

4th grade Nevada History Discussion Lesson Template

Topic: Statehood

Lesson Authors: Tracy Cecil, Jennifer Farrow and Keta Cline

Related Essential Questions:

How do physical geography and natural resources effect the settlement of people and the development of culture?

Related Nevada History Chapters: Nevada Our Home: Chapter 7, Pages 126-131

NV Social Studies Standards (Geography, Economics, Civics, History):

H2.0

Students understand the people, events, ideas and conflicts that lead to the evolution of nations, empires, distinctive cultures and political and economic ideas.

H3.0

Students understand how social ideas and individual action lead to social, political, economic, and technological change.

Literacy Standards:

RI.4.1-4.5

W4.1

SL4.1-4.3

Brief Overview of Lesson & Guiding Discussion Question:

Was President Lincoln influencing Nevada to become a state?

Was President Lincoln's decision to make Nevada a state self-serving or beneficial to the whole country?

What would have happened if Nevada had never become a state?

Brief Historical Background:

It is believed that Nevada had a major role in the Civil War. The claim that Nevada's mineral wealth contributed to its statehood is one of the most misconceived stories about Nevada.

Included Materials:**Lesson Sequence:**

Approximate Time Frame	What is the teacher doing?	What are students doing?	Notes (additional scaffolds, logistical considerations, room arrangements, grouping, etc.)
Day 1 30 minutes	Teacher will show a video from www.history.com titled: "How Nevada Got Its Shape".	Filling out "The How Nevada Got Its Shape" note taker.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •May show video twice, and/or stop and start as needed. •After video, share note taker with partner and fill in any information gaps that were missed.
Day 2 60 minutes	<p>1. Discuss academic content vocabulary for the article: "Why Did Nevada Become a State?"</p> <p>Vocabulary: political, economic, reelection, territory, statehood.</p> <p>2. Pass out the article.</p> <p>3. Teacher leads discussion reviewing annotated notes. Students are placed into cooperative groups of 3 or 4.</p>	<p>1. Discussing vocabulary using vocabulary handout.</p> <p>2. Students follow along while teacher reads article aloud. Students will then read with a partner, re-read the article and then use classroom annotation guide or "Super Annotator".</p> <p>3. Each group will then create a T-chart on butcher paper categorizing information from the article into fact or fiction.</p> <p>4. After 20 minutes of work time, groups will share posters with the class.</p>	See attached handout for "Super Annotator".
Day 3 45 -60 minutes	<p>1. Discuss academic content vocabulary for the article: "Nevada's Statehood: Lincoln's Halloween Treat."</p> <p>Vocabulary: claim, dominated, appointment, staunch, ally</p> <p>2. Using the divided up sections of the article, follow a standard jigsaw lesson. Having each group determine the main idea of each section with one or two supporting details.</p>	<p>1. Discussing academic content vocabulary handout.</p> <p>2. Students read the article independently using their annotation guide.</p>	1. Prior to reading, cut copies of the article into sections that work for the number of groups you want to have.
Day 4 45-60 minutes	Teacher posts "Fishbowl" question(s) on board. These are located under the "Guiding Discussion Questions" part of the lesson plan (see above).	Students will jot down the answer to the question posted on the board or take notes to	<p>Teacher may want to gather Post-it notes for note taking.</p> <p>Teacher may want to arrange chairs into the "Fishbowl"</p>

	<p>Teacher gives students opportunity to answer posted question or jot down notes to use as reference during the “Fishbowl” activity</p> <p>Teacher is dividing students into inner and outer circles of the fishbowl.</p> <p>Teacher then follows the attached “Fishbowl” instructions to complete the activity.</p>	<p>help with discussion during the activity using the 2 articles from the previous days.</p> <p>Students will have a classroom discussion regarding the posted prompt for the activity.</p>	<p>discussion formation prior to class time beginning.</p>
<p>Day 5-7</p> <p>Time spent is at teacher discretion.</p>	<p>Teacher is having students use the standard writing process to write a persuasive response to the writing prompt on the paper.</p>	<p>Students will use the writing process to create their piece of writing.</p> <p>Students will use the Student Guide for Opinion Writing during the revising/editing process</p>	<p>Copy the writing task prompt and Student Guide for Opinion Writing checklist for each student.</p> <p>How fast you move through the writing process is at your discretion.</p>

Name: _____

How Nevada Got Its Shape • Video Notes

Draw the boundaries of Nevada in 1850 using red marker or colored pencil.

Next draw the boundaries of Nevada in 1864 using a blue marker or colored pencil.



1. _____ people were required for Nevada to become a state.
2. How many people did Nevada actually have? _____
3. How many more people did Nevada need to be granted statehood? _____
4. What were the two reasons President Lincoln wanted Nevada to become a state?
 1. _____
 2. _____
5. What was lacking for Nevada to become a state? _____
6. Who did Arizona side with and how did that affect how the land was divided?

“Why Did Nevada Become A State”

By Guy Rocha

Political-- adjective- having to do with the government

Economic—adjective – having to do with making, distributing and using money and resources

Reelection--verb – being elected again for the same position

Territory—noun—an area of land ruled by a state before it becomes officially a state

Statehood—noun—when a territory becomes a state

Why Did Nevada Become A State?

by

Guy Rocha

Nevada State Archivist

Who hasn't heard ad nauseam that our state was admitted to the Union on October 31, 1864 because its silver and gold production were needed to help finance the Civil War. Anyone who has attended Nevada's schools has heard the story from a teacher or read it in a textbook. It's a wonderful tale, but nothing could be farther from the truth. Our state's history has too often been embellished and transposed into myth, and the claim of Nevada's mineral wealth triggering statehood ranks as one of the most pervasive fictional stories in the annuals of the Silver State. The reasons for Nevada's statehood were political, not economic. Earlier writers were so caught up in romanticizing Nevada's role in the Civil War they decided to re-invent history.

FACT: Nevada Territory was a federal territory, a part of the Union, and President Abraham Lincoln appointed Governor James Warren Nye, a former Police Commissioner in New York City, to ensure that it stayed that way. Governor Nye put down any demonstration in support of the Confederacy, and there were some. The federal government bought much of Nevada's silver and gold bullion to support its currency. What federal taxes there were at the time that could be effectively collected went into Union coffers. Therefore, Nevada's creation as a TERRITORY on March 2, 1861 by the United States Congress ensured that its riches would help the Union and not the Confederate cause.

FACT: By the time Congress approved an Enabling Act for Nevada on March 21, 1864, the Civil War was winding down. The Union had won decisive victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, and the South was in shambles. President Lincoln sought reelection and faced a three-way race against General John C. Fremont, the Radical Republican candidate, and General George B. McClellan, a Democrat--he had earlier in the war relieved both generals of their commands. New states, and their popular and electoral vote, were needed to reelect Lincoln in support of his moderate, reconstruction policies for the South. Among the proposed policies was the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery. If Nevada were a state, it could ratify the amendment and help in the passage of the landmark humanitarian legislation.

FICTION: Nevada was singled out to help save the Union. Actually Enabling acts for three territories, Colorado, Nebraska, and Nevada, were passed by Congress in March 1864. Nebraska's constitutional convention voted against statehood, while Colorado Territory's voters did not approve the proposed state constitution. Thus, Nevada Territory was the only territory to come to the support of President Lincoln. Ironically, shortly after Nevadans voted 8-1 in support of the state constitution, General Fremont dropped out of the presidential race, and Nevada was no longer critical to a Lincoln win. President Lincoln proclaimed Nevada a state on October 31, a week before the national election, and then went on to carry Nevada in a relatively easy win over General McClellan.

42

43 **FICTION:** While it is true that Nevadans gave the beleaguered president three Republican
44 Congressman to help rebuild the nation, ironically our two U.S. Senators James W. Nye and
45 William M. Stewart arrived in Washington, D.C. too late to sign the 13th Amendment.
46 Congressman Henry C. Worthington did sign the amendment, and it was soon ratified by
47 Nevada. Senator Stewart would prove to be a key player in the drafting of the 15th Amendment
48 giving Black males the right to vote.

49

50 So Nevada was, in fact, the "Battle Born" state because of its entrance into the Union during the
51 Civil War, but not for the reasons we find in the popular mythology. Historians recognize that
52 the discovery of the Comstock Lode in 1859 was one of many factors influencing Nevada's
53 territorial status. However, making the leap to statehood because wealth from Nevada's mines
54 was desperately needed to help the Union win the Civil War keeps stubbornly recurring as
55 perhaps our state's #1 legend.

56

57 The Exhibit Gallery of the **Nevada State Library and Archives**, where the original State
58 Constitution is displayed, has an informative video entitled "Battle Born" which creatively
59 captures the reasons for granting Nevada statehood in 1864.







It's a bird! It's a plane! IT'S SUPER ANNOTATOR!

She can analyze,
synthesize,
evaluate!
But most of all,
she can ANNOTATE!



Don't let her witty
charm fool you! She is
the leader of a gang of
superheroes who
regularly risk their lives
in the great Jungle of
Primary Sources!

HUDDLE UP SUPERHEROES! IT'S TIME TO SUPER-ANNOTATE!

Common Core Anchor Standard	Annotation Guide (If different colors help you organize your thoughts, please use them!)
Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings.	Circle words  that are unknown or that might need explanation to others. Double circle words that might have a unique connotation or meaning. If necessary, comment in the margins.
Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and make inferences from it.	Consider this the "huh, what?" section. Put a  next to areas where you say, "huh, what?" and write a brief description of your inference in the margin.
Determine central ideas of a text and summarize the key details and ideas.	1) At the top, write down a two-six word "central idea" of the document. 2) At the bottom, write a short summary explaining the main idea of the document (no more than two sentences).
Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevancy and sufficiency of the evidence.	Underline each specific argument or claim in the text. Is the argument or claim valid and relevant? On a scale of 1-3 (one is very relevant and valid and three is not relevant or valid), rate the evidence and explain. (e.g.  = 1, very historically accurate and persuasive)
Assess how point of view or purposes shapes the content and style of a text.	When a word or phrase helps you understand the author's point of view, draw a talking bubble  in the margin and write a few words to describe the point of view.
Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to compare the approaches of the authors.	1) Does this relate to something else you know? If so, place a  next to the section and write the connection in the margin. 2) Draw arrows  between your two documents when there is a connection. Write a phrase that describes the connection.

ACCOUNTABILITY & SHARED KNOWLEDGE

When the annotation process is complete, group will exchange materials with another group (so that each group is now looking at an unfamiliar text). Ask each group to compare the annotated version with the original, and then in discussion consider the following questions:

- ▶ How much difference did the annotations make to the comprehensibility of the text? What insights were possible with the annotated version that was not possible with the original?
- ▶ What kinds of annotations were most helpful? Which ones were least helpful? What is the overall effect of the annotation on the text? How does it alter your impression of the text?

Nevada's Statehood: Lincoln's Halloween Treat

October 31, 2014 By [Michael Green](#)

Nevada's road to statehood began in June 1859 with the discovery of a large vein of gold and silver near Virginia City. Two Irish prospectors, Patrick McLaughlin and Peter O'Riley, deserved the credit, but another miner in the area, Henry Comstock, popped up and claimed that they had found it on his claim. With a lack of local government and certainty about who owned which claim, and where claims started and ended, they agreed to go in together. They and three other partners they picked up later sold their shares for the five figures—and the lode that bears Comstock's name went on to produce hundreds of millions of dollars.

With thousands pouring into the area, Nevada became a territory on March 2, 1861, two days before Lincoln's inauguration. The presence of an increasing population affected this development, but so did the secession of seven southern states, whose members of Congress, with the exception of Senator Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, left the Union with them. The decades-long debate over slavery in the territories had, at least for the moment, ended, and a northern-dominated Congress created three new entities—Dakota, Colorado, and Nevada—without even referring to slavery.

One logical reason for that omission was that Lincoln would send anti-slavery leadership to those new territories. The new president struggled a great deal with patronage appointments, and sent several supporters or friends of supporters to Nevada territory. He named James W. Nye, a staunchly antislavery minor cog in Secretary of State William Henry Seward's New York machine, the governor. Orion Clemens, who had read law in the office of Attorney General Edward Bates, arrived ahead of Nye as Territorial secretary. His appointment prompted his younger brother Samuel to head west; he hoped to get rich from mining, but instead gave it up for journalism and settled for being Mark Twain.

Nye concentrated on setting up the Territorial government and achieving statehood. As early as December 1862, the Territorial legislature set a vote for statehood to be held in September. In 1863, Nevadans voted by a 4-1 margin to hold a constitutional convention that November.

34 But economic and political power became an obstacle to statehood. Nevada leaders were
35 divided over whether the gross or net proceeds of mining should be taxed. Convention
36 chairman John Wesley North, a Territorial judge who later helped found Northfield,
37 Minnesota, and Riverside, California, wanted to tax mines like any other property.
38 Delegate William Stewart, an attorney who represented the corporations that increasingly
39 dominated the Comstock Lode, advocated taxing net proceeds, after depreciation and
40 deductions. The convention went along with North.

41 For their part, Stewart and his allies declared that the legislature would allow them to tax
42 mining as they wished—a position that, as one of Stewart’s opponents said, “stunk in the
43 nostrils of the people.” Nor did it help that North and Stewart were fighting over the
44 interpretation of mining law and for control of the Union Party in the state. By the time
45 Nevadans voted on their constitution in January 1864, they had had enough and rejected
46 it by a 4-1 margin.

47 Three weeks after the vote, Senator James Doolittle of Wisconsin introduced an enabling
48 act for Nevada statehood that Lincoln signed on March 21, 1864. The next constitutional
49 convention would meet with the legal imprimatur the previous gathering had neglected to
50 obtain. The delegates who met later that year agreed on taxing net proceeds and to limit
51 the percentage, a break for the mining industry that it still enjoys. Without the
52 controversy, voters approved the proposed constitution on September 7, 1864, 10,375-
53 1,284.

54 But Nevada’s troubles were far from over. Nye mailed the constitution to Washington,
55 D.C., but it never arrived. Seward urged Lincoln to issue a statehood proclamation
56 without it, but Lincoln refused. When Seward informed Nye, he ordered the document
57 telegraphed to the capital—at 18,000 words and a cost of more than \$4,300, the longest
58 telegram sent to date. Lincoln received the transcription and declared Nevada a state on
59 October 31, 1864.

60 For Nevadans to want statehood was one thing; for Lincoln and Seward and their allies to
61 support it was another thing entirely. For many years, the myth has been popular that
62 Lincoln wanted statehood for Nevada so that he could have the Comstock Lode’s gold
63 and silver to help finance the Union war effort. But Nevada was a Union Territory. If
64 anything, Territorial status gave Lincoln more control over its monies than he would have
65 if it became a state.

66 Rather, what mattered most were politics and policy. During the summer of 1864,
67 Lincoln had been certain that he would lose his bid for reelection to Democrat George B.
68 McClellan, his onetime general-in-chief: the Union was faring poorly in the war, his
69 party leaders were doubtful that he could win, and Lincoln was trying to become the first
70 president since Andrew Jackson in 1832 to win a second term. One night in October, he
71 made a list of the states and their electoral votes. It came out to a victory, but by a margin

72 of 117-114. Later, someone—apparently Major Thomas T. Eckert of the War Department
73 telegraph office—added Nevada’s three electoral votes to the Lincoln column to give him
74 120.

75 Also, Lincoln and his party realized that they would need support for the Thirteenth
76 Amendment to end slavery—in the House, where they had fallen short of the two-thirds
77 majority required, and when the amendment went to the states, with three-quarters of
78 them needed to ratify it. Nevada’s votes might be important.

79 Then, presuming that Lincoln won reelection and continued the war until the
80 Confederacy had surrendered and the Thirteenth Amendment had become a reality, what
81 would become of the millions of newly freed slaves and of the southerners who had tried
82 to keep them in bondage? Nevada’s members of Congress might be helpful.

83 These factors combined to turn Nevada into the “battle born” state, one of two created
84 under unusual circumstances during the Civil War; the other, West Virginia, had seceded
85 from rebellious Virginia. Having achieved statehood, Nevada kept its end of the bargain.
86 On November 8, 1864, its voters supported Lincoln, but he received only two of the new
87 state’s electoral votes; the third elector was stuck in a blizzard and never made it to the
88 state capital. But Lincoln’s electoral majority was a whopping 212-21, so he survived
89 politically without Nevada.

90

91

Modified Fishbowl Strategy



1. Provide a common reading and background on an unresolved or controversial issue to the class. Utilize a reading strategy to help students to access the text and force them to choose quotes or facts from the text pertaining to the issue. Have students write down their interesting facts and quotes on post-it notes or small pieces of paper.
2. Make two to three circles in your classroom with +/- 5 chairs in each. The chairs will face inwards. Outside of each circle, make another circle of chairs.
 - a. The inner circle of chairs is the fishbowl and students in these chairs are very talkative, intelligent and scholarly fish.
 - b. The outer circle represents people who love to learn from their fish and provide them “fish food for thought.”
 - c. The teacher will choose one person from the outside circle to be the “fish trainer.” This person interjects only if the conversation gets off track. This person will rephrase the question and ask the fish to go back to their discussion.
3. **RULE:** Only students in the fishbowl (inner circle) are allowed to speak during this activity.
 - a. Students in the fishbowl engage in deliberation of an issue presented, as an open-ended question, by the teacher.
 - b. All participants must abide by the rules of civic discussion and common courtesy.
4. The outside circle has a responsibility of providing “food for thought” (strip of paper/post-it) with relevant information that can be used by the fish. For this reason, it can be very positive to pair students on the inside/outside of the circle so that someone with great confidence is on the outside helping the less confident “fish” on the inside.
5. Once a student in the circle has spoken twice, a student from outside the circle may tap that student on the shoulder and switch places with the student. The student on the outside **MUST TAP IN** after their inside partner has spoken four times. The student in the circle will exit to the outside observation seats. This process can continue throughout the discussion.
6. The teacher does not participate in the discussion except to provide a new question or to terminate an irrelevant, or inappropriate, line of discussion.
7. It is highly effective to have two separate (but related) discussion questions. After you have completed a fishbowl on one question, you can begin the next question by reversing the original groups. Fish become fish feeders and feeders become fish.
8. Including a written reflection piece is a great way to assess student learning.
9. Allowing small groups to bring all of their post-its to a table and co-write a piece demonstrating their understanding is also a great assessment and instructional tool.

Basic Discussion Rubric

Discussion Rubric	3	2	1	0
Substantive				
States and identifies issues.	Accurately states and identifies issues.	Accurately states an issue.	States a relevant factual, ethical, or definitional issue as a question.	Does not state any issues.
Uses foundational knowledge.	Accurately and expresses completely relevant foundational knowledge pertaining to the issues raised during the discussion.	Accurately expresses mostly relevant foundational knowledge pertaining to issues raised during the discussion.	Accurately expresses somewhat relevant foundational knowledge pertaining to an issue raised by someone else.	Does not express any relevant foundational knowledge.
Elaborates statements with explanations, reasons, or evidence.	Pursues an issue with more than one elaborated statements.	Pursues an issue with one elaborated statement.	Elaborates a statement with an explanation, reasons, or evidence.	Does not elaborate any issues.
Procedural				
Invites contributions from, and acknowledges statements of, others.	Engages others in the discussion by inviting their contributions and acknowledging their contributions.	Invites comments from others and does not acknowledge their statements.	Does not invite comments from others but allows others to speak. Does not acknowledge contributions from others.	Does not invite comments from others nor acknowledge their statements.
Challenges the accuracy, logic, relevance, or clarity of statements.	Constructively challenges the accuracy, clarity, relevance, or logic of statements made.	Responds in a civil manner to a statement made by someone else by challenging its accuracy, clarity, relevance, or logic.	Responds in a civil manner but does not challenge the accuracy, clarity, relevance, or logic of statements.	Does not respond in a civil manner in all conversations. Does not challenge the accuracy, clarity, relevance, or logic of statements.

2014 Opinion Writing Rubric (Grades 3-5)

	4	3	2	1
Statement of Purpose/Focus	<p>The response is fully sustained and consistently and purposefully focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> opinion is clearly stated, focused, and strongly maintained opinion is communicated clearly within the context 	<p>The response is adequately sustained and generally focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> opinion is clear and for the most part maintained, though some loosely related material may be present context provided for the claim is adequate 	<p>The response is somewhat sustained with some extraneous material or a minor drift in focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may be clearly focused on the opinion but is insufficiently sustained opinion on the issue may be unclear and unfocused 	<p>The response may be related to the purpose but may offer little or no focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may be very brief may have a major drift opinion may be confusing or ambiguous
Organization	<p>The response has a clear and effective organizational structure creating unity and completeness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective, consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies logical progression of ideas from beginning to end effective introduction and conclusion for audience and purpose 	<p>The response has a recognizable organizational structure, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end adequate introduction and conclusion 	<p>The response has an inconsistent organizational structure, and flaws are evident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inconsistent use of transitional strategies with little variety uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end conclusion and introduction, if present, are weak 	<p>The response has little or no discernible organizational structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> few or no transitional strategies are evident frequent extraneous ideas may intrude
Elaboration of Evidence	<p>The response provides thorough and convincing support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of evidence from sources is smoothly integrated, comprehensive, and relevant effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques 	<p>The response provides adequate support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes the use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some evidence from sources is integrated, though citations may be general or imprecise adequate use of some elaborative techniques 	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes partial or uneven use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence from sources is weakly integrated, and citations, if present, are uneven weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques 	<p>The response provides minimal support/evidence for the writer's opinion that includes little or no use of sources, facts, and details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of evidence from sources is minimal, absent, in error, or irrelevant
Language and Vocabulary	<p>The response clearly and effectively expresses ideas, using precise language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of academic and domain-specific vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose 	<p>The response adequately expresses ideas, employing a mix of precise with more general language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of domain-specific vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose 	<p>The response expresses ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of domain-specific vocabulary that may at times be inappropriate for the audience and purpose 	<p>The response expression of ideas is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses limited language or domain-specific vocabulary may have little sense of audience and purpose
Conventions	<p>The response demonstrates a strong command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> few, if any, errors in usage and sentence formation effective and consistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some errors in usage and sentence formation are present, but no systematic pattern of errors is displayed adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> frequent errors in usage may obscure meaning inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> errors are frequent and severe and meaning is often obscured

A response gets no credit (0) if it provides no evidence of the ability to [fill in with key language from the intended target].



This rubric was released by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium to help teachers, administrators, and policymakers better understand the Common Core Standards and prepare for the implementation of the Smarter Balanced assessments. The Nevada Department of Education has reformatted it to fit on one page.

Working Copy December 20, 2013

Grade 4

Student Guide for Opinion Writing

Statement of Purpose/Focus

- I clearly state my opinion.
- I maintain focus throughout my writing.
- I support my opinion with context.

Organization

- I clearly introduce my topic.
- I group related information in paragraphs.
- I organize my reasons and evidence from beginning to end.
- I use linking words and phrases that help connect my opinion and reasons.
- I include a concluding statement or section that is related to my opinion.
- I address audience and purpose in my introduction and conclusion.

Elaboration of Evidence

- I support my opinion with facts, details, and reasons.
- I include relevant evidence from sources.
- I include my sources.
- I use elaborative techniques that support my opinion.

Language and Vocabulary

- I express my ideas with academic vocabulary.
- I use domain-specific vocabulary.
- I use language appropriate for the audience and purpose.

Conventions

- I edit my paper for correct usage.
- I edit my paper for sentence formation.
- I edit my paper for correct punctuation.
- I edit my paper for correct capitalization.
- I edit my paper for correct spelling.