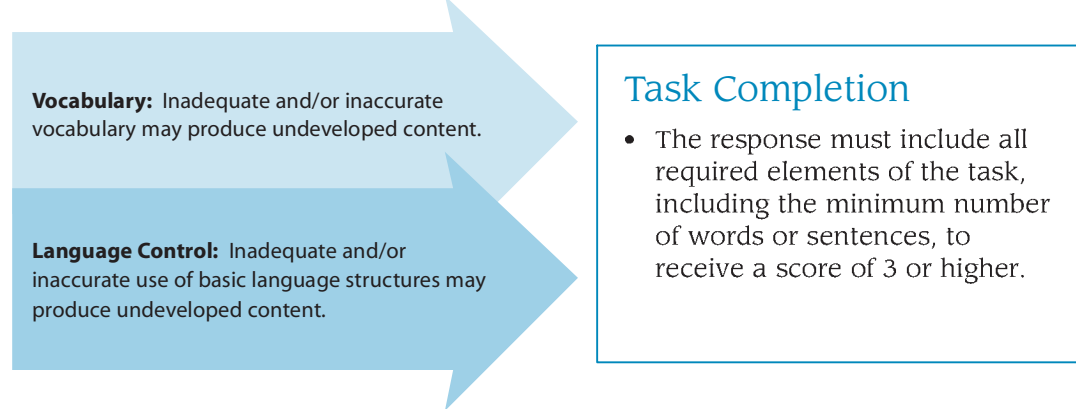


Upper Level Presentational (Writing) Explanation of Rubric

Task Completion and **Comprehensibility** are big picture domains which reflect the communication of the message. Consequently they are affected by level of discourse, vocabulary, and language control.

Task Completion

This domain measures how thoroughly the student completes the required task.



Each rating for this domain has particular characteristics:

1 Minimal completion of the task; content very superficial and/or repetitive.

- Response is mostly relevant but lacks appropriate details.
- A required portion of the task may be missing.
- Response may be unrelated to the assigned task.
- There may be very little ratable material.

2–3 Partial completion of the task; content superficial and/or repetitive.

- Response is relevant but may be repetitive.
- Some ideas are developed with appropriate details.
- A minor portion of the task may be missing.
- Response shows some organization.

4–5 Completion of the task; content appropriate; ideas adequately developed with some elaboration and detail.

- Response has sufficient information and/or detail.
- Response directly relates to the task as given.
- All required elements are present.
- Response shows organization.

6 Superior completion of the task; content rich; ideas well developed with some elaboration and detail.

- Student is able to provide substantial detail.
- Response includes much information related to the task.
- Response is well-organized and cohesive.



Comprehensibility

This domain measures how much interpretation is required by a native speaker of the language, although the reader may on occasion need to make a special effort to understand the message.

Level of Discourse: The use of appropriate cohesive devices facilitates comprehensibility.

Vocabulary: Inaccurate use of vocabulary and spelling which requires interpretation hinders comprehension.

Language Control: Errors in basic language structures may hinder comprehensibility when they require interpretation.

Comprehensibility

- Comprehensibility covers the big picture.
- Errors in language control and vocabulary may, but do not always, interfere with comprehensibility.
- Use of English *does* interfere with comprehensibility. The use of a word in English should be considered as a blank where nothing is said.
- A response which includes all the required elements yet is very short cannot receive a score higher than a 3 because the sample lacks sufficient evidence of communication.
- If a response is extremely short and/or repetitive, it can receive a score as low as 0.5.
- Organization, or lack thereof, may affect comprehensibility.

Each rating for this domain has particular characteristics:

1 Text somewhat comprehensible.

- Text is difficult to understand.
- Text frequently requires reader to “figure out” what the student is trying to say.
- Errors of vocabulary, grammar, and/or spelling may be impossible to decipher.

2 Text mostly comprehensible, requiring some interpretation on the part of the reader.

- Some parts of the text may still be incomprehensible.
- The reader should be able to “figure out” most of the text.

3 Text comprehensible, requiring minimal interpretation on the part of the reader.

- Reader may have to pause briefly in order to understand the text fully.
- Frequency of pauses does not interrupt the reader’s comprehension of the text.
- Text flows and shows some organization.

4 Text readily comprehensible, requiring no interpretation on the part of the reader.

- Reader should be able to understand all of the text with very brief or no pauses.
- Text flows in such a way that the reader can readily understand it.

Level of Discourse

This domain measures the degree of linguistic sophistication used to communicate ideas (not what is said, but *how* it is said). At this level, students report, narrate, and describe, using connected sentences, paragraph-length, and longer forms of discourse on topics of personal, school, community, and global interests. As students improve their level of discourse, the use of multi-clause sentences and a variety of cohesive devices* becomes more important.

***Cohesive devices** are described by ACTFL as follows: "These are words and phrases that link ideas and move forward the action in some form of logical narrative order, whether the 'narrative' is a story, a description, or a set of instructions. Adverbs and conjunctions serve most frequently as cohesive devices (words and phrases such as *and, but, because, suddenly, in the first place, however*). They permit logical sequencing; they establish time-frames for actions and events; they create structures of meaning by establishing principal and supporting language units."

Issues regarding Level of Discourse:

- Expectations in this domain vary greatly from beginning to end of year, as well as from level to level.
- Overuse or artificial use of cohesive devices should be discouraged.

Each rating for this domain has particular characteristics:

1 Variety of discrete sentences; a few basic cohesive devices.

- Few ideas are connected and flow logically.
- Sentences may have a variety of verbs and possibly of subject pronouns.
- There are few cohesive devices appropriate for this level.

2 Variety of discrete sentences; predominantly basic cohesive devices.

- Some ideas are connected and flow logically.
- Sentences have a variety of verbs and possibly of subject pronouns.
- There are some cohesive devices appropriate for this level.

3 Emerging paragraph-length discourse; variety of cohesive devices appropriate for this level.

- Ideas flow logically, showing evidence of emerging paragraph-length discourse.
- Sentences vary in length, often with two or more clauses.
- Cohesive devices are varied and appropriate for this level.

4 Paragraph-length discourse; variety of cohesive devices appropriate for this level.

- There is evidence of paragraph-length discourse.
- Sentences vary in length, often with two or more clauses.
- Some clauses show the use of advanced language structures.
- There is a variety of appropriate cohesive devices, some advanced.



Vocabulary and Language Control reflect the accuracy and variety of the language produced. Each of these domains should be rated independently.

Vocabulary

This domain measures accuracy, variety, and quantity of vocabulary in the student response.

Issues regarding Vocabulary:

- Teachers should be aware that students may choose simplified vocabulary in an attempt to avoid errors. The result is often accurate but inadequate use of vocabulary.
- Students should be trained to recall learned vocabulary rather than resort to an English word. In addition, students should be taught to use basic circumlocution. For instance, if a student does not know the word for an “auto-repair shop,” the student could use words such as “where they fix cars,” “a place for broken cars,” “a car hospital,” or “a car doctor.”
- Titles of films, books, and TV shows can be given in English without penalty.
- In a *formative assessment*, recently learned vocabulary should be evident.
- In a *summative assessment* (usually an end-of-year assessment), the student should incorporate both basic and advanced vocabulary.
- Errors in spelling not related to the language structures (i.e., not verb endings, adjective agreement, etc.) should be considered vocabulary errors.

Each rating for this domain has particular characteristics:

1 Inadequate range and/or inaccurate use of vocabulary.

- Response lacks variety of vocabulary.
- Student may frequently repeat words or expressions.
- Vocabulary may be used inappropriately or out of context.
- Some English may be used, but infrequently.
- Response may include very few words.

2–3 Limited range of vocabulary; use sometimes inaccurate and/or inappropriate.

- Response lacks sufficient variety of vocabulary.
- There may be some repetition of words and expressions.
- Some vocabulary may be used inappropriately.
- Response may include an English word which is difficult to circumlocute in the target language.
- Response may be somewhat short.

4–5 Adequate range of vocabulary with a few idiomatic expressions; use generally accurate and appropriate.

- Student uses a variety of vocabulary.
- Most vocabulary is used accurately and appropriately.
- Student incorporates some advanced vocabulary and a few idiomatic expressions.
- Response includes no English.

6 Wide range of vocabulary with some idiomatic expressions; use accurate and appropriate.

- Student accurately uses a rich variety of vocabulary.
- Student incorporates advanced vocabulary and some idiomatic expressions.

Upper Level Presentational (Writing) Explanation of Rubric

Language Control

This domain measures the use and accuracy of basic and advanced language structures.

Basic Language Structures — Upper Levels

Western European Languages

- Formation and use of present tense
- Formation and use of the past tense (preterite and *pass compos*)
- Reflexive verbs
- Noun-article-adjective agreement
- Interrogatives/Question formation
- Word order
- Articles
- Use of the possessive "my" and "de" to indicate possession (French and Spanish)

Japanese

- Word order (subject—object—verb)
- Forms of address and their usage (*san, kun*)
- Use of particles or relationals (*wa, ga, o, e ni, de*)
- Tense/(adjective/verb)/(present/future, past)
- Negatives (verbs/adjectives)
- Progressive form (*~imasu* form)
- Interrogatives/Question formation

Issues regarding Language Control:

- It is important to focus on language structures used correctly, not only on errors.
- Control of basic language structures must be evident before credit can be given for the use of advanced language structures.
- Narration in the past (which involves more than one past tense) IS an advanced skill. Therefore, the use of the preterite or *pass compos* with the imperfect is considered an advanced language structure.
- In *formative assessments* which ask students to use recently taught advanced structures (e.g., the subjunctive), these structures should be considered basic language structures for the purpose of scoring the performance.
- In *summative assessments*, such as those given at the end of the year, students are asked to demonstrate the skills acquired over the whole language learning experience. Although students have been taught more advanced language structures (e.g., the subjunctive), these structures may not have been internalized. Therefore, lack of control of advanced structures should not heavily impact the student's score in a summative assessment. More emphasis should be placed on basic language structures.
- Errors in spelling due to a lack of control of language structures (i.e., not verb endings, adjective agreement, etc.) should be considered errors in language control.

Each rating for this domain has particular characteristics:

1 Emerging control of basic language structures and minimal or no use of advanced language structures.

- Basic language structures, as defined above, are used correctly only about three quarters of the time.
- A few advanced language structures may be attempted, with some success.

2–3 Control of basic language structures and minimal or no use of advanced language structures.

- Basic language structures, as defined above, are used correctly most of the time, not all of the time.
- A few advanced language structures may be attempted, with some success.



Upper Level Presentational (Writing) Explanation of Rubric

4–5 Control of basic language structures and occasional use of advanced language structures.

- Basic language structures, as defined above, are used correctly most of the time, not all of the time.
- Some advanced language structures are used correctly.

6 Control of basic language structures and use of a variety of advanced language structures.

- Basic language structures, as defined above, are used correctly most of the time, not all of the time.

Use of Basic Language Structures

Inadequate/inaccurate use	= used accurately less than 1/2 of the time
Emerging use	= used correctly about 1/2 of the time
Emerging control	= used correctly about 3/4 of the time
Control	= used correctly most of the time, not all of the time