

Revision Assistant Traits, Grades 11-12 Argumentative

SAT Essay Scoring Guide Reading, Analysis, and Writing



Advanced

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Support and Evidence

Reading

The essay cites the most relevant, appropriate, and **valid evidence to support its claim** and the counterclaims while **fully explaining how the evidence cited** and **reasons support the claim**. The essay demonstrates **reasoning and full understanding of the topic and/or text(s)**, thoroughly stating the strengths and weaknesses of both the claim and the counterclaim(s). Counterclaims are acknowledged and/or distinguished from essay's central claim. The essay anticipates the audience's background knowledge, potential biases, and concerns.

- Demonstrates **thorough comprehension of the source text**.
- Shows an **understanding of the text's central idea(s)** and of most important details and how they interrelate, **demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of the text**.
- Is free of errors of fact or interpretation with regard to the text.
- Makes **skillful use of textual evidence** (quotations, paraphrases, or both), demonstrating a complete understanding of the source text.



Claim and Focus

Analysis

The essay introduces an interesting, clear, arguable, and **precise claim**, based on the topic or text(s) and establishes the significance of the claim. The essay maintains **strong focus on the purpose and task, using the whole essay to support** and develop the claim and counterclaims fairly while **thoroughly addressing demands of the prompt**.

- Offers an **insightful analysis of the source text** and demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the analytical task.
- Offers a **thorough, well-considered evaluation** of the author's use of evidence, reasoning, and/or stylistic and persuasive elements, and/or feature(s) of the student's own choosing.
- Contains relevant, sufficient, and **strategically chosen support for claim(s)** or point(s) made.
- **Focuses consistently** on those features of the text that are **most relevant to addressing the task**.



Organization

Writing

The essay incorporates an **organizational structure** with clear transitional words and phrases that enhances the relationships between and among ideas (i.e. claim and evidence, claim and counterclaim, strengths and weaknesses) and establishes **cohesion and clarity**. The essay includes a **logical progression of ideas** from beginning to end, including an **effective introduction and a conclusion** which follows from and supports the arguments presented.

- Includes a **precise central claim**.
- Is **cohesive** and demonstrates a **highly effective** use and command of **language**.
- Includes a **skillful introduction and conclusion**. The response demonstrates a deliberate and **highly effective progression of ideas** both within paragraphs and throughout the essay.
- Has a **wide variety in sentence structures**. The response demonstrates a consistent use of **precise word choice**. The response **maintains a formal style and objective tone**.
- Shows a **strong command of the conventions** of standard written English and is free or virtually free of errors.



Language and Style

The essay demonstrates a definitive perspective and voice, as well as a **clear command of conventions**. The essay incorporates language that appeals to the reader's interests and **effectively maintains a formal style and objective tone**. The essay consistently employs **vivid word choice** and **varied sentence structure**.

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Proficient

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Support and Evidence

Reading

The essay cites clear, relevant, and **appropriate evidence** related to the claim and counterclaims while **explaining how the evidence supports the claim**. The essay demonstrates some **logical reasoning** and **understanding of the topic and/or text(s)** and states the strengths and weaknesses of both the claim and counterclaim(s). Counterclaims are acknowledged but may be only generally explained and/or distinguished from the essay's central claim.

- Demonstrates **effective comprehension of the source text**.
- Shows an **understanding of the text's central idea(s)** and important details.
- Is free of substantive errors of fact and interpretation with regard to the text.
- Makes **appropriate use of textual evidence** (quotations, paraphrases, or both), **demonstrating an understanding of the source text**.



Claim and Focus

Analysis

The essay introduces a **clear, arguable, and specific claim**, based on the topic or text(s). The essay **maintains focus on the purpose and task**, using most of the essay to support and develop the claim and counterclaims while thoroughly **addressing the demands of the prompt**.

- Offers an **effective analysis of the source text** and demonstrates an understanding of the analytical task.
- Competently **evaluates** the author's use of **evidence**, reasoning, and/or stylistic and persuasive elements, and/or feature(s) of the student's own choosing.
- Contains **relevant and sufficient support for claim(s)** or point(s) made.
- **Focuses primarily** on those features of the text that are **most relevant to addressing the task**.



Organization

Writing

The essay incorporates an **organizational structure** with clear transitional words and phrases that show the relationship between and among ideas (i.e. claim and evidence, claim and counterclaim, strengths and weaknesses). The essay includes a **progression of ideas** from beginning to end, **including an introduction and conclusion** which generally supports the argument presented.

- Is mostly cohesive and demonstrates effective use and control of language.
- Includes a **central claim** or implicit controlling idea.
- Includes an **effective introduction and conclusion**. The response demonstrates a **clear progression of ideas** both within paragraphs and throughout the essay.
- Has **variety in sentence structures**. The response demonstrates some **precise word choice**. The response maintains a **formal style and objective tone**.
- Shows a **good control of the conventions** of standard written English and is free of significant errors that detract from the quality of writing.




Language and Style

The essay demonstrates a perspective and voice, as well as a **general command of conventions**. The essay incorporates language that shows an awareness of the reader's interests and generally maintains a **formal style** and somewhat **objective tone** with few possible exceptions. The essay employs **interesting word choices** and some **variety in sentence structure**.


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 **Developing**
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 **Support and Evidence**
Reading


The essay **uses some evidence** but **may not precisely explain how it supports the claim** and/or the claim is not properly distinguished from the counterclaim. The essay includes **some reasoning and understanding** of the topic and/or text(s), but the strengths and weaknesses of the claim and counterclaims **may be confusing, unclear, or absent**.

- Demonstrates **some comprehension** of the source text.
- Shows an understanding of the text's central idea(s) but not of important details.
- May contain errors of fact and/or interpretation with regard to the text.
- **Makes limited and/or haphazard use of textual evidence** (quotations, paraphrases, or both), demonstrating **some understanding** of the source text.

 **Claim and Focus**
Analysis


The essay introduces a clear, arguable, and **specific claim**, based on the topic or text(s), but it **may be somewhat unclear** or **not maintained** throughout the essay. The essay **may not fully address** the demands of the prompt or stay focused on the purpose and task. The **writing may stray off topic** at times. Counterclaims may not be presented evenly or objectively.

- Offers **limited analysis** of the source text and demonstrates only **partial understanding** of the analytical task.
- Identifies and **attempts to describe the author's use of evidence**, reasoning, and/or stylistic and persuasive elements, and/or feature(s) of the student's own choosing, but merely asserts rather than explains their importance, or one or more aspects of the response's analysis are unwarranted based on the text.
- Contains **little or no support for claim(s)** or point(s) made.
- May **lack a clear focus on those features** of the text **that are most relevant** to addressing the task.

 **Organization**
Writing

The essay uses a **basic organizational structure** but **relationships between and among ideas** are **not consistently clear**, including the explanation of the claim and the counterclaims or their strengths and weaknesses. The essay may move from beginning to end; however, the **introduction and/or conclusion may be overly formulaic and/or repetitious**.

- Demonstrates little or no cohesion and limited skill in the use and control of language.
- May **lack a clear central claim** or controlling idea or **may deviate from the claim** or idea over the course of the response.
- May include an **ineffective introduction and/or conclusion**. The response **may demonstrate some progression of ideas** within paragraphs but not throughout the response.
- Has **limited variety in sentence structures**; sentence structures may be repetitive.
- Demonstrates **general or vague word choice**; word choice may be repetitive. The response **may deviate noticeably from a formal style** and **objective tone**.
- Shows a **limited control of the conventions** of standard written English and **contains errors** that detract from the quality of writing and **may impede understanding**.

 **Language and Style**

The essay demonstrates an uneven and/or inconsistent perspective and/or voice; it may also contain **errors in conventions** that **interfere with meaning**. The essay incorporates language that may not show an awareness of the reader's interests and **does not maintain a formal and/or objective style** consistently. **Some attempts at strong word choices are made**, and **sentence structure may not vary**.

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Emerging

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Support and Evidence

Reading

The essay **does not use clear or relevant evidence** or reasoning to support the claim or **to demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text(s)** or uses very little evidence from the source. Counterclaims are not acknowledged, addressed, or distinguished from the claim.

- Demonstrates **little or no comprehension of the source text**.
- Fails to show an understanding of the text's central idea(s), and may include only details without reference to central idea(s).
- May contain numerous errors of fact and/or interpretation with regard to the text.
- **Makes little or no use of textual evidence** (quotations, paraphrases, or both), **demonstrating little or no understanding of the source text**.



Claim and Focus

Analysis

The essay **does not clearly make a claim**, or the claim is overly simplistic or vague. The essay **does not maintain focus** on purpose or task. The essay does not address counterclaims.

- Offers **little or no analysis or ineffective analysis of the source text** and demonstrates little or no understanding of the analytic task.
- Identifies without explanation some aspects of the author's use of evidence, reasoning, and/or stylistic and persuasive elements, and/or feature(s) of the student's choosing.
- Or numerous aspects of the response's analysis are unwarranted based on the text.
- **Contains little or no support for claim(s)** or point(s) made, or support is largely irrelevant.
- **May not focus on features of the text** that are relevant to addressing the task.
- Or the response offers no discernible analysis (e.g., is largely or exclusively summary).



Organization

Writing

The essay **does not have a clear organizational structure** and **may simply offer a series of ideas without** any clear **transitions or connections**. An **introduction** and/or **conclusion are not evident**.

- Demonstrates little or no cohesion and inadequate skill in the use and control of language.
- May **lack a clear central claim or controlling idea**.
- **Lacks a recognizable introduction and conclusion**. The response **does not have a discernible progression of ideas**.
- **Lacks variety in sentence structures**; sentence structures may be repetitive. The response demonstrates **general and vague word choice**; word choice may be poor or inaccurate. The response **may lack a formal style** and **objective tone**.
- Shows a **weak control of the conventions** of standard written English and may contain numerous errors that **undermine the quality of writing**.



Language and Style

The essay does not demonstrate a clear voice and/or perspective and may **contain pervasive errors in conventions that interfere with meaning**. The essay employs language that is inappropriate for the reader's interests and **is not formal in style or objective in tone**. **Word choice is uninteresting or poor**, and **sentence structures are simplistic and unvaried**.