MSTAR Writing Student Checklist

Name _____ Date _____

How your writing is scored

Two holistic scores, added together:

Score	Points
Written Expression	0–4
Written Conventions	0–3
Total	**7**

A score describes the response as a whole; you don't need every feature to earn it.

Read it right first

The top Written Expression score starts with **understanding the passage**, both what it says and what it suggests.

A neat, organized essay can still score a 2 if it misreads the text or barely uses it.

Written Expression (0–4)

- [ ] I understood the passage, including what it suggests, not just what it says.
- [ ] **Grade 3:** I explained the text accurately. **Grade 4 and up:** I analyzed it accurately.
- [ ] My ideas are fully developed, from introduction to conclusion.
- [ ] My reasoning is clear, and I supported it with evidence from the text.
- [ ] Each body paragraph has a specific fact or quote from the passage.
- [ ] After each piece of evidence, I explained what it shows.
- [ ] **Narrative (grades 3–7):** my story fits the task, is well organized, and uses narrative elements and style on purpose.

Written Conventions (0–3)

- [ ] My sentences are complete and correct.
- [ ] I proofread, so any errors are minor and my meaning is easy to understand.

My plan

My claim or controlling idea	Evidence from the passage	This shows…

Grades 3–7 may write opinion or argument, informative, or narrative; grade 8 writes argument or informative. Student summary based on MSDE's Holistic Rubrics for Grades 3–8 and 10 (informative and argument rubric); not an official MSDE document.