disjointed, or circular
5–6	**D&S 301.** Building and strengthening the argument A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make use of mostly relevant reasoning and examples to support the thesis and arrive at a general or simplistic understanding of the issue — Offer a rationale that largely clarifies the argument — Provide elaboration of ideas and analysis that is somewhat repetitive or imprecise
7–8	**D&S 401.** Building and strengthening the argument A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make use of clear reasoning and examples to arrive at an understanding of the issue and differing perspectives on it — Adequately convey reasons why the argument is worth considering — Extend ideas and analysis by considering factors that complicate the writer's own perspective — Anticipate objections by qualifying the argument
9–10	**D&S 501.** Building and strengthening the argument A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make purposeful use of reasoning and examples to support the thesis and arrive at a deeper understanding of the issue — Capably convey reasons why the argument is worth considering — Enrich ideas and analysis by considering factors that complicate the writer's own perspective — Anticipate objections by qualifying the argument
11–12	**D&S 601.** Building and strengthening the argument A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make skillful use of reasoning and examples to broaden the context for analysis, support the thesis, and arrive at deeper insight into the issue — Effectively convey reasons why the argument is worth considering — Enrich and strengthen ideas and analysis by considering factors that complicate the writer's own perspective — Anticipate objections by qualifying the argument

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SCORE RANGE	Organization (ORG)
3–4	**ORG 201. Grouping and connecting ideas** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Group ideas with little consistency or clarity — Use misleading and poorly formed transitions **ORG 202. Employing an organizational strategy** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Provide a minimal organizational structure in which some ideas are grouped locally
5–6	**ORG 301. Grouping and connecting ideas** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Group most ideas logically — Use transitions between and within paragraphs to clarify some relationships among ideas **ORG 302. Employing an organizational strategy** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Provide a basic organizational structure are grouped locally
7–8	**ORG 401. Grouping and connecting ideas** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Group and sequence ideas logically — Use transitions between and within paragraphs to clarify relationships among ideas **ORG 402. Employing an organizational strategy** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make use of an emergent controlling idea or purpose to shape the argument
9–10	**ORG 501. Grouping and connecting ideas** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Group and sequence ideas logically to increase the effectiveness of the argument — Use transitions between and within paragraphs to consistently clarify relationships among ideas **ORG 502. Employing an organizational strategy** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make use of a controlling idea or purpose to unify the argument
11–12	**ORG 601. Grouping and connecting ideas** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Group and sequence ideas logically, creating a progression that increases the effectiveness of the argument — Use transitions between and within paragraphs to strengthen the relationships among ideas **ORG 602. Employing an organizational strategy** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make use of a controlling idea or purpose to unify and focus the argument

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SCORE RANGE	Language Use and Conventions (L&C)
3–4	**L&C 201. Using language to enhance meaning** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make word choices that are rudimentary and frequently imprecise — Make stylistic choices, including voice, tone, and diction, that are inconsistent and are not always appropriate for the given writing purpose and topic **L&C 202. Applying the conventions of standard written English** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Compose sentences that sometimes have clear structures — Produce writing that has distracting errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics and only sometimes conveys meaning clearly
5–6	**L&C 301. Using language to enhance meaning** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make word choices that are general and occasionally imprecise — Make stylistic choices, including voice, tone, and diction, that are not always appropriate for the given writing purpose and topic **L&C 302. Applying the conventions of standard written English** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Compose sentences that usually have clear structures but show little variety — Produce writing that has distracting errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics but, in most instances, conveys meaning clearly
7–8	**L&C 401. Using language to enhance meaning** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make adequate word choices that convey the argument with clarity — Make stylistic choices, including voice, tone, and diction, that are appropriate for the given writing purpose and topic **L&C 402. Applying the conventions of standard written English** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Compose sentences with clear and occasionally varied structures — Produce writing that has errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics but conveys meaning clearly
9–10	**L&C 501. Using language to enhance meaning** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make precise word choices that work in service of the argument — Make stylistic choices, including voice, tone, and diction, that are effective for the given writing purpose and topic **L&C 502. Applying the conventions of standard written English** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Compose sentences with clear and often varied structures — Produce writing that has only minor errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
11–12	**L&C 601. Using language to enhance meaning** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Make skillful and precise word choices that enhance the argument — Make stylistic choices, including voice, tone, and diction, that are strategic and effective for the given writing purpose and topic **L&C 602. Applying the conventions of standard written English** A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: — Compose sentences with clear and consistently varied structures — Produce writing that is free of all but a few minor errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

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