



**English Language Arts  
English 2**

**Sample Text-Dependent  
Writing Item**

Writing to Persuade

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## General Introduction

The South Carolina State Department of Education provides districts and schools with tools to assist in delivering focused instruction aligned with the *2024 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready ELA Standards*. The text-dependent-writing (TDW) sampler was designed as a resource for South Carolina educators to provide guidance in classroom instruction.

This document contains an example of an argumentative TDW task from the End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP). The TDW task was written to align with the SC English Language Arts Academic Standards. The passage set and prompt were reviewed by a committee of South Carolina educators to ensure appropriateness for the intended grade in terms of text complexity, wording, topic, and bias.

The TDW item is composed of a reading passage(s) and a writing task related to the passage(s). The item requires that students closely read and analyze the passage(s) and write a response to the task while drawing upon evidence in the passage(s). Each student's response is then scored using the South Carolina EOCEP TDW Scoring Guidelines.

Embedded within the TDW item is a mode-specific writer's checklist. Students can use the embedded writer's checklist to help them plan, write, and proofread their responses.

The TDW sampler contains student responses that illustrate score points described in the two-trait holistic rubric and represent a point range of 4 (highest) to 1 (lowest) for Trait 1, and a 2 (highest) to 0 (lowest) for Trait 2. These responses contain a combination of reader-scored responses and teacher committee-scored responses established during range finding.

### Trait 1

This trait examines a student's ability to effectively establish a claim(s), address and refute a counterclaim(s), support the claim(s) with evidence from the text(s), and elaborate on the claim(s) with reasons and evidence.

- 4 points: The 4-point response is a **well-developed argument** that examines a topic and skillfully supports a claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant text-based evidence.
- 3 points: The 3-point response is a **complete argument** that develops and supports a claim(s) with sufficient text-based evidence.
- 2 points: The 2-point response is an **incomplete argument** that minimally supports a claim(s) with loosely related text-based evidence.
- 1 point: The 1-point response is a **weak attempt to write an argument** and does not support a claim(s) with adequate text-based evidence.

## Trait 2

This trait examines a student's ability to demonstrate control of language usage, conventions, and mechanics as embodied in ELA.E2.C.4 of the *2024 South Carolina College-and-Career-Ready ELA Standards*. Students are scored as *Meets Expectations* or *Does Not Meet Expectations*.

- 2 points: Demonstrates a **command** of language usage and conventions.
- 1 point: Demonstrates a **weak command** of language usage and conventions.
- 0 points: demonstrates a **pattern of errors** that significantly interfere with meaning.

## Purpose

This document is intended to be a resource for educators; it is not designed to be a practice test for students. The sample items are examples of college- and career-ready assessment items. The EOCEP assesses content standards in a variety of ways. This document does not include all item types or standards.

## To Persuade through Argument

### Trait 1

**4 points** – A well-developed argument that examines a topic and skillfully supports claims with clear reasons and relevant text-based evidence.

#### Structure

- Makes a precise claim(s) that is focused on the task
- Effectively maintains the claim(s) and focus throughout the response
- Uses an organizational structure that effectively strengthens the response
- Uses varied transitional words and phrases to skillfully create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claim(s), counterclaim(s), reasons, and evidence
- Provides an effective introduction and a concluding statement or section that supports and enhances the argument presented

#### Development

- Effectively demonstrates a thorough understanding of the task and topic
- Smoothly integrates reasons that are supported by facts and relevant evidence from the text(s)
- Smoothly integrates elaboration of thoughts which includes original student thinking combined with summary, paraphrasing, and/or text evidence to support an argument
- Skillfully acknowledges and refutes a counterclaim(s) with relevant evidence

#### Coherence

- Integrates precise vocabulary to skillfully strengthen and further ideas
- Skillful use of varied sentence types and phrasing that contribute to the fluidity of ideas
- Uses a voice that enhances the overall argument
- Establishes and maintains a style and tone appropriate to the purpose and audience

**3 points** – A complete argument that develops and supports claims with sufficient text-based evidence.

### **Structure**

- Makes a claim(s) that is focused on the task
- Maintains the claim(s) and focus throughout the response
- Uses an organizational structure that strengthens the response
- Uses varied transitional words and phrases to create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claim(s), counterclaim(s), reason, and evidence
- Provides a sufficient introduction and a concluding statement or section that supports and enhances the argument presented

### **Development**

- Demonstrates an understanding of the task and topic
- Includes reasons that are supported by facts and sufficient evidence from the text(s)
- Adequate elaboration of thoughts which includes original student thinking combined with summary, paraphrasing, and/or text evidence to support an argument
- Sufficiently acknowledges and refutes a counterclaim(s) with relevant evidence

### **Coherence**

- Integrates vocabulary to strengthen and further ideas
- Uses varied sentence types and phrasing that contribute to the fluidity of ideas
- Uses a voice appropriate to the overall argument
- Uses a style and tone appropriate to the purpose and audience

**2 points** – An incomplete argument that partially supports claims with loosely related text-based evidence.

**Structure**

- Makes a claim that may be unclear or insufficiently sustained within the response
- Organizational structure may be repetitive or inconsistent
- Uses transitions to connect ideas but cohesion is inconsistent
- Introduction and concluding statement or section may be repetitive or ineffective

**Development**

- Demonstrates a lack of understanding of the task
- Inconsistently develops the argument using facts and evidence that may not support the claim(s)
- Relies too heavily on the text(s) or is repetitive
- Acknowledges a counterclaim that is loosely related to the argument

**Coherence**

- Vocabulary and word choice may be limited or inconsistently used, showing a partial command of the expression of ideas
- Sentence structure may be simplistic or lacking grade-appropriate language
- Inconsistently establishes a style and tone appropriate to the purpose and audience but does not maintain it throughout the response

**1 point** – A weak attempt to write an argument and does not support claims with adequate text-based evidence.

### **Structure**

- Claim may be confusing or absent, demonstrating a misunderstanding of the task
- Demonstrates little to no organizational structure
- Transitions may be missing or confusing
- Introduction and concluding statement or section may be missing or may be unrelated to the response

### **Development**

- Response may be too brief to demonstrate an understanding of the task or may consist mostly of a summary of the text(s)
- Evidence from the text(s) may be missing or confusing
- Elaboration of thoughts may consist of vague or confusing ideas
- Counterclaim is missing or confusing

### **Coherence**

- Vocabulary and word choice may be unclear or confusing
- Sentence structure may be confusing
- Style and tone may be inappropriate to the purpose and audience

**Trait 2**

**2 points** – The student’s response demonstrates a command of language usage and conventions.

- Demonstrates a consistent command of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling
- Uses clear and complete sentence structure, with variety
- Has minor errors in usage and/or conventions that do not interfere with meaning

**1 point** – The student’s response demonstrates a weak command of language usage and conventions.

- Demonstrates an inconsistent command of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling
- Has patterns of fragments, run-ons, and other sentence structure errors that interfere with meaning
- Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning

**0 points** – The student’s response demonstrates a pattern of errors that significantly interfere with meaning.

Read the passage. Then respond to the TDW task.

### Should Video Gaming Be a High School Sport?

In the past, video games were considered only a fun pastime. Today, however, there are people who make careers out of playing them. Playing video games has become so popular that some people believe video gaming should become a high school sport. There are many issues to consider when discussing whether video gaming should become a recognized sport in high schools.

#### Video Gaming Should Definitely Become a High School Sport

High school athletes train hard for many hours to be the best they can be. Then on game day, they give everything they have to win a competition. Basketball players, soccer players, and volleyball players prepare themselves physically and mentally for a game. How are video game players, or gamers, any different? Quite simply, they are not different. These gamers put in countless hours against online adversaries each year in video games, or electronic sports (e-sports) as they have become known.

Some people believe that high school sports must involve some type of extreme physical exertion; however, golf is an example of a sport where the physical exertion is not as intense as it is in other recognized sports. Golf is called a sport, and it should be. Few people disagree that golf is a sport and that the participants are very skilled athletes. Many golfers lift weights, jog, or do other exercises to be in the best shape possible; however, they do not have to train in these ways. Some golfers are great—displaying huge amounts of talent—but the only exercise they get is walking on the golf course and swinging their clubs. They walk many miles each week while working on their game. They also walk a long way during their competitions. However, on the day of competition, are they exerting the same physical force that, say, football players do? Many professional golfers do not even carry their own golf clubs. They have caddies do that for them. If golf, with a lower level of physical activity, is considered a high school sport, should not video gaming, with its lower level of physical activity, be considered a legitimate high school sport as well?

At one time, the sports network ESPN televised e-sports. In a 2021 *Washington Post* article, Noah Smith reported, “In January of 2016, ESPN embarked on a bold new venture, announcing regular, in-depth coverage of competitive video gaming, popularly known as e-sports.” Although ESPN no longer televises video gaming events regularly, it is significant that this premier sports network considered video gaming a sport. In another article, CNN Business reported that “competitive video game playing. . . is now a high school varsity sport in eight states.” The states mentioned in the article include Connecticut, Georgia, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas. Today, some colleges even offer scholarships to e-sports players.

If reputable news outlets, a TV sports network, and eight states consider video gaming a sport, why can't e-sports be accepted in all high schools as legitimate? Many feel it is just a matter of time until video gaming becomes an official sport in every high school.

As players in other high school sports do, video gamers have to make quick decisions. They need to assess their opponent's strategic weaknesses and act accordingly. Just like athletes playing conventional sports, video gamers know that every good decision they make will help their team and every bad decision has the possibility of harming their team's chance of winning. Assessing situations and making fast decisions are crucial skills in every sport but maybe even more so in e-sports because situations can change more quickly than they do in conventional sports.

Finally, high school video gaming may be the most inclusive sport of all. E-sports athletes do not need to have large muscles. They do not have to be tall or fast either. However, they do, like all successful athletes, have to be dedicated to practicing and making themselves the best they can be. In addition, e-sports, like all sports, are extremely competitive. Because video gaming has so many things in common with conventional sports, it should be included as an official sport in every high school.

### **Video Gaming Is Not a Sport**

For most people, part of the definition of a sport is that the activity has to be highly competitive and athletic and involve physical skill. This physical skill usually requires strength and stamina.

Many people believe that to be considered a sport, an activity must involve some type of intense physical exertion. Soccer players sprint up and down a field. Tennis players hustle across a court. Basketball and volleyball players are constantly running and jumping on a court. Even golfers walk for hours on a golf course while displaying extreme concentration to be able to hit a tiny golf ball into a small cup on the green. E-sports do not demand the same level of physical exertion that other sports require; therefore, video gaming should not be considered a sport at the high school level.

No one argues that video gaming does not require stamina. People who play e-sports have trained hard to be able to play for many hours at a time. Admittedly, engaging in e-sports can be mentally exhausting. People who play have developed extreme concentration skills to be able to compete at a high level. While concentration skills and a high level of competition are required in both conventional sports and e-sports, these two similarities are not sufficient to classify video gaming as an official high school sport.

When two people have a staring contest, each competitor needs mental concentration to keep from blinking before the opponent. Staring competitions, like e-sports, require mental concentration. However, staring competitions, which may be taking place in high schools across the country, are not high school sports. Competitive activities requiring mental concentration are not necessarily sports. Therefore, video gaming should not be accepted as a high school sport. Should schools have e-sports clubs? Yes. Should video gaming be recognized as an official high school sport? No.

## Text-Dependent Writing (TDW) Question

Read the passage. Should video gaming be a high school sport? Take a position, and then write an argumentative response to persuade the school board of your perspective. Be sure to acknowledge and refute a counterclaim in your response. Use evidence and reasons from the passage as well as your own ideas to support your claim.

## Sample Student Responses and Annotations

### Sample 1 Student Response Score Point

Trait 1: 4

Trait 2: 2

What makes a competition into a sport? The teamwork, strategy, strenuous exercise, or the relentless work ethic? Most people consider video gaming to be a hobby or a club, not a varsity high school sport. However, multiple components of conventional sports and e-sports are similar including the strategy, mental stamina, and complexity of the game. Therefore, video gaming should be considered and played as a high school sport.

Firstly, e-sports can be considered a sport based on the amount of mental concentration and stamina required. Video games are known for their storyline, gameplays, and combinations. To memorize and understand these components, specific gaming skills are needed to succeed. In 'Video Gaming Is Not a Sport' the author states that "engaging in e-sports can be mentally exhausting". Due to the high levels of concentration and stress, the mental preparedness and state need to be at their peak to succeed. Additionally, in e-sports tournaments gamers have usually logged many hours with the game and were sufficiently prepared. However, the exhaustion that is felt at the end of an e-sports game was still intense enough to reflect their body language. So, this mental exhaustion and stamina is alike to the physical and mental exhaustion assumed by conventional sports. Moreover, multiple components, not only mental stamina, are similar to conventional sports.

Likewise, the strategic analysis required for e-sports, is similar to the strategy used in conventional sports. In e-sports, players generally play with a team and are aware of their responsibility to their aforementioned team. Therefore, video gamers learn to assess their surroundings, and respond to other players and actions strategically based on strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, they have to perform these actions even quicker because the situations during e-sports change rapidly (Video Gaming Should Definitely Become a High School Sport). As there are multiple gameplays, choices, and controls that a video gamer must anticipate and control, the strategies must be memorized and practiced at a high level. In conventional sports, the analysis is similarly done, simply on a field or court rather than with a screen and controller. In summary, during both situations, the tensions are high and the players must be intelligent or clever enough to recognize opportunities and devise strategy.

However, many state that video gaming is not worthy of being a high school sport due to the lack of complexity. Many compare it to a staring competition in which an opponent must only not blink before their own opponent. This is an incorrect assumption, and the complexity of video gaming cannot be discounted simply because it is played through a different medium. Video games have competition, but also have complex gameplay and storylines that require the gamers' full attention and understanding. The controls are also foreign, objects such as keyboards, VR headsets, and many other types of controls. To understand and use these controls efficiently, the gamer must have many hours of practice with the game and controls themselves. Of course, the mental stamina and strategy are required in addition to the understanding of the game and controls themselves. This is similar to the complexity of conventional sports which require all of the above. Staring competitions use only the body and concentration, although they may be difficult, but video gaming is much more complex and requires much more practice than staring competitions. Video games cannot be unavailable to school students for lack of complexity. Which is also the reason that video games and their specific skills should be available to be learned by students.

**Sample 1 Student Response Score Point 4/2 (continued)**

Video gaming and e-sports should be considered valid sports by high schools, if not for the concentration or strategy, then for the complexity. The satisfaction and fatigue at the end of a game is felt by both conventional and video gamers. The skills and equipments are learned and practiced to be an extension of body which cannot be denied to students. Conventional sports and esports both require an immense amount of skill, and are similar in multiple components such as the mental stamina and strategy required. Physical exertion should not be the only limiting factor that prevents this school from creating an inclusive sports environment for all athletes, conventional, or e-sports.

## Sample 1 Annotation Score Point 4/2

## Trait 1 Score Point 4

**Exceeds Expectations: A well-developed argument that examines a topic and skillfully supports claims with clear reasons and relevant text-based evidence**

**STRUCTURE**

- **Makes a precise claim(s) that is focused on the task**
- **“. . .multiple components of conventional sports and e-sports are similar including the strategy, mental stamina, and complexity of the game. Therefore, video gaming should be considered and played as a high school sport.”**
- **Effectively maintains the claim(s) and focus throughout the response, as the writer supports the claim by consistently drawing comparisons between conventional and e-sports, focusing on the shared requirements of mental stamina and strategic analysis. The writer then uses the shared component of complexity to refute the counterclaim.**
- **Uses an organizational structure that effectively strengthens the response. The argument builds throughout the response, and ideas are consistently supported with reasons, text evidence, and elaboration.**
- **Uses varied transitional words and phrases to skillfully create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claim(s), counterclaim(s), reasons, and evidence. These transitions are used consistently to create a strong progression of ideas within and between body paragraphs:**
  - **“Firstly. . .” “To memorize. . .” “In ‘Video Gaming Is Not a Sport’ the author states. . .” “Due to the high levels. . .” “Additionally, in e-sports tournaments. . .” “However, the exhaustion. . .” “So, this mental exhaustion. . .” “Moreover, multiple components. . .”**
  - **“Likewise, the strategic analysis. . .” “In e-sports. . .” “Therefore. . .” “Additionally. . .” “As there are multiple gameplays. . .” “In conventional sports. . .” “In summary, during both situations. . .”**
  - **“However, many state. . .” “This is an incorrect assumption. . .” “To understand and use these controls. . .” “Of course, the mental stamina. . .” “This is similar. . .” “Which is also the reason. . .”**
- **Provides an effective introduction and a conclusion that supports and enhances the argument presented. The introduction engages the reader with rhetorical questions to make the reader consider the definition of sport. There is an acknowledgement of an opposing perspective before the writer lists the similarities between conventional and e-sports, leading to the writer’s claim. The conclusion reminds the reader of the shared characteristics of both types of sports.**

## DEVELOPMENT

- **Effectively demonstrates a thorough understanding of the task and topic.**
- **Smoothly integrates reasons that are supported by facts and relevant evidence from the text(s):**
  - “. . .e-sports can be considered a sport based on the amount of mental concentration and stamina required.”
  - “. . .the strategic analysis required for e-sports, is similar to the strategy used in conventional sports.”
  - “. . .many state that video gaming is not worthy of being a high school sport due to the lack of complexity.”
- **Smoothly integrates elaboration of thoughts which includes original student thinking combined with summary, paraphrasing, and/or text evidence to support an argument. While this response integrates text quotes and paraphrased text, a strength of the elaboration is the integration of examples from the student’s personal knowledge, as well as the original thinking that is part of each explanation.**

**For the first reason:**

- “Video games are known for their storyline, gameplays, and combinations. To memorize and understand these components, specific gaming skills are needed to succeed. . .Due to the high levels of concentration and stress, the mental preparedness and state need to be at their peak to succeed. . .However, the exhaustion that is felt at the end of an e-sports game was still intense enough to reflect their body language. So, this mental exhaustion and stamina is alike to the physical and mental exhaustion assumed by conventional sports.”

**For the second reason:**

- “In e-sports, players generally play with a team and are aware of their responsibility to their aforementioned team. Therefore, video gamers learn to assess their surroundings, and respond to other players and actions strategically based on strengths and weaknesses. . .As there are multiple gameplays, choices, and controls that a video gamer must anticipate and control, the strategies must be memorized and practiced at a high level. In conventional sports, the analysis is similarly done, simply on a field or court rather than with a screen and controller. In summary, during both situations, the tensions are high and the players must be intelligent or clever enough to recognize opportunities and devise strategy.”

**For the third reason:**

- “. . .complexity of video gaming cannot be discounted simply because it is played through a different medium. Video games have competition, but also have complex gameplay and storylines that require the gamers’ full attention and understanding. The controls are also foreign, objects such as keyboards, VR headsets, and many other types of controls. To understand and use these controls efficiently, the gamer must have many hours of practice with the game and controls themselves.”

- **Skillfully acknowledges and refutes a counterclaim(s) with relevant evidence. There is elaboration for the counterclaim:**
  - “However, many state that video gaming is not worthy of being a high school sport due to the lack of complexity. Many compare it to a staring competition. . .”
  - “Staring competitions use only the body and concentration, although they may be difficult, but video gaming is much more complex and requires much more practice than staring competitions.”

## COHERENCE

- **Integrates precise vocabulary to skillfully strengthen and further ideas. Some examples are:**
  - “strenuous exercise,” “relentless work ethic,” “multiple components,” “mental preparedness,” “at their peak,” “sufficiently prepared,” “afformentioned team,” “similarly done,” “devise strategy,” “incorrect assumption,” “discounted,” “different medium,” “complex gameplay,” “satisfaction and fatigue,” “extension of body,” “cannot be denied,” “limiting factor,” “inclusive sports environment.”
- **Skillful use of varied sentence types and phrasing that contribute to the fluidity of ideas**
  - “To memorize and understand these components, specific gaming skills are needed to succeed. In ‘Video Gaming Is Not a Sport’ the author states that ‘engaging in e-sports can be mentally exhausting’”
  - “Due to the high levels of concentration and stress, the mental preparedness and state need to be at their peak to succeed.”
  - “As there are multiple gameplays, choices, and controls that a video gamer must anticipate and control, the strategies must be memorized and practiced at a high level.”
- **Uses a voice that enhances the overall argument. The voice of the writer is confident, knowledgeable, and certain of the validity of the argument throughout the response.**
- **Establishes and maintains a style and tone appropriate to the purpose and audience through consistent use of precise vocabulary and phrasing, along with sentence variety. Rhetorical questions are engaging.**

**Trait 2 Score Point 2**

**Meets Expectations:** The student's response demonstrates a command of language usage and conventions.

- **Demonstrates a consistent command of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Although there are some spelling errors, many of these words are spelled correctly elsewhere in the response:**
  - “competiton,” “strategy,” “excercise,” “Mots,” “Additionally,” “exhuastion,” “componenets,” “thir,” “afforementioned,” “resond,” “peform,” “oppurtunities,” “assumption,” “themsleves,” “practce,” “mutiple.”
- **Uses clear and complete sentence structure, with variety.**
- **Has minor errors in usage and/or conventions that do not interfere with meaning.**
  - “a” for an, “equipments” for equipment

**Score Justification**

- **The response is purposefully organized to lead the reader through the argument.**
- **There is a strong progression of ideas, especially a strong sentence-to-sentence progression within each paragraph.**
- **Sentence variety and the skillful use of introductory phrases enhance the coherence of the response.**
- **The writer skillfully integrates reasons, paraphrased text evidence, and original thought in support of the argument.**
- **Word choice is effective and enhances the response.**

**Suggestions for Improvement**

**Use correct spelling. The errors detract from an otherwise skillful and effective response.**

**Sample 2 Student Response Score Point****Trait 1: 4****Trait 2: 2**

Video gaming should not be considered a high school sport. The definition of what is considered a sport or not is not really clear. This lack of clarity is why some people question the authenticity of sports like cheer, gymnastics, ice skating, and e-sports. Sports are not just a test of physical exertion, but also challenge somebody's mental awareness and involve a variety of techniques relating to each sport. Cheer, gymnastics, and ice skating all require these traits and video gaming does not seem to check all these boxes.

One main reason why video gaming should not be considered a sport at the high school level is because it is not like other sports in any way. Conventional sports are not just for the players but for the spectators as well. The reason most people play sports is because they grew up watching others play and fell in love with it. The world has created a market around sports games, it is an experience for both the players and the spectators. Sports like football, soccer, golf, baseball, basketball, cheer, gymnastics, ice skating, etc. are so widely popular because they appeal to consumers, and the adrenaline a person gets from being able to watch their favorite team participate in events like the World Cup, Superbowl, and Olympics creates a relationship between the players, spectators, and the sport itself. E-sports do not gain as much of this attention, and it does not resonate with people as much. The passage makes known that "ESPN no longer televises video gaming events regularly." Clearly video gaming did not appeal enough to others resulting in their events not being as televised. If high schools made this an official sport, it would just be wasting money because most likely students wouldn't care as much compared to sports like football that bring the community together due to the market surrounding it.

E-sports do not have the same learning effect on the players as conventional sports do. Sports are not just meant to challenge players on their physicality, but they offer a wide variety of learning opportunities. They teach players critical thinking, teamwork, leadership, discipline, and respect. One of the best parts of sports is after a game when the two teams exchange high fives no matter who won or when both teams take a knee to show respect for an injured player. E-sports do not offer these kinds of things, so the bond between players even on opposite teams is almost impossible to have when playing behind a screen. In high school, it is important to build these bonds since teenagers are still developing, and hiding behind a screen just won't enable this type of social development.

Many argue that video gaming should be considered a high school sport because it requires mental concentration, hours of practice, and competition similar to conventional sports. Although this is completely true, sports are much more than these things, and activities requiring strong mental concentration like e-sports are not necessarily considered a sport. The text notes, "Staring competitions, like e-sports, require mental concentration. However, staring competitions, which may be taking place in high schools across the country, are not high school sports." Therefore, as much as video gaming may involve characteristics similar to regular sports, it doesn't necessarily mean that video gaming itself is a sport. This revelation only further proves that video gaming is not a sport and shouldn't be considered one at the high school level.

In conclusion, high schools should not consider video gaming a sport. Not only does e-sports fail to utilize the same type of skill sets as other sports, but it does not provide the same learning opportunities for teenagers either. The audience surrounding esports is simply not as high as conventional sports, which means most consider the activity as less-desireable and are not in a rush to make it more widely known. Therefore, it should be recognized as a club rather than an official sport.

## Sample 2 Annotation Score Point 4/2

## Trait 1 Score Point 4

**Exceeds Expectations: A well-developed argument that examines a topic and skillfully supports claims with clear reasons and relevant text-based evidence.**

**STRUCTURE**

- **Makes a precise claim(s) that is focused on the task:**
  - “Video gaming should not be considered a high school sport.”
- **Effectively maintains the claim(s) and focus throughout the response. The writer consistently argues the position that video gaming does not meet the criteria to be a sport.**
- **Uses an organizational structure that effectively strengthens the response. In each of the first two body paragraphs, the writer presents a characteristic of conventional sports and then explains why video gaming does not meet those requirements to be called a sport. This leads to the counterclaim and refutation, resulting in a conclusion which follows logically.**
- **Uses varied transitional words and phrases to skillfully create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claim(s), counterclaim(s), reasons, and evidence.**
  - “One main reason. . .” “The reason most people. . .” “The passage makes known. . .” “If high schools made. . .” “One of the best parts of sports. . .” “In high school. . .” “Many argue. . .” “Although this is completely true. . .” “The text notes. . .” “Therefore. . .” “This revelation only further proves. . .” “In conclusion. . .”
- **Provides an effective introduction and a conclusion that supports and enhances the argument presented. The introduction sets up the argument that video gaming is not a sport because it does not include:**
  - “physical exertion. . .[challenging] mental awareness. . .and a variety of techniques relating to each sport.”

**The conclusion reiterates this idea and also adds the lack of learning opportunities and audience:**

  - “Not only does e-sports fail to utilize the same type of skill sets as other sports, but it does not provide the same learning opportunities for teenagers either. The audience surrounding esports is simply not as high as conventional sports. . .”

## DEVELOPMENT

- **Effectively demonstrates a thorough understanding of the task and topic**
- **Smoothly integrates reasons that are supported by facts and relevant evidence from the text(s). Reasons presented are related to ideas in the passage:**
  - “. . .it is not like other sports in any way.”
  - “E-sports do not have the same learning effect on the players as conventional sports do.”
  - “. . .activities requiring strong mental concentration like e-sports are not necessarily considered a sport.”
- **Smoothly integrates elaboration of thoughts which includes original student thinking combined with summary, paraphrasing, and/or text evidence to support an argument. While this response does have some text quotes and some paraphrased text, some of the examples are from the student’s personal knowledge and much of the elaboration is original student thinking.**

**For the first reason:**

  - “Conventional sports are not just for the players but for the spectators as well. . .they grew up watching others play and fell in love with it. . .the adrenaline a person gets from being able to watch their favorite team participate in events like the World Cup, Superbowl, and Olympics creates a relationship between the players, spectators, and the sport itself. E-sports do not gain as much of this attention, and it does not resonate with people as much. The passage makes known that ‘ESPN no longer televises video gaming events regularly.’ Clearly video gaming did not appeal enough to others resulting in their events not being as televised.”

**For the second reason:**

  - “Sports. . .offer a wide variety of learning opportunities. . .teach players critical thinking, teamwork, leadership, discipline, and respect. . .after a game when the two teams exchange high fives no matter who won or when both teams take a knee to show respect for an injured player. E-sports do not offer these kinds of things, so the bond between players even on opposite teams is almost impossible to have when playing behind a screen.”
- **Skillfully acknowledges and refutes a counterclaim(s) with relevant evidence**
  - “Many argue that video gaming should be considered a high school sport because it requires mental concentration, hours of practice, and competition similar to conventional sports. Although this is completely true, sports are much more than these things, and activities requiring strong mental concentration like e-sports are not necessarily considered a sport.”
  - “The text notes, ‘Staring competitions, like e-sports, require mental concentration. However, staring competitons, which may be taking place in high schools across the country, are not high school sports.’”

## COHERENCE

- **Integrates precise vocabulary to skillfully strengthen and further ideas**
  - “lack of clarity,” “authenticity,” “variety of techniques,” “check all these boxes,” “spectators,” “fell in love,” “created a market,” “widely popular,” “adrenaline,” “resonate,” “did not appeal enough,” “learning effect,” “physicality,” “exchange high fives,” “take a knee,” “hiding behind a screen,” “enable,” “social development,” “characteristics,” “revelation,” “utilize,” “skill sets.”
- **Skillful use of varied sentence types and phrasing that contribute to the fluidity of ideas**
  - “Sports are not just a test of physical exertion, but also challenge somebody’s mental awareness and involve a variety of techniques relating to each sport.”
  - “If high schools made this an official sport, it would just be wasting money because most likely students wouldn’t care as much compared to sports like football that bring the community together due to the market surrounding it.”
- **Uses a voice that enhances the overall argument**
- **Establishes and maintains a style and tone appropriate to the purpose and audience. The style is enhanced by the use of precise vocabulary and sentence variety.**

## Trait 2 Score Point 2

**Meets Expectations:** The response demonstrates a command of language usage and conventions.

- **Demonstrates a consistent command of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. There are some spelling errors:**
  - “competitons,” “characteristis,” “less-desireable.”
- **Uses clear and complete sentence structure, with variety**
  - “One of the best parts of sports is after a game when the two teams exchange high fives no matter who won or when both teams take a knee to show respect for an injured player.”
- **Has minor errors in usage and/or conventions that do not interfere with meaning.**

## Score Justification

- **The argument is focused on the claim throughout the response.**
- **Supporting ideas are organized and elaborated to enhance the argument.**
- **Some precise vocabulary is used.**
- **There is some sentence variety.**

### Suggestions for Improvement

- Transitions should be used more consistently within body paragraphs to connect ideas.
- The use of more introductory phrases at the beginning of sentences would form a stronger connection between ideas.
- The use of more text evidence would strengthen the response.
- The use of more precise vocabulary would enhance the style of the response.
- There are lengthy compound sentences in this response that could be shortened or divided into separate sentences to increase the clarity of the writing.

**Sample 1 Student Response Score Point****Trait 1: 3****Trait 2: 2**

Should video gaming be a sport in High School. People base their careers on video games and competing in e-sports tournaments and can make a ton of money. However, should they be offered as a sport option in High School. In my opinion, yes they should. In the modern day, many people can make tons of money off of just picking up a controller and being good at a game that they already like to play for fun. Games like Fortnite, Rainbow Six Siege, Call of Duty, and Rocket League already have a large fan bases and they also offer tournaments for those that are good enough.

First off, practically anybody can play video games and be good at the game they are playing. Some games like Rainbow Six Siege require critical thinking, teamwork, communication, concentration and knowledge of the map and utilities you have so you can fight effectively. Teaching high schoolers these skills can benefit them in the real world too. Making this a sport would give people that are passionate about their game to put their skills to the test and prepare them for e-sports if they chose to chase that career path. If people can be passionate about football, soccer, baseball and other high school sports why can someone that enjoys playing video games not represent their school by doing something they love. Many athletes start their serious training in high school so that they can play for college and then professionally. I think we should give that option to possible future e-sports players.

Next, gamers can make money doing something they love to do. Many people will tell you to “find a job you enjoy so that you never feel like you are working a day in your life”. Why not prepare gamers to play professionally by giving them a sport to play in high school. The best athletes have played their sport in high school if not most of their life. Players like Messi and Ronaldo played their sport since they were little kids and were offered to play semi-professionally or professionally as a young adult or older teenager. Giving gamers a sport to play competitively at a high school level could give them a jump start to possibly playing in professional e-sports.

Finally, many people already consider gaming a sport. There are big tournaments that you go to compete in and if you win you can come out of that building with sums of money larger than half a million dollars. Some tournaments even offer million dollar tournaments. If you can make money like that by playing in an e-sports tournament and winning, why can't it be considered a sport to play in high school. Teachers and other adults claim that everything you do in high school will be used in the real world. If that's the case then making gaming a sport in high school would prepare gamers to play for big e-sports teams. If you are told to follow your dreams and your dreams are to play professional e-sports, why is that not a good enough dream.

Many people will disagree with my claim, stating that a sport has to involve physical strain or exertion. Golf is considered a high school sport yet all you must do is walk on the green and swing a club. Some don't even walk when they play, they get into a golfcart and drive on the green. Some might say that gaming doesn't require skill or a high IQ. Some gamers have some of the highest IQ's. For example, the game Rainbow Six Siege has an average IQ of I believe 170. As for skill, gamers need critical thinking, teamwork, and need to be quick in the head and be able to function and think properly in tough situations.

In regards to the evidence I have shown, gaming should be considered a real sport and should be offered as such in high school.

## Sample 1 Annotation Score Point 3/2

## Trait 1 Score Point 3

**Meets Expectations: A complete argument that develops and supports claims with sufficient text-based evidence.**

**STRUCTURE**

- **Makes a claim(s) that is focused on the task:**
  - “People base their careers on video games and competing in e-sports tournaments and can make a ton of money. However, should they be offered as a sport option in High School. In my opinion, yes they should.”
- **Maintains the claim(s) and focus throughout the response, as each supporting idea gives elaborated reasons that remain focused on persuading the reader that the claim is valid.**
- **Uses an organizational structure that strengthens the response. The body of the response presents supporting ideas that video gaming should be a sport in order to help students get started in their careers. These reasons lead to the counterclaim that addresses whether physical effort is required for a sport and whether video gamers have high IQs. All of the discussion leads the reader to the concluding statement.**
- **Uses varied transitional words and phrases to create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claim(s), counterclaim(s), reason, and evidence. A strength of the response is the use of sentence variety to create a strong sentence-to-sentence progression of ideas within each body paragraph and throughout the response. For example:**
  - “First off, practically anybody. . .” “Teaching high schoolers. . .” “Making this a sport. . .” “If people can be passionate. . .” “I think we should. . .”
  - “Next. . .” “Why not prepare. . .” “Giving gamers a sport. . .”
  - “Finally. . .” “If you can make money. . .” “If that’s the case. . .” “If you are told. . .”
  - “Many people will disagree. . .” “Some might say. . .” “For example. . .” “As for skill. . .”
- **Provides a sufficient introduction and a concluding statement that supports and enhances the argument presented. The introduction states the claim and then reveals that the basis of the argument will be that making video gaming a high school sport will help to launch the careers of future professional gamers. This prepares the reader for the argument in the body of the response.**

**DEVELOPMENT**

- **Demonstrates an understanding of the task and topic**
- **Includes reasons that are supported by facts and sufficient evidence from the text(s). While some of the ideas are related to the text, the reasons given are mostly supported by facts from the writer’s personal knowledge:**
  - “First off, practically anybody can play video games and be good at the game they are playing. . .Teaching high schoolers these skills can benefit them in the real world too.”
  - “. . .gamers can make money doing something they love to do.”
  - “. . .many people already consider gaming a sport.”

- **Adequate elaboration of thoughts which includes original student thinking combined with summary, paraphrasing, and/or text evidence to support an argument. There are examples of elaboration related to text ideas:**
  - “Some games like Rainbow Six Seige require critical thinking, teamwork, communication, concentration. . .”
  - “If people can be passionate about football, soccer, baseball and other high school sports why can someone that enjoys playing video games not represent their school by doing something they love. Many atheletes start their serious training in high school. . .”
  - “. . .many people already consider gaming a sport. There are big tournaments that you go to compete in. . .”
  - “Golf is considered a high school sport yet all you must do is walk on the green and swing a club.”
  - “As for skill, gamers need critical thinking, teamwork, and need to be quick in the head and be able to function and think properly in tough situations. . .”
- **Much of the elaboration in this response is original student thinking:**
  - “In the modern day, many people can make tons of money off of just picking up a contoller and being good at a game that they already like to play for fun. Games like Fortnite, Rainbow Six Seige, Call of Duty, and Rocket League already have a large fan bases and they also offer tournaments for those that are good enough.”
  - “Some games like Rainbow Six Seige require critical thinking, teamwork, communication, concentration and knowledge of the map and utilities you have so you can fight effectively. Teaching high schoolers these skills can benefit them in the real world too. Making this a sport would give people that are passionate about their game to put their skills to the test and prepare them for e-sports if they chose to chase that career path.”
  - “The best atheletes have played their sport in high school if not most of their life. Players like Messi and Ronalda played their sport since they were little kids and were offered to play semi-profesionally or professionally as a young adult or older teenager.”
  - “There are big tournaments that you go to compete in and if you win you can come out of that building with sums of money larger than half a million dollars. Some tournaments even offer million dollar tournaments. If you can make money like that by playing in an e-sports tournament and winning, why can’t it be considered a sport to play in high school.”
  - “Some might say that gaming doesn’t require skill or a high IQ. Some gamers have some of the highest IQ’s. For example, the game Rainbow Six Seige has an average IQ of I believe 170. As for skill, gamers need critical thinking, teamwork, and need to be quick in the head and be able to function and think properly in tough situations.”
- **Sufficiently acknowledges and refutes a counterclaim(s) with relevant evidence:**
  - “Many people will disagree with my claim, stating that a sport has to involve physical strain or exertion. . .Some might say that gaming doesn’t require skill or a high IQ.”
  - “Golf is considered a high school sport yet all you must do is walk on the green and swing a club.”
  - “As for skill, gamers need critical thinking, teamwork, and need to be quick in the head and be able to function and think properly in tough situations.”

## COHERENCE

- **Integrates vocabulary to strengthen and further ideas:**
  - “base their careers,” “ton of money,” “sport option,” “fan bases,” “tournaments,” “skills can benefit them,” “passionate,” “represent,” “competitively,” “jump start,” “make money like that,” “prepare gamers,” “follow your dreams,” “physical strain,” “quick in the head,” “function,” “tough situations,” “offered as such.”
- **Uses varied sentence types and phrasing that contribute to the fluidity of ideas**
  - “Some games like Rainbow Six Siege require critical thinking, teamwork, communication, concentration and knowledge of the map and utilities you have so you can fight effectively.”
  - “If that’s the case then making gaming a sport in high school would prepare gamers to play for big e-sports teams.”
- **Uses a voice appropriate to the overall argument:**
  - “Many people will tell you to ‘find a job you enjoy so that you never feel like you are working a day in your life’.”
- **Uses a style and tone appropriate to the purpose and audience. The response uses rhetorical questions, which are then answered to engage the reader and create connections between ideas.**
  - “However, should they be offered as a sport option in High School?”
  - “Why not prepare gamers to play professionally by giving them a sport to play in high school?”
  - “If you are told to follow your dreams and your dreams are to play professional e-sports, why is that not a good enough dream?”

**Trait 2 Score Point 2**

**Meets Expectations:** The response demonstrates a command of language usage and conventions.

- **Demonstrates a consistent command of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. There are some spelling errors, missing question marks after rhetorical questions throughout the response, and a missing apostrophe:**
  - “contoller,” “Seige,” “atheletes,” “profesionally,” “competitevly”
  - “Should video gaming be a sport in High School.”
  - “thats”
- **Uses clear and complete sentence structure, with variety**
  - “If people can be passionate about football, soccer, baseball and other high school sports why can someone that enjoys playing video games not represent their school by doing something they love?”
- **Has minor errors in usage and/or conventions that do not interfere with meaning.**

**Score Justification**

- The claim is clear, and the focus is sustained throughout the response.
- The response creates clear connections between reasons and the task.
- Elaboration consists of some text-based evidence, but mostly original thinking.
- The counterclaim is developed and refuted.
- There is some precise language.

**Suggestions for Improvement**

- Use more text evidence for elaboration, so that there is a combination of original thinking and text evidence/ideas to support each reason.
- Use a variety of compound and complex sentences.
- Use precise vocabulary to enhance the response.

**Sample 2 Student Response Score Point 3/2**

When thinking of video gaming, does it appear as a sport, or a fun way to pass time? Sports are used to keep people in shape, to teach responsibility, to show that it takes physical and mental work to perform. Considering video games to be a sport is a pathway down to a world that considers anything such as writing an essay or reading a book a sport as well.

To begin, it should be noted that most things on this world require concentration to complete a task. Reading requires concentration, driving a car requires concentration, cooking requires concentration, as well as taking care of a child, or completing a test. Are highschools around the world turning student babysitters and drivers into sports just because its a hard job and it requires concentration? The passage states, "When two people have a staring contest, each competitor needs mental concentration to keep from blinking before the opponent." As well as going off to say that in fact, staring contests are taking place across highschools all around the country, but yet, are still not considered sports and are simply competitive activites that students take part in. Video gaming should just be another high school club.

Secondly, most sports need players in good shape in order to play. Anyone could play video games as it doesn't take much physical labor or discipline to participate. While on the other hand, sports either require strength, speed, stamina, skill, or all of the above. What's special about sports is that not everyone can play them. That's why people enjoy watching sports as entertainment. It's easier to be sitting on a couch, watching sports on the TV than it is to be out on field, putting in the work. The passage even states that: "Many people believe that to be considered a sport, an activity must involve some type of intense physical exertion." The only thing gamers are exerting is intense finger sweat and sore eyeballs from sitting on a chair all day staring at a screen. There are sports out there that people can join in on that don't need large muscles, or speed, or other things, but they do need something to make it different from the other sports.

Lastly, some people may still believe that video gaming should become a sport due to its similar requirements as sports. Yes, it takes practice for both sports and video games, and yes, they can both be competitive. No one can argue with that. However, there are so many qualities of sports that are what make them sports, whereas video games are just another hobby. Another hobby that takes place online. In a world with so much moving on to the internet, shouldn't there be a way to pass time that doesn't require looking at a screen for hours? Another quality of sports that is different from video gaming is that it takes place outside, excluding indoor volleyball, while even still there's beach volleyball. With so much technology, sports are a good way to take your eyes off a screen.

In conclusion, video gaming is not a sport. It's an online activity, that takes very little physical work, and about the same amount of concentration as hide and seek. To consider video gaming a sport will most likely ruin the reputation of sports and will make people think that anyone is able to play them.

**Sample 2 Annotation Score Point****Trait 1: 3****Trait 2: 2****Trait 1 Score Point 3**

**Meets Expectations: A complete argument that develops and supports claims with sufficient text-based evidence.**

**STRUCTURE**

- **Makes a claim(s) that is focused on the task**
  - “Considering video games to be a sport is a pathway down to a world that considers anything such as writing an essay or reading a book a sport as well.”
  - “Video gaming should just be another high school club.”
- **Maintains the claim(s) and focus throughout the response. Ideas presented throughout the response are used to compare video gaming to other activities/sports to support the claim and refute the counterclaim.**
- **Uses an organizational structure that strengthens the response. The response begins by comparing video gaming to other everyday activities and then provides a contrast with conventional sports before leading the reader to the counterclaim. Within each body paragraph, supporting ideas are introduced with topic sentences and then supported with text evidence and original thoughts, with strong sentence-to-sentence progression within each paragraph.**
- **Uses varied transitional words and phrases to create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claim(s), counterclaim(s), reason, and evidence:**
  - “To begin. . .” “The passage states. . .” “As well as. . .”
  - “Secondly. . .” “While on the other hand. . .” “What’s special about sports. . .” “That’s why. . .”
  - “Lastly, some people my still believe. . .” “However. . .” “Another hobby. . .” “In a world. . .” “Another quality. . .” “With so much. . .”
- **Provides a sufficient introduction and conclusion that supports and enhances the argument presented. The introduction makes the comparison between conventional and e-sports before stating the claim, while the conclusion reiterates the claim and reminds the reader of the counterclaim.**

**DEVELOPMENT**

- **Demonstrates an understanding of the task and topic.**
- **Includes reasons that are supported by facts and sufficient evidence from the text(s):**
  - “. . .most things on this world require concentration to complete a task.”
  - “. . .most sports need players in good shape in order to play.”
  - “. . .some people may still believe that video gaming should become a sport due to its similar requirements as sports.”

- **Adequate elaboration of thoughts which includes original student thinking combined with summary, paraphrasing, and/or text evidence to support an argument. In addition to quoted text, the writer also paraphrases text and includes some original thinking to support the argument. However, the writer does not clearly connect the idea of video gaming to the characteristic of concentration in Paragraph 2:**
  - “Reading requires concentration, driving a car requires concentration, cooking requires concentration, as well as taking care of a child, or completing a test. Are highschools around the world turning student babysitters and drivers into sports just because its a hard job and it requires concentration?”
  - “What’s special about sports is that not everyone can play them. That’s why people enjoy watching sports as entertainment. It’s easier to be sitting on a couch, watching sports on the TV than it is to be out on field, putting in the work.”
  - “In a world with so much moving on to the internet, shouldn’t there be a way to pass time that doesn’t require looking at a screen for hours? Another quality of sports that is different from video gaming is that it takes place outside, excluding indoor volleyball, while even still there’s beach volleyball. With so much technology, sports are a good way to take your eyes off a screen.”
- **Sufficiently acknowledges and refutes a counterclaim(s) with relevant evidence. The response acknowledges an opposing perspective, which is supported with evidence, and then is refuted:**
  - “Lastly, some people may still believe that video gaming should become a sport due to its similar requirements as sports.”
  - “However, there are so many qualities of sports that are what make them sports, whereas video games are just another hobby.”
  - “Another quality of sports that is different from video gaming is that it takes place outside. . .With so much technology, sports are a good way to take your eyes off a screen.”

## COHERENCE

- **Integrates vocabulary to strengthen and further ideas.**
  - “teach responsibility,” “pathway,” “considers,” “complete a task,” “require concentration,” “sports as entertainment,” “putting in the work,” “intense finger sweat,” “similar requirements,” “a good way to take your eyes off a screen,” “the same amount of concentration as hide and seek,” “ruin the reputation.”
- **Uses varied sentence types and phrasing that contribute to the fluidity of ideas.**
  - “When thinking of video gaming, does it appear as a sport, or a fun way to pass time?”
  - “In a world with so much moving on to the internet, shouldn’t there be a way to pass time that doesn’t require looking at a screen for hours?”
- **Uses a voice appropriate to the overall argument.**
- **Uses a style and tone appropriate to the purpose and audience.**

**Trait 2 Score Point 2**

**Meets Expectations:** The response demonstrates a command of language usage and conventions.

- **Demonstrates a consistent command of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.**  
**There are some spelling errors and a missing apostrophe:**
  - “highschools,” “activites”
  - “its”
- **Uses clear and complete sentence structure, with variety:**
  - “Anyone could play video games as it doesn’t take much physical labor or discipline to participate. While on the other hand, sports either require strength, speed, stamina, skill, or all of the above.”
- **Has minor errors in usage and/or conventions that do not interfere with meaning.**

**Score Justification**

- **The organizational structure is appropriate and focus is maintained on the claim throughout the response.**
- **Transitions and sentence variety create connections between ideas and help to lead the reader smoothly through the argument.**
- **Adequate elaboration includes text evidence, paraphrased text ideas, and considerable original thought.**

**Suggestions for Improvement**

- **For organization, make clearer connections to the claim in each paragraph to reinforce the argument. For instance, in paragraphs 3 and 4, the concluding sentence should make a connection to the claim, thereby helping to persuade the reader of the validity of the argument.**
- **For development, include more text-based evidence to support ideas.**
- **For elaboration, show the reader the connections between ideas. For instance, paragraph 2 is a discussion of the requirement of concentration in many activities. The writer never mentions how that characteristic applies to video gaming, leaving the reader to determine why that discussion leads to the conclusion that video gaming should be a club.**

**Sample 1 Student Response Score Point****Trait 1: 2****Trait 2: 2**

In the passage, "Should Video Gaming Be a High School Sport?", school districts are considering if gaming should be a sport. Schools should add emphasis on sports with physical skills and activities, instead of online games.

Particularly, in sports there is some type of physical skill. Making the players exert or sweat involves strength and stamina. For instance, "Basketball players, soccer players, and volleyball players." Many athletes go through extensive training to prepare for their games, including weight lifting, hours of practice, days of hydration, and more. To expand on this point, when people engage in a sport, they must be mentally and physically prepared. For example, "Golfers walk for hours on the golf course while displaying extreme concentration." This takes a lot of effort, this is why sports are very time consuming, Golfers have to have intensive concentration in getting the golf ball in the hole.

Furthermore, video gaming is seen to be bad for people's health. Especially if people do not have regulations. They spend hours daily on screens, which is not the best for brain health. In the modern world, studies have shown that being on technology for a long time can cause bad social skills, site problems, and more. On the contrary, physical sports provides a breath of fresh air and has great health benefits. When playing a sport it is a great work out, making players heart rate go up.

Some people may consider gaming as an official sport because it includes concentration and long hours of practice. However, sports require physical and mental preparation. Additionally, if gaming was considered a sport then why would we need P.E in schools anymore? In P.E students have to play basketball and other sports that do not just require concentration.

Indisputably, school should not make gaming into an official sport. If people want to do gaming they can make a club instead of making it into a sport. The people who enter the gaming club can be provided a scholarship but not a sports scholarship.

## Sample 1 Annotation Score Point 2/2

## Trait 1 Score Point 2

**Minimally Meets Expectations: An incomplete argument that partially supports claims with loosely related text-based evidence.**

## STRUCTURE

- **Makes a claim that may be unclear or insufficiently sustained within the response:**
  - “. . .school districts are considering if gaming should be a sport. Schools should add emphasis on sports with physical skills and activities, instead of online games.”
- **Organizational structure may be repetitive or inconsistent. Supporting reasons are organized within the body of the response but are not sufficiently connected to the idea of whether or not video gaming should be a high school sport.**
- **Uses transitions to connect ideas but cohesion is inconsistent. Some transitions are used to connect information within body paragraphs:**
  - “Particularly. . .” “For instance. . .” “To expand. . .” “For example. . .” “This shows. . .”
  - “Furthermore. . .” “In the modern world. . .” “On the contrary. . .” “When playing. . .”
  - “Some people may consider. . .” “However. . .” “Additionally. . .”
- **The response has an introduction which introduces the topic, but the claim is unclear. The conclusion offers a compromise solution, but does not support that solution with previously stated ideas:**
  - “. . .school should not make gaming into an official sport. If people want to do gaming they can make a club instead of making it into a sport.

## DEVELOPMENT

- **Demonstrates a lack of understanding of the task. The response would be more persuasive if the writer focused more on arguing whether video gaming should be a sport, rather than just drawing comparisons between conventional sports and video gaming.**
- **Inconsistently develops the argument using facts and evidence that may not support the claim(s). Facts and evidence from the text are used to provide a contrast between the characteristics of conventional sports and video gaming:**

**There are text quotes in Paragraph 2:**

  - “Basketball players, soccer players, and volleyball players.”
  - “Golfers walk for hours on the golf course while displaying extreme concentration.”

**There is paraphrased text in Paragraphs 2 and 4:**

  - “. . .in sports there is some type of physical skill. Making the players exert or sweat involves strength and stamina.”
  - “. . .when people engage in a sport, they must be mentally and physically prepared.”
  - “. . .[video gaming] includes concentration and long hours of practice. However, sports require physical and mental preparation.”

**Elaboration in Paragraph 2 includes original thinking and ideas from personal knowledge:**

- “Many athletes go through extensive training to prepare for there games, including weight lifting, hours of practice, days of hydration, and more.”
- “This takes a lot of effort, this is why sports are very time consuming, Golfers have to have intensive concentration in getting the golf ball in the hole.”

**And in Paragraph 3, the idea of health problems in video gaming is not supported with text evidence but is elaborated with examples from the writer’s personal knowledge:**

- “. . .spend hours daily on screens. . .not the best for brain health. . .studies have shown that being on technology for a long time can cause bad social skills, site problems, and more.”
- “. . .physical sports provides a breath of fresh air and has great health benefits. When playing a sport it is a great work out, making players heart rate go up.”
- **Acknowledges a counterclaim that is loosely related to the argument:**
  - “Some people may consider gaming as an offical sport because it includes concentration and long hours of practice. However, sports require physical and mental preporation.”

## COHERENCE

- **Vocabulary and word choice may be limited or inconsistently used, showing a partial command of the expression of ideas. There is some precise word choice:**
  - “add emphasis,” “extensive training,” “hours of practice,” “time consuming,” “regulation,” “modern world,” “breath of fresh air.”
- **Sentence structure may be simplistic or lacking grade-appropriate language. There is some sentence variety in the response:**
  - “To expand on this point, when people engage in a sport, they must be mentally and physically prepared.”
  - “Whether video gaming is a high school sport or not it teaches mental and concentration skills.”
  - “In the modern world, studies have shown that being on technology for a long time can cause bad social skills, site problems, and more.”
- **Inconsistently establishes a style and tone appropriate to the purpose and audience but does not maintain it throughout the response.**

## Trait 2 Score Point 2

**Meets Expectations:** The response demonstrates a command of language usage and conventions.

- **Demonstrates a consistent command of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. There are some punctuation errors, such as commas used instead of periods to punctuate a sentence, missing periods, and missing apostrophes to indicate possession.**
  - “This takes a lot of effort, this is why sports are very time consuming, Golfers have to have intensive concentration in getting the golf ball in the hole.”
  - “P.E”
  - “peoples,” “players”

**There are also some spelling errors:**

- “Particularly,” “extert,” “Furthermore,” “conterary,” “preporation,” “Additionaly,” “offical,” “scholar ship.”
- **Uses clear and complete sentence structure, with variety. There are some sentence fragments:**
  - “For instance, ‘Basketball players, soccer players, and volleyball players.’”
  - “Especially if people do not have regulations.”
- **Has minor errors in usage and/or conventions that do not interfere with meaning.**
  - “there” for their, “provides” for provide, “has” for have, “site” for sight, “rate” for rates, “consider” for considered, “than” for then, “scholar ships” for “scholarship.”

## Score Justification

- The response organizes some comparisons of videogaming to conventional sports.
- The elaboration includes original thinking and some text evidence.
- These reasons are not adequately connected to the validity of the claim, leaving the reader to determine why these comparisons should persuade the reader that video gaming should not be a high school sport.
- Some precise word choice enhances the response.

## Suggestions for Improvement

- Topic sentences should state why the reason given is connected to the claim. The response is focused on providing a comparison of video gaming to conventional sports, instead of arguing why video gaming should not be a high school sport.
- For each supporting idea within the body of the response, the writer should remind the reader why the ideas presented are convincing support for the claim. For instance, in Paragraph 2, the writer makes the case that conventional sports require physical skill, but never tells the reader that video gaming is missing that requirement. In Paragraph 3, the writer makes the point that conventional sports have more health benefits than video gaming, but leaves it to the reader to make the connection to the claim. The response would be more persuasive if the writer clearly made these connections.
- Elaboration needs to include more text evidence as support for ideas.

**Sample 2 Student Response Score Point****Trait 1: 2****Trait 2: 2**

Video gaming should be a high school sport. People who play video games require the same skills as people who play basketball or football, except for physical skills.

One way it should be a high school sport is it requires a player to make quick decisions. In the text it states, "Just like athletes playing conventional sports, video gamers know that every good decision they make will help their team and every bad decision has the possibility of harming their team's chance of winning." This shows that whatever decision an e-sport athlete makes, just like a sports athlete, can determine how their team does in the future.

Another way video gaming should be a high school sport is they have to be dedicated to practice just like someone who plays basketball or football. In the text, "they do, like all successful athletes, have to be dedicated to practicing and making themselves the best they can be." This shows that in order for an e-sport athlete to get good at what they are doing they have to actually like what they are doing and get better at it.

However, e-sport athletes do not require physical skills like strength and stamina. It could also be very mentally exhausting. In the text it states, "E-sports do not demand the same level of physical exertion that other sports require." Also, the text states, "Admittedly, engaging in e-sports can be mentally exhausting." These show that they might have some of the same similarities, but they are still different from physical sports.

Whether video gaming is a high school sport or not it teaches mental and concentration skills.

## Sample 2 Annotation Score Point 2/2

## Trait 1 Score Point 2

**Minimally Meets Expectations: An incomplete argument that partially supports claims with loosely related text-based evidence.**

## STRUCTURE

- **Makes a claim that may be unclear or insufficiently sustained within the response. The response makes a claim:**
  - “Video gaming should be a high school sport. People who play video games require the same skills as people who play basketball or football, except for physical skills.”
- **Organizational structure may be repetitive or inconsistent. The body of the response is formulaic, as each supporting idea has a topic sentence, then quoted text evidence, and a concluding sentence. In each case, the topic sentence simply restates the text evidence:**
  - “One way it should be a high school sport is it requires a player to make quick decisions.”
  - “Another way video gaming should be a high school sport is they have to be dedicated to practice just like someone who plays basketball or football.”
  - “However, e-sport athletes do not require physical skills like strength and stamina. It could also be very mentally exhausting.”

**The vague concluding sentences for each paragraph do not make a connection to the task:**

  - “This shows that whatever decision an e-sport athlete make, just like a sports athlete, can determine how their team does in the future.”
  - “This shows that in order for an e-sport athlete to get good at what they are doing they have to actually like what they are doing and get better at it.”
  - “These show that they might have the some of the same similarities, but they are still different from physical sports.”
- **Uses transitions to connect ideas but cohesion is inconsistent. The transitions used do not create connections between ideas or help the reader understand how the ideas are related to the claim:**
  - “One way. . .” “Another way. . .” “However. . .” “This shows. . .”
- **The response has an introduction, but the concluding statement is ineffective and ambiguous. Instead of reiterating why the claim is valid, the conclusion states an advantage of video gaming:**
  - “Whether video gaming is a high school sport or not it teaches mental and concentration skills.”

## DEVELOPMENT

- **Demonstrates a lack of understanding of the task. The response lacks reasoning to persuade the reader that the facts presented support the claim.**
- **Inconsistently develops the argument using facts and evidence to support the claim. The response uses text quotes which make comparisons between video gaming and conventional sports:**
  - “Just like athletes playing conventional sports, video gamers know that every good decision they make will help their team and every bad decision has the possibility of harming their team’s chance of winning.”
  - “. . .they do, like all successful athletes, have to be dedicated to practicing and making themselves the best they can be.”
- **Relies too heavily on the text(s) or is repetitive. The reasons in the topic sentences are drawn from the supporting text quotes, and the response lacks further elaboration or original thought to show how the text examples support the claim.**
- **Acknowledges a counterclaim that is loosely related to the argument. The writer acknowledges the differences and similarities between video gaming and other sports, but the response does not connect these characteristics to the validity of the claim.**
  - “However, e-sport athletes do not require physical skills like strength and stamina. It could also be very mentally exhausting.”
  - “These show that they might have some of the same similarities, but they are still different from physical sports.”

## COHERENCE

- **Vocabulary and word choice may be limited or inconsistently used, showing a partial command of the expression of ideas. Vocabulary is drawn from the text:**
  - “physical skill,” “stamina,” “concentration skills.”
- **Sentence structure is simplistic, and language is taken from the text.**
- **Inconsistently establishes a style and tone appropriate to the purpose and audience. The repetitive language and formulaic nature of the response inhibits the development of style and tone.**

**Trait 2 Score Point 2**

**Meets Expectations:** The response demonstrates a command of language usage and conventions.

- **Demonstrates a consistent command of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.**
- **Uses clear and complete sentence structure, with variety.**
- **Has minor errors in usage and/or conventions that do not interfere with meaning.**
  - “make” for makes

**Score Justification**

- **This formulaic response organizes some reasons in support of the claim.**
- **These reasons are not adequately connected to the validity of the claim.**
- **There is some elaboration which reiterates ideas from the text.**

**Suggestions for Improvement**

- **Topic sentences, instead of restating the claim, should state why the reason given is connected to the claim.**
- **Concluding sentences for paragraphs should state why the text evidence is convincing support for the claim.**
- **Elaboration needs to include more original thought to show why the writer thinks the facts from the text are persuasive.**

**Sample 1 Student Response Score Point****Trait 1: 1****Trait 2: 2**

i think that vidoegaming for an esports team should be cosidered a sport. i say this because the only requirement for an activity to be called a sports is for there to be a competition. think about it, eveyr sport has that one fact in common, they all include some kind of competition between 2 or more people. one counterclaim that i have heard in the past is that all sports must involve some kind of physical work. and to that i say, "what about golf?" i say this because in the passage i read, the writer mentions that, even though golf is low labor and not physicaly difficult, it is still recognized as a sport.

## Sample 1 Annotation Score Point 1/1

## Trait 1 Score Point 1

**Does Not Meet Expectations:** The response is a weak attempt to write an argument and does not support claims with adequate text-based evidence.

## STRUCTURE

- **Claim may be confusing, demonstrating a misunderstanding of the task. The response argues that video gaming for an e-sports team should be a sport, but not that it should be a high school sport.**
  - “i think that vidoegaming for an esports team should be cosidered a sport.”
- **Demonstrates little organizational structure. There is an introductory statement, but the response lacks a concluding statement. There is little attempt to organize ideas in the body of the response, which consists of a reason, supporting detail, counterclaim, and supporting detail.**
- **Transitions may be missing or confusing. There are some attempts to use transitions, but these transitions do not create connections between ideas:**
  - “I say this because”
  - “and to that i say”
- **A concluding statement is missing from the response.**

## DEVELOPMENT

- **Relies too heavily on the text(s) for ideas. The idea of a competition requirement to support the claim and the idea of physical work for the counterclaim are both taken from the text:**
  - “. . .the only requirement for an activity to be called a sports is for there to be a competition.”
  - “one counterclaim that i have heard in the past is that all sports must involve some kind of physical work.”
- **Elaboration of thoughts may consist of vague ideas. The idea of competition from the text is reiterated in an attempt at elaboration, but the writer never explains how competition is related to video gaming. The elaboration for the counterclaim is also from the text, but the writer never explains the connection between video gaming and a “low labor” sport:**
  - “. . .eveyr sport has that one fact in common, they all include some kind of competition between 2 or more people.”
  - “. . .even though golf is low labor and not physically difficult, it is still recognized as a sport.”
- **Acknowledges a counterclaim that is loosely related to the argument:**
  - “one counterclaim that i have heard in the past is that all sports must involve some kind of physical work. and to that i say, ‘what about golf?’”

## COHERENCE

- **Vocabulary and word choice may be limited or inconsistently used, showing a partial command of the expression of ideas**
- **Sentence structure may be simplistic and is somewhat repetitive:**
  - “i think that video gaming for an esports team. . .”
  - “i say this because. . .”
  - “. . .i have heard in the past. . .”
  - “. . .i say, ‘what about golf?’”
- **The writer attempts to create an informal tone in the response by using first person pronouns, but this tends to shift the focus from the elements of the argument to the writer’s opinion.**

**Trait 2 Score Point 1**

**Does Not Meet Expectations:** The response demonstrates a weak command of language usage and conventions.

- **Demonstrates an inconsistent command of capitalization and spelling. The first letters in sentences and the personal pronouns “i” are not capitalized throughout the response. There are also spelling errors:**
  - “videogaming,” “cosidered,” “eveyr,” “physicaly.”
- **There is a minor error in sentence structure, using commas to separate independent clauses:**
  - “think about it, eveyr sport has that one fact in common, they all include some kind of competition between 2 or more people.”
- **There is a minor error in usage that does not interfere with meaning:**
  - “sports”

**Score Justification**

- The response argues that video gaming for an e-sports team should be a sport, but not specifically that it should be a high school sport.
- There is little organizational structure in the body of the response, and there is no conclusion.
- There is little support given for the validity of the claim before the writer introduces the counterclaim.
- A counterclaim related to text ideas is included.
- Both the claim and counterclaim are elaborated with evidence from the text, but the response lacks original thinking from the student to connect ideas.

**Suggestions for Improvement**

- Make a claim that is focused on the task.
- Organize supporting reasons in the body of the response.
- Use transitions to connect ideas so that the reader knows how those ideas are related to the claim and to each other.
- Support ideas with further elaboration, including original thought and more text evidence.

**Sample 2 Student Response Score Point 1/1**

the video game today is not that only thing u can play sport anything you want i dont think the video game become to school becuase people its gone do noting my opion is no  
for me athletes dont was to play any video games cuz is decisions the is gon afeaccts a lot players  
they was to have good diet with that food drink a lot water go to the gym sleep 9 hours  
proably in the high they was to put video game for the players for one part is good in for ah other is not good

## Sample 2 Annotation Score Point

Trait 1: 1

Trait 2: 2

### Trait 1 Score Point 1

**Does Not Meet Expectations:** The response is a weak attempt to write an argument and does not support claims with adequate text-based evidence.

#### STRUCTURE

- **Claim is confusing, demonstrating a misunderstanding of the task. The writer argues that video games shouldn't be in high schools, not whether video games should be a high school sport:**
  - "i dont think the video game become to school"
  - "my opion is no"
- **Demonstrates little to no organizational structure. Although there are introductory and concluding statements, there is no attempt to organize ideas in the body of the response.**
- **Transitions may be missing or confusing. There are some attempts to use transitions, but these transitions do not connect ideas:**
  - "for me," "proably."
- **An introduction section and a concluding statement are present in the response. The introduction states the claim, but the concluding statement is ambiguous:**
  - "proably in the high they was to put video game for the players for one part is good in for ah other is not good"

#### DEVELOPMENT

- **Includes reasons, but these are not supported by evidence from the text(s):**
  - ". . .people its gone do noting. . ."
  - "for me athletes dont was to play any video games cuz is decisions the is gon afeaccts a lot players"
- **Evidence from the text(s) is missing or confusing. While evidence from the text is not used to support the claim, the response does have some vague references to the text:**
  - "athletes," "players."
- **Elaboration of thoughts may consist of vague or confusing ideas. The writer uses examples from personal knowledge to support the idea that video games would adversely affect athletes who should be spending their time more wisely. The response lacks elaboration to tell the reader how these examples support the claim:**
  - ". . .people its gone do noting. . ."
  - ". . .is decisions the is gon afeaccts a lot players. . ."
  - "they was to have good diet with that food drink a lot water go to the gym sleep 9 hours"
- **Counterclaim is missing or confusing. Only the concluding statement acknowledges an opposing perspective:**
  - ". . .for one part is good in for ah other is not good"

**COHERENCE**

- **Vocabulary and word choice may be unclear or confusing.**
- **Sentence structure may be confusing.**
- **The writer attempts to create a formal tone in the response, but conventions errors interfere with coherence.**

**Trait 2 Score Point 1**

The response demonstrates a pattern of errors that significantly interfere with meaning.

- Severe errors in sentence formation, usage, spelling, and punctuation are present throughout the response, making it difficult for the reader to understand ideas and follow the writer's argument.

**Score Justification**

- The response argues that video games in high school are not a good idea, but not whether video gaming should be a high school sport.
- Reasons are included to support the claim as the writer chooses examples, possibly from personal experience, to show the reader what athletes should be doing instead of playing video games.

**Suggestions for Improvement**

- Make a claim that is focused on the task.
- Organize supporting reasons in the body of the response.
- Use transitions to connect ideas so that the reader knows how those ideas are related to the claim.
- Support ideas with elaboration, including original thoughts and text evidence.

**Sample 1 Student Response Score Point 0**

Video games shouldnt be a sport for high school students. “many people believe that to be considered a sport, an activity must involle some type of intense physical activity”. This is why video games shoundt be a sport.

**Score Justification**

The response is too limited to score. The response states a claim that “video games shouldnt be a sport” and includes a text quote as support. The vague concluding statement attempts to connect the text to the claim “this is why,” but the response lacks elaboration to persuade the reader that “intense physical activity,” or the lack of it, is related to the claim. To obtain a score of 1, the response needs a minimal attempt to persuade by presenting some reasoning that the text selection supports the claim.

**Sample 2 Student Response Score Point 0**

yes because a lot of people would love to join the sport and actually try and compete with eachother. a lot of people would be interested in playing it a lot since videos games are very popular in this society all over the world.

**Score Justification**

The response answers “yes” without stating a claim or specifically identifying a sport. The response includes some vague reasons, but it isn’t clear to the reader why “people would love to join the sport” or why people should want to “compete with eachother.” The response attempts to make a connection between interest and popularity: “people would be interested in playing it” because “videos games are very popular,” but there is no elaboration to explain how these ideas support the “yes” answer. There is no attempt to organize or connect ideas. There are no transitions, and the two sentences could be presented in reverse order without affecting the meaning of the response. To obtain a score of 1, the response needs to provide a clearer claim and include some elaboration to persuade the reader that one of these reasons supports the idea that video gaming should be a high school sport.

