Team Sports

UNIT 2

What policy should your school follow about team sports?

This workbook belongs to: ___________________________
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Why join a sports team? It is a fun way to get exercise, build friendships, and develop physical skills. But participating in sports is a good choice for an even more important reason. The greatest benefit of team sports is that they help young people build good character.

A key part of developing character is learning positive values, and that is an outcome of being part of a sports team. Discovery Education surveyed 9,000 children, parents, teachers, and coaches. According to the survey, most parents whose children play sports believe their child is learning values such as teamwork, commitment, fairness, and respect for others. In addition, the survey showed that more than half of the children who play sports agree that they have a stronger sense of right and wrong because of the sport they play. Another survey, conducted by the Josephson Institute of Ethics, involved 35,000 high school students. They found that 90% of athletes say their coach “consistently sets an example of good character” and “expects players to do the right thing.” Both surveys provide evidence that playing a team sport helps young people learn positive values.

Participating in sports also helps young people learn to make good choices. The U.S. Department of Education sponsored a series of studies that followed the same students over multiple years. Results indicate that students who play sports are less likely to drop out of school than those who do not play sports. They also spend more time on homework, get higher grades, apply to more colleges, and are more likely to graduate from college. In another study, researchers surveyed over 7,000 high school students in Georgia. They found that athletes are more likely than non-athletes to use seatbelts, exercise regularly, and eat healthy foods. The Department of Education and the Georgia studies provide a great deal of evidence that young people learn to make good choices when they play team sports.

Finally, team sports build character by discouraging bad behaviors. Researchers surveyed 400 middle school students in Arizona. They found that sports participants are less likely than non-participants to exhibit such behaviors as smoking, drinking, cheating on tests, vandalizing school property, fighting, and stealing. Another study examined the rate of fights and other disturbances at 21 high schools in Maryland. They
found that, when two schools have the same number of students, the school with more students involved in team sports will have fewer disturbances. The authors conclude that encouraging more students to play team sports may help make schools safer. All of this evidence shows that sports help young people stay out of trouble.

Critics say that team sports often have negative impacts on players. If players are made to feel that they do not play well, it may lower their self-esteem and cause them to become angry or depressed. Such outcomes do occur, but they can be minimized if coaches are properly trained. Programs like Coach Effectiveness Training encourage coaches to focus less on winning and more on improving each player’s skills. One study examined the impact of this training on Little League coaches by interviewing 152 players, ages 10 to 12. The study found that trained coaches were evaluated more highly by their players than untrained coaches. Players with trained coaches also had more fun, liked their teammates more, and had higher self-esteem than players with untrained coaches. In a British study, surveys were given to 265 boys who played soccer or cricket. Results indicate that, when the coach focuses on effort and improvement, most players feel good about themselves. When the coach focuses on winning, most players feel unsuccessful and incompetent. These studies show that, by focusing on effort and improvement, coaches can help players feel competent and build self-esteem.

Playing team sports can provide young people with positive experiences that build character. Players learn important values like discipline, teamwork, fairness, and respect for others. They also learn to make good choices and avoid bad behaviors. And best of all, while they’re learning all those things, they are playing a game and having fun.
The Dark Side of Team Sports
by Grace Young

Playing sports should be fun for kids, but too often the focus is not on having fun but on winning, being the best and beating the competition. The best players are recognized as stars, which can make them think too much of themselves. Kids who are not the stars feel unsuccessful and incompetent. Instead of working to improve their skills, they often quit trying or drop out of the sport altogether. For these reasons, participating in sports can lead young players to focus on the wrong values instead of developing good character.

Kids who play team sports often develop bad personality traits. Researchers in Finland studied girls and boys, ages 8 to 16, who played baseball. They measured sensitivity, which is the ability to understand what others are feeling. They also measured narcissism, which is when people think only of themselves. The study found that, the more years kids spent playing baseball, the lower they scored on sensitivity and the higher they scored on narcissism. This shows that sports can cause kids to ignore what others are feeling and become vain and self-centered. Mark Edmundson is a writer who played football in high school. He says that athletes “are often bullies. They often seek violence for its own sake. They like to humiliate their foes, off the field as well as on it.” This shows that sports can cause kids to become overly aggressive and even cruel.

Participating in team sports can also encourage kids to make bad choices. The Josephson Institute of Ethics conducted a survey of 35,000 high school students. They found that athletes are more likely than non-athletes to cheat in school, and many athletes believe it’s okay for coaches to teach players how to cheat without getting caught. In another study, researchers gave the Youth Risk Behavior Survey to 4,000 middle school students. They found that kids who play sports are more likely than non-players to engage in risky behaviors like fighting, smoking, drinking, and using drugs. Taken together, the two studies show that sports encourage kids to make bad choices on the field and in life.

People who promote team sports claim that they teach positive values like discipline, fair play, respect for others, and teamwork. In a Discovery Education survey, those were all rated as important values for sports to teach. Competitiveness and winning were rated as
unimportant. And yet, when asked which values sports actually teach, competitiveness and winning were at the top of the list and the others were at the bottom. In another study, researchers gave the Youth Experiences Survey to 450 high school students. They found that kids who played sports reported more negative experiences than kids in non-sport activities like church choir or scouts. For example, kids in sports were more likely to report that peers in their activity made fun of them or that an adult told them to do something they knew was wrong. Although team sports could teach important values, these studies show that, in reality, they do not.

Finally, playing team sports can weaken the family ties that are essential for developing good character. Jeannette Twomey is a writer whose son played youth league baseball. His family attended all practices and games, which often involved weekend travel. She wrote this about the impact on her family:

Over the years, we saw one family activity after another bow its head to youth sports. Dinner at home, reading before bedtime, visits to grandma's, games, picnics, camping trips – all were casualties of the sport schedule.

Researchers interviewed parents of tennis players, who described similar problems. They reported less time with their spouses and less time spent together as a family.

Family activities bind families together. Without them, a family will drift apart. This can cause children to feel less support and parents to have less influence over their children’s behavior.

It is often said that team sports build character. Yet kids who play sports often develop bad personality traits. They tend to make bad choices in life, and their family relationships often suffer. Despite what many people believe, participating in team sports can be harmful to a player’s character.
## Assorted Evidence

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Quote from Lisa Harper, mother of an 11-year-old who has played soccer since age 7: “We’ve seen our daughter and her teammates learn how to work together. They respect the uniform and one another. They know what it means to work for something beyond themselves.”</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>A survey by i9 Sports found that most mothers of sports players are stressed by their child’s participation in sports, and over half said it caused stress for the entire family. Almost 90% said the stress was due to schedule conflicts and about 60% blamed money issues.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Quote from writer Mark Edmundson: “There were times while I was playing that I thought that I was an abject failure at the game. I simply never got very good. But I came to see that I was actually quite a success. I was able to show up every day, to work hard at something that was extremely difficult for me, and to improve little by little.”</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Researchers from the University of Illinois surveyed 2300 high school students. The survey asked about students’ experiences in different types of activities, including drama and music groups, volunteering, faith-based activities, and sports. They found that sports help students learn to set goals, work hard, solve problems, and manage their time.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Researchers at the University of California conducted a study at a sports camp for boys and girls, ages 9-16. They found that kids who play contact sports like football tend to be more aggressive in sports and in daily life than kids who play other sports.</td>
<td>In a follow-up study of Coach Effectiveness Training, researchers interviewed players of trained and untrained coaches. After one year, 26% of players with untrained coaches had quit the team, compared to only 5% of players with trained coaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A study described in <em>Youth &amp; Society</em> followed 1800 young people from sixth grade until age 25. They found that most children who play sports continue to be active in sports and fitness activities as adults.</td>
<td>Researchers from the University of Ottawa reviewed 185 studies of young athletes and their families. They found that parents often pay thousands of dollars for sports fees, equipment, uniforms, and other costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A study described in the <em>Journal of Youth and Adolescence</em> surveyed 260 boys and girls who play sports. They found that when there is a good relationship between the coach and the players and when players treat each other with respect and fairness, students are more likely to do positive things like sharing, helping, and supporting others.</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>The 2002 National Youth Survey of Civic Engagement shows that young adults who played sports in high school are more likely than non-athletes to watch the news, register to vote, volunteer, and participate in fundraising events and public meetings.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>A study described in <em>School Counselor</em> examined the grades of 123 high school students who played soccer one semester and did not play a sport the following semester. They found that their grades were significantly higher during the soccer season than during the off season.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Data from <em>High School and Beyond</em>, a multi-year study of over 30,000 young people, shows that girls who play team sports are more likely to succeed in science than girls who don’t play sports.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>According to the Center for Disease Control, regular physical activity helps children build strong bones and muscles, reduces the chance of being overweight, and promotes emotional health.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>The National Center for Sports Safety reports that 3.5 million children aged 14 years and younger receive medical care for sports injuries each year. Two thirds of all sports-related injuries treated in emergency rooms involve injuries to children.</td>
<td>The U.S. Anti-Doping Agency says that an athletes’ use of performance-enhancing drugs reveals a fundamental ethical problem – the willingness to win at all costs. This attitude destroys the true value of sport and all that it can offer.</td>
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</table>
Tab 2 - Worksheets

- Lesson 1 Quickwrite
- Lesson 2 Quickwrite
- Lesson 4 Quickwrite
- Lesson 5 Quickwrite
Lesson 1

Quickwrite!
In response to "Team Sports Build Character"

Do you agree with this author about team sports building character? Explain why or why not.

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
Lesson 2

Quickwrite!
In response to both texts

What does each of these authors want you to think about this topic?

Team Sports Build Character
by Robert K. Fuller

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

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____________________________________________________

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____________________________________________________

The Dark Side of Team Sports
by Grace Young

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

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Lesson 4

Quickwrite!
In response to both texts

What is the most convincing reason each of these authors gave? In your own words, briefly describe each reason and evidence the author provided to support it.

**Team Sports Build Character**
by Robert K. Fuller

**The Dark Side of Team Sports**
by Grace Young

Most convincing reason:

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Evidence for that reason:

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

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__________________________________________

Most convincing reason:

__________________________________________

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__________________________________________

Evidence for that reason:

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__________________________________________
I'm Not Convinced

Choose something from one of the texts that did not convince you. Tell the author what was not convincing and explain why you were not convinced.

__________________________________________________________________
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Tab 3 – Argument Maps

• Map of PRO text:
  Team Sports Build Character

• Map of CON text:
  The Dark Side of Team Sports
Team sports help kids build good character. 

Reason 1: Players learn to make good choices. 

Evidence 1a: Disc Ed parents and kids talk about values. 
Evidence 1b: Josephson: Coaches set good examples. 

Reason 2: Sports discourage bad behaviors. 

Evidence 2a: USDE: Do better in school. 
Evidence 2b: Georgia: Choose healthy behaviors. 

Reason 3: Players learn positive values. 

Evidence 3a: Arizona: Less likely to smoke, etc. 
Evidence 3b: Maryland: Fewer fights. 

Reason 4: Players build good character. 

Evidence 4: Fewer fights. 
Evidence 5: Disc Ed: Parents & kids talk about values. 

Counter-Reason: Team sports can lower self-esteem & cause bad feelings. 

Rebuttal 1: Trained coaches can build self-esteem. 
Rebuttal 2: Focus on effort is good for kids.
Claim: Team sports can keep kids from developing good character.

Reason 1: Players develop bad choices. 
Players learn to make risky behaviors.

Reason 2: Sports weaken family ties.

Evidence 1a: Finland: Less sensitive & more selfish.
Evidence 2a: Josephson: Cheating.

Evidence 3: Tennis: Fewer family activities.
Evidence 3b: YRBS: Risky behaviors.

Counter-Reason: Sports can teach positive values.

Evidence: Yes: Negative experience.
Evidence: Tennis: Less time spent together.
Evidence: Family activities: Fewer.

Evidence 2b: Edmundson: Some are bullies.
Evidence 3b: Edmundson: Some are bullies.

Evidence 2b: Josephson: Cheating.
Evidence 3b: Josephson: Cheating.

Rebuttal 1: Disc Ed: Actually teach competitiveness & winning.

Evidence: Less sensitive & more selfish.

Rebuttal 2: YES: Negative experiences.

Evidence: Positive experiences.

Counter-Reason: Kids from developing Team sports can keep good character.
Tab 4 – Planning your essay

- Essay Criteria
- Outline Template
- Peer Feedback 1
- Peer Feedback 2
Team Sports
Extended Writing Task: Argument Essay

Essay prompt:
What policy should your school follow about team sports?
Your score will be based on the following criteria:

Claim
Your claim is clearly stated and it responds to the prompt

Reasons
You include at least two different reasons why you believe your claim

Evidence
Each reason is supported by at least one piece of evidence

CR/Rebuttal
You include a counter-reason that goes against your claim and a rebuttal that shows that the C-R is false

Conclusion
Your essay ends with a conclusion that connects back to the claim

Signal Words
You use signal words to help readers follow the logic of your argument

Organization
Your essay has paragraphs that organize your argument

Bonus points will be awarded for:
- a third reason with evidence
- originality of ideas
Evidence 1a
(How I know it's true)

Evidence 1b
(How I know it's true)

Evidence 2a
(How I know it's true)

Evidence 2b
(How I know it's true)
Outline Map on Front
Counter-Reason
(A reason that goes against my argument)

challenges claim

goes against

Rebuttal a
(How I know it’s false)

Rebuttal b
(How I know it’s false)
Reason 3
(Why I believe it)

Evidence 3a
(How I know it's true)

Evidence 3b
(How I know it's true)
# Peer Feedback 1

- Read the author's claim and provide feedback by writing comments that answer the questions below.
- Write your comments on a post-it and place it on the author's outline near the claim.
- Add your initials to the post-it so your partner will remember who wrote it.
- Honest feedback can help your partner improve their essay.

**Essay prompt:** What policy should your school follow about team sports?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1 – Do you understand exactly what the claim is saying?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>If your answer is:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>kind of</td>
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<tr>
<td>no</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2 – Does the claim address the prompt?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>If your answer is:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>no</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 3 – Can the claim be supported by text evidence?</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>If your answer is:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>kind of</td>
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<tr>
<td>no</td>
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</table>
PEER FEEDBACK 2

- Examine the author’s outline and write comments that answer the questions below.
- Write your comments and your initials on post-its and place them on the author’s outline.
- Honest feedback can help your partner improve their essay.

Essay prompt: **What policy should your school follow about team sports?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1 – Is there a clearly stated claim that addresses the prompt?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If your answer is:</td>
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<tr>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>no</td>
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<tr>
<th>Question 2 – Are there at least two different reasons that clearly explain why the author believes the claim?</th>
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<tr>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>no</td>
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<tr>
<th>Question 3 – Is there at least one piece of text evidence to support each reason?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>no</td>
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<tr>
<th>Question 4 – Is there a counter-reason that goes against the claim?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>no</td>
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<tr>
<th>Question 5 – Is there a rebuttal that shows the counter-reason is false?</th>
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<tr>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>no</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Argument Writing for Middle School

Tab 5 – Writing your essay

- Teacher’s Model Draft
- Self Checklist
- Draft paper
- Sample Marked Essay
- Scoring Rubric
- Sample Draft & Final
- Final essay paper
One reason the school should promote team sports is because it can help students stay active and healthy. A survey of high school students in Georgia found that sports players are more likely than non-players to use seatbelts, get regular exercise, and eat healthy foods. Moreover, the Center for Disease Control says that regular physical activity helps children grow physically strong and emotionally healthy. Together, these two pieces of evidence show that playing sports can help students develop healthy habits and stay fit.

Some people say sports make children too competitive. However, programs like Coach Effectiveness Training teach coaches to focus more on improvement than winning. This helps players work together instead of competing with each other. Similarly, Lisa Harper says playing soccer taught her daughter to work with her teammates and respect them. Both pieces show that sports can teach cooperation rather than competition.
SELF CHECKLIST

Author______________________________

CLAIM

Yes No Do you state a claim?
Yes No Is it clear?
Yes No Does your claim respond to the writing prompt?

REASONS

Yes No Do you have at least 2 reasons?
Yes No Do they explain why you believe the claim?
Yes No Are your reasons different from each other?

EVIDENCE

Yes No Do you support each reason with text evidence?
Yes No Are your sources given?
Yes No Do you have different evidence for different reasons?
Yes No Do you explain how your evidence supports its reason?

COUNTER-REASON

Yes No Do you have a counter-reason that goes against your claim?
Yes No Is it clear?

REBUTTAL

Yes No Do you have a rebuttal?
Yes No Are your sources given?
Yes No Do you explain how your rebuttal shows the counter-reason is false?

CONCLUSION

Yes No Do you have a conclusion?
Yes No Does it connect back to the claim?

LANGUAGE & ORGANIZATION

Yes No Do you use words to help readers follow your argument?
Yes No Do you use paragraphs to organize your argument?

What are you doing in your essay to make sure your argument will be convincing to your readers?

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

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__________________________________________

 tripleQ (2020)
Pennsylvania State University
University of Pittsburgh
Sample Marked Essay

C: My school should not have a team sports program, and here’s why.

R1: One reason is because kids can get hurt playing sports. The National Center for

E1a: Sports Safety says that 3.5 million kids are treated for sports injuries each year.

R2: Another reason is because uniforms, equipment and fees can be very expensive.

R3: A third reason is that it can be hard on families. In an nq Sports survey, most

E3a: moms say their whole family is stressed by the sport, mostly because of time and

money issues. This shows that families can suffer when kids play sports. Also,

some coaches teach players to cheat without getting caught.

C-R: Supporters claim that sports build character. But that isn’t really true.

reb: Writer Mark Edmundson says that many athletes are bullies who “like to

humiliate their foes”. This shows that sports actually do the opposite of building

character. In conclusion, middle schools should not have sports teams

because kids can get hurt, it can be expensive, and it can stress their family.
## Argument Essay Scoring Rubric – Unit 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Level 2 Description</th>
<th>Level 1 Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Claim</strong></td>
<td>Your claim is clearly stated and it answers the writing prompt.</td>
<td>Your claim addresses the topic, but it is not clear or it does not answer the prompt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reasons</strong></td>
<td>You include at least two different reasons that explain why you believe your claim.</td>
<td>You have only one reason, or your reasons are very similar or do not connect to your claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong></td>
<td>For each reason, you include at least one piece of evidence that clearly supports the reason.</td>
<td>You support one but not all of your reasons with text evidence, or your evidence does not clearly support a reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connections</strong></td>
<td>You include sentences that explain how evidence connects to a reason or how a reason connects to your claim.</td>
<td>You try to explain connections, but your explanations are vague, unclear, or inaccurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Counter-Reason &amp; Rebuttal</strong></td>
<td>You include a counter-reason that goes against your claim and a rebuttal that goes against the counter-reason.</td>
<td>You include a counter-reason and rebuttal, but your rebuttal supports the counter-reason rather than arguing against it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion</strong></td>
<td>Your essay ends with a conclusion that connects back to your claim.</td>
<td>Your essay ends with a conclusion, but it is unclear or simply restates your claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signal Words</strong></td>
<td>You use signal words to help readers follow the logic of your argument.</td>
<td>You include signal words, but you use them incorrectly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Your essay is divided into paragraphs, and each paragraph has just one big idea.</td>
<td>Your essay is divided into paragraphs, but you have a paragraph with multiple reasons or a reason and counter-reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Originality of Ideas</strong></td>
<td>Your argument is different from the unit texts. Your reasons might be original, or you might use evidence in an original way.</td>
<td>Part of your argument is original, but one or more segments are very similar to a unit text.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>