

PSSA 6–8 ARGUMENTATIVE SCORING GUIDELINES

Score Point	Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharp, distinct claim made convincing through a thoughtful and substantiated argument with evident awareness of task, purpose, counterargument,* and audience • Effective organizational strategies and structures that logically support reasons and evidence • Substantive, specific, and relevant content that demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose • Thorough elaboration that includes a clear position that is consistently supported with precise and relevant evidence • Effective transitions that connect and clarify ideas and concepts • Established and consistently maintained formal style with effective control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety • Consistent control of sentence formation • Few errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear claim made convincing through a credible and substantiated argument with general awareness of task, purpose, counterargument,* and audience • Adequate organizational strategies and structures that support reasons and evidence • Adequate and relevant content that demonstrates an understanding of the purpose • Sufficient elaboration that includes a clear position that is supported with relevant evidence • Appropriate transitions that connect and clarify ideas and concepts • Established and maintained formal style with appropriate control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety • Adequate control of sentence formation • Some errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claim may lack a credible and/or substantiated argument; limited awareness of task, purpose, counterargument,* and audience • Inadequate organizational strategies and structures that ineffectively support reasons and evidence • Inadequate, vague content that demonstrates a weak understanding of the purpose • Insufficient elaboration that includes an underdeveloped position supported with little relevant evidence • Inconsistent transitions that somewhat connect ideas and concepts • Inconsistently maintained formal style with limited control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety • Inconsistent control of sentence formation • Errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal evidence of a claim that lacks a credible and/or substantiated argument with little awareness of task, purpose, counterargument,* and audience • Minimal organizational strategies and structures • Minimal content that demonstrates little or no understanding of the purpose • Undeveloped position with little support; may be a bare list • Minimal transitions that may or may not connect ideas and concepts • Ineffective formal style with little control of language • Minimal control of sentence formation • Many errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning

* Counterargument is not required at grade 6.