M-STEP Passage-Based Writing Student Checklist

Name _____ Date _____

How your essay is scored

One holistic score from **1 to 4**:

Score	Analysis of the text	Writing
4	Effective	Skillful
3	Adequate	Appropriate
2	Limited	Inconsistent
1	Minimal	Inadequate

Analysis comes first

A neat, error-free **summary** of the passage won't reach a 3. Explain what your evidence **shows**.

There's no separate conventions score to fall back on.

The task

- [ ] I read the prompt and answered **all** of its parts.
- [ ] I wrote about the passage and the prompt I was given, not a different topic.

Analysis and evidence

- [ ] My analysis uses what the text says directly **and** what it suggests.
- [ ] I referred to the text accurately, with enough evidence to support each paragraph.
- [ ] After every piece of evidence, I wrote a "this shows" sentence.
- [ ] My body paragraphs explain the passage; they don't just retell it in order.

Organization and writing

- [ ] My essay has an introduction and a conclusion.
- [ ] I used transitions to connect my ideas.
- [ ] I proofread, so errors don't get in the way of my meaning.

My plan

My main idea	Evidence from the passage	This shows...

On MDE's 2027 field test, the prompt comes with a checklist of what a well-written essay includes. Student summary based on MDE's M-STEP Passage-based Writing scoring guidelines; not an official MDE document.