



**English Language Arts
Grade 7**

**Sample Text-Dependent
Writing Item**

To Persuade
(through Argument)

Table of Contents

General Introduction	1
Purpose	1
To Persuade (through Argument) Rubric	2
Text-Dependent Writing (TDW) Passage and Task	6
Sample Student Responses and Annotations	9
Sample 1 Student Response – Score Point 4	9
Sample 2 Student Response – Score Point 4	16
Sample 3 Student Response – Score Point 3	21
Sample 4 Student Response – Score Point 3	26
Sample 5 Student Response – Score Point 2	30
Sample 6 Student Response – Score Point 2	34
Sample 7 Student Response – Score Point 1	38
Sample 8 Student Response – Score Point 1	42
Sample 9 Student Response – Score Point 0	45
Sample 10 Student Response – Score Point 0	46

General Introduction

The South Carolina Department of Education provides districts and schools with tools to assist in delivering focused instruction aligned with the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards. The Text-Dependent Writing (TDW) sampler was designed as a resource for South Carolina educators to provide guidance and clarity around state summative assessment.

This document contains an example of an argumentative TDW from the SC READY English Language Arts assessment. The TDW item is composed of a reading passage(s) and a writing task aligned to the *2024 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts Standards*. The passage(s) and task 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 requires that students read a passage(s) and respond to a task while drawing upon the text for their written responses. 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. Each student's response is then scored using the SC READY TDW Scoring Guidelines.

The TDW sampler contains student responses that illustrate the score points described in the holistic rubric and represent a point range of 4 (highest) to 1 (lowest). These responses contain a combination of reader-scored responses and teacher committee-scored responses established during rangefinding. Each response is scored holistically by domain: structure, development, and language. Scores within each domain are earned by demonstrating most of the descriptors within a score point.

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

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. SC READY assesses content standards in a variety of ways. This document does not include all item types or standards.

To Persuade (through Argument) Rubric

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

Structure

- Effectively introduces a claim(s) focused on the task
- Skillfully maintains the claim 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 the claim(s), a counterclaim, reasons, and evidence
- Provides an effective introduction and a concluding statement or section that supports the argument presented

Development

- Effectively demonstrates a thorough understanding of the task and topic
- 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 the argument
- Acknowledges a counterclaim

NOTE: Rebutting and/or refuting a counterclaim is not a 7th grade indicator per the TDW Argumentative rubric.

Language

- Integrates precise vocabulary to skillfully strengthen and further ideas, showing a command of the expression of ideas
- Skillful use of varied sentence types and phrasing to contribute to the fluidity of ideas
- Has very few or no errors in usage and conventions
- Uses a voice that enhances the overall response

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

Structure

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

Development

- Demonstrates an understanding of the task
- Integrates elaboration of thoughts which includes original student thinking combined with summary, paraphrasing, and/or text evidence to support the argument
- Acknowledges a counterclaim

Language

- Integrates vocabulary to strengthen and further ideas
- Uses varied sentence types and phrases to contribute to the fluidity of ideas
- Has a few minor errors in usage and conventions with no significant effect on meaning

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

Structure

- Introduces a claim(s) that may be unclear
- Inconsistently maintains the claim throughout the response
- Uses a weak, inconsistent, or repetitive organizational structure
- Uses transitions to connect ideas but cohesion is inconsistent
- Provides an introduction and concluding statement or section that may be weak, repetitive, or ineffective

Development

- Response may demonstrate a partial 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 or may be repetitive
- Lacks acknowledgment of a counterclaim

Language

- Vocabulary and word choice may be limited or inconsistently used, showing a partial command of the expression of ideas
- Uses varied sentence types and phrases inconsistently
- Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that sometimes interfere with readability

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 unrelated to the response

Development

- Response may be too brief to demonstrate an understanding of the topic or may consist mostly of a summary of the text(s)
- Evidence from the text(s) may be absent or confusing
- Elaboration of thoughts may consist of vague or confusing ideas
- Does not acknowledge a counterclaim

Language

- Vocabulary and word choice may be unclear or confusing
- Sentence structure may be confusing
- Has frequent major errors in usage and conventions that interfere with readability

Text-Dependent Writing (TDW) Passage and Task

Read the passage. Then respond to the TDW task.

Why Do Zebras Have Stripes?

Why do zebras have stripes? Scientists have searched for possible answers to this question for many years. Recently, a research team may be getting closer to solving the mystery.

Past Scientific Hypotheses

Socialization

There is an unsupported hypothesis called socialization that is related to the possible function of zebra stripes. The socialization hypothesis predicts that having stripes helps zebras identify and locate mates. This hypothesis is based on zebras' stripes being as unique as human fingerprints; no two zebras have identical stripes. The hypothesis of socialization has been found to be unlikely because other animals are able to recognize one another without the help of stripes.

Body Temperature

Another unsupported hypothesis about why zebras have stripes is related to body temperature regulation. Since dark colors absorb more heat energy than light colors, research proposed that the combination of dark and light stripes helped zebras regulate their body temperatures. The hypothesis proposed that the combination of black and white stripes created a cooling air current that flowed over the surface of zebras' bodies. The hypothesis of body temperature has been found to be unlikely because this regulation process would only work on a resting animal. Movements by a zebra would break up any currents created by the stripes.

A Past Hypothesis Renewed

An old hypothesis that is now gaining renewed acceptance among today's researchers is that zebras have stripes to evade biting insects. These researchers found that some insects avoid landing on a zebra's black-and-white stripes. This hypothesis is further supported by the discovery that zebras living in regions with large fly populations have more stripes than zebras living in other locations.

In 2019, a research team experimented with horses and zebras by observing how a specific kind of fly responded to each type of mammal. As part of their observation, the research team recorded the number of flies buzzing around, landing on, and biting the mammals. Researchers covered each horse with a solid black cloth, a solid white cloth, or a black-and-white striped cloth. Only the horses' heads and ears remained uncovered.

Through careful observation, the research team discovered that:

- flies slowed down before landing on horses,
- flies did not slow down when nearing zebras,
- flies avoided the striped cloths covering the horses but did land on their uncovered heads, and
- flies more frequently landed on solid-colored cloths than on striped cloths.

Is It Important?

While much of the research on why zebras have stripes is exciting, there are those who believe it is a waste of time. Their reasoning revolves around many questions, including the following: Why is it important to know why zebras have stripes? Is any information gained from the research worth the cost of finding out? People with this perspective point out that money is spent on setting up experiments, on the researchers' time, and on the time it takes to record results. There will always be questions around any experiments that researchers conduct, but questions of importance and money spent are probably the biggest two.

Next Steps

Although researchers do not fully understand why black-and-white stripes discourage some insects, there is speculation that the stripes may disrupt the insects' vision. Further research is needed to answer the question: Why do biting flies avoid striped surfaces? For now, researchers are getting closer to finding out the answer to why zebras have stripes.

Text-Dependent Writing (TDW) Question

It takes time and money to conduct research projects. Is it worth the time and money to research why zebras have stripes? Choose one side, and then write an argumentative response in which you persuade readers whether time and money should be spent on this research project. Acknowledge a counterclaim in your response. Use evidence from the passage and your own ideas to support your claim.

Sample Student Responses and Annotations

Sample 1 Student Response – Score Point 4

Investigating zebras is worth it because of how much we could possibly learn from it. This claim can be supported because if the insect hypothesis is true it can prevent millions of deaths, teach us more about biting flies as a whole, and maybe learn about the problems zebras had to go through evolution to solve.

If the hypothesis about biting flies is true, it can prevent millions of deaths each year. In places like Africa, bugs like mosquitos carry deadly diseases like Malaria to places it really can't be treated. This results in mosquitos being the deadliest animal, statistically. In the text it says, "Researchers covered each horse with a solid black cloth, a solid white cloth, or a black-and-white striped cloth. Only the horses' heads and ears remained uncovered... flies avoided the striped cloths covering horses but did land on their uncovered heads...flies more freuently landed on solid-colored cloths than on striped cloths." If we had knowledge that these bugs were less likley to bite with such a cheap and easily available solution, it could prevent so much death in places were biting bugs are a problem.

As well, if the hypothesis about biting flies is true it could teach us more about biting flies as a whole in general. If we learned that they didn't like the black-and-white stripes, then that would teach scientists more about how they, and maybe some related species, brains work. This could give us a headstart on other ways to prevent bugs biting us. The text tells us that "These researchers found that some insects avoid landing on zebra's black-and-white stripes." With this information, we could learn a lot more about biting bugs, as it really does show that biting bugs are in fact unatracted to the stripes, which could be a big deal for the researchers actually trying to understand the bugs better. As well as this, the speculation on how the stripes disrupt the flie's vision could tell us more about the flies. We learn this one when it says "flies slowed down before landing on horses, flies did not slow down before landing on zebras." This can be backed up, because the flies moves slow towards the horse, like it knows it's going to land. But then with the zebra, it keeps going fast like it doesn't see anything.

At last, If the hypothesis about biting flies is true it can teach us about the problems zebras faced before they had stripes. Just knowing that zebras possibly have stripes to defend from biting bugs can tell us about the evolution they went through to have stripes. This all comes from when the text tells us "These researchers found that some insects avoid landing on zebra's black-and white stripes." Based of what we know from the text, and especially this sentence, that an animal doesn't just come with this 'feature', it has to evolve in one way or another. This can tell us that maybe zebras haven't always had stripes, and maybe they gained stripes because of these bugs.

One may say that why zebras have stripes is like asking why the sky is blue, and that it's to time consuming and expensive to keep reaserching. Well, we can disprove this because based on the knowledge we have learned so far, knowing more about how the animals have evolved and how they think, not to mention possibly saving lives is worth a bit of the researchers time. This can be supported by how it could be a solution to one of the deadliest problems, like we learned. In the text it says, "Researchers covered each horse with a solid black cloth, a solid white cloth, or a black-and-white striped cloth. Only the horses' heads and ears remained uncovered...Flies avoided the striped cloths covering horses but did land on their uncovered heads...flies more freuently landed on solid-colored cloths than on striped cloths." With this, we can once again prove that we may be able to save lives with this new knowledge.

Sample 1 Student Response – Score Point 4 (continued)

So at the end of the day, Investigating zebras may actually be worth it because of how much we might learn from it. This claim can be supported because the insect hypothesis shows that the reasearch may be able to prevent millions of deaths, teach us more about biting flies as a whole, and maybe learn about the problems zebras had to go through evolution to solve.

Sample 1 Annotation – 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

- **Effectively introduces a claim(s) focused on the task by presenting the claim, as well as the supporting reasons to prove the claim is valid:**
 - “Investigating zebras is worth it because of how much we could possibly learn from it. This claim can be supported because if the insect hypothesis is true it can prevent millions of deaths, teach us more about biting flies as a whole, and maybe learn about the problems zebras had to go through evolution to solve.”
- **Skillfully maintains the claim throughout the response as the writer consistently argues in favor of the research:**
 - The writer consistently argues the position that research into the behavior of biting flies will help save lives. The argument is supported by text evidence and original thinking, with some elaboration from the writer’s personal knowledge.
- **Uses an organizational structure that effectively strengthens the response:**
 - The body of the response has organized and developed supporting ideas that help to support the claim. Sentence variety and the use of introductory phrases create a strong progression of ideas, within and between body paragraphs. Reasons are supported with text and original thought that is focused on the importance of understanding more about the behavior of dangerous biting insects.
 - ▶ “If the hypothesis about biting flies is true, it can prevent millions of deaths each year.”
 - ▶ “As well, if the hypothesis about biting flies is true it could teach us more about biting flies as a whole in general.”
 - ▶ “At last, If the hypothesis about biting flies is true it can teach us about the problems zebras faced before they had stripes.”
 - The refutation of the counterclaim allows the writer to prove the superiority of the original claim, arguing that the research may provide a solution to defeat deadly diseases and may have implications for the understanding of why zebras evolved the stripes.
- **Uses varied transitional words and phrases to skillfully create cohesion and clarify the relationships between the claim(s), a counterclaim, reasons, and evidence.**
 - Sentence variety also contributes to the consistent transitioning:
 - ▶ “If the hypothesis” “In places” “If we had” “As well” “If we learned” “With this information” “As well as this” “We learn this one when it says” “This can be backed up” “But then” “At last” “Just knowing” “This all comes from when” “Based of” “One may say” “Well, we can” “This can be supported by” “In the text” “With this, we can” “So at the end of the day”

- **Provides an effective introduction and a concluding statement or section that supports the argument presented.**
 - The introduction states the claim and provides the supporting ideas:
 - ▶ “Investigating zebras is worth it because of how much we could possibly learn from it. This claim can be supported because if the insect hypothesis is true it can prevent millions of deaths, teach us more about biting flies as a whole, and maybe learn about the problems zebras had to go through evolution to solve.”
 - The conclusion repeats the information presented in the introduction:
 - ▶ “So at the end of the day, Investigating zebras may actually be worth it because of how much we might learn from it. This claim can be supported because the insect hypothesis shows that the research may be able to prevent millions of deaths, teach us more about biting flies as a whole, and maybe learn about the problems zebras had to go through evolution to solve.”

DEVELOPMENT

- **Effectively demonstrates a thorough understanding of the task and topic:**
 - The writer consistently supports ideas with relevant text evidence and elaboration to convince the reader that the research will save lives, demonstrating an understanding of the task. The elaboration is enhanced by the writer’s knowledge of the danger of the diseases transmitted by biting flies.
- **Integrates reasons that are supported by facts and relevant evidence from the text(s).**
 - The first reason has quoted text support, describing the results of the research:
 - ▶ “If the hypothesis about biting flies is true, it can prevent millions of deaths each year.”
 - ▶ “In the text it says, ‘Researchers covered each horse with a solid black cloth, a solid white cloth, or a black-and-white striped cloth. Only the horses’ heads and ears remained uncovered...flies avoided the striped cloths covering horses but did land on their uncovered heads...flies more frequently landed on solid-colored cloths than on striped cloths.’”
 - The second reason combines multiple text quotes to describe the interaction between the flies and the animals:
 - ▶ “As well, if the hypothesis about biting flies is true it could teach us more about biting flies as a whole in general.”
 - ▶ “These researchers found that some insects avoid landing on zebra’s black-and-white stripes”
 - ▶ “flies slowed down before landing on horses, flies did not slow down before landing on zebras.”
 - The third reason is supported by the same quoted text as the second reason:
 - ▶ “At last, If the hypothesis about biting flies is true it can teach us about the problems zebras faced before they had stripes.”
 - ▶ “These researchers found that some insects avoid landing on zebra’s black-and white stripes.”

- **Smoothly integrates elaboration of thoughts which includes original student thinking combined with summary, paraphrasing, and/or text evidence to support the argument.**
 - For the first reason, the writer uses personal knowledge to clarify the importance of the research and explain how the research would be beneficial:
 - ▶ “In places like Africa, bugs like mosquitos carry deadly diseases like Malaria to places it really can’t be treated. This results in mosquitos being the deadliest animal, statistically.”
 - ▶ “If we had knowledge that these bugs were less likley to bite with such a cheap and easily available solution, it could prevent so much death in places were biting bugs are a problem.”
 - For the second reason, the elaboration combines original thinking and paraphrased text to clarify what could be learned:
 - ▶ “If we learned that they didn’t like the black-and-white stripes, then that would teach scientists more about how they, and maybe some related species, brains work. This could give us a headstart on other ways to prevent bugs biting us.”
 - ▶ “With this information, we could learn a lot more about biting bugs, as it really does show that biting bugs are in fact unatracted to the stripes, which could be a big deal for the researchers actually trying to understand the bugs better. As well as this, the speculation on how the stripes disrupt the flie’s vision could tell us more about the flies.”
 - ▶ “This can be backed up, because the flies moves slow towards the horse, like it knows it’s going to land. But then with the zebra, it keeps going fast like it doesn’t see anything.”
 - For the third reason, the writer speculates that the stripes may be a result of an evolutionary change to allow the zebras to evade biting insects:
 - ▶ “Just knowing that zebras possibly have stripes to defend from biting bugs can tell us about the evolution they went through to have stripes.”
 - ▶ “Based of what we know from the text, and especially this sentence, that an animal doesn’t just come with this ‘feature’, it has to evolve in one way or another. This can tell us that maybe zebras haven’t always had stripes, and maybe they gained stripes because of these bugs.”
- **Acknowledges a counterclaim.**
 - The counterclaim is acknowledged, refuted, and developed with elaboration which includes reasoning and text support that describes the research results:
 - ▶ “One may say that why Zebras have stripes is like asking why the sky is blue, and that it’s to time consuming and expensive to keep reaserching. Well, we can disprove this because based on the knowledge we have learned so far, knowing more about how the animals have evolved and how they think, not to mention possibly saving lives is worth a bit of the researchers time. This can be supported by how it could be a solution to one of the deadliest problems, like we learned... With this, we can once again prove that we may be able to save lives with this new knowledge.”
 - ▶ “Researchers covered each horse with a solid black cloth, a solid white cloth, or a black-and-white striped cloth. Only the horses’ heads and ears remained uncovered... Flies avoided the striped cloths covering horses but did land on their uncovered heads...flies more freuently landed on solid-colored cloths than on striped cloths.”

LANGUAGE

- **Integrates precise vocabulary to skillfully strengthen and further ideas, showing a command of the expression of ideas:**
 - “Investigating” “insect hypothesis” “evolution” “deadliest animal” “statistically” “easily available” “related species” “headstart” “unattracted” “speculation” “problems faced” “feature”
- **Skillful use of varied sentence types and phrasing to contribute to the fluidity of ideas:**
 - “With this information, we could learn a lot more about biting bugs, as it really does show that biting bugs are in fact unattracted to the stripes, which could be a big deal for the researchers actually trying to understand the bugs better. As well as this, the speculation on how the stripes disrupt the flie’s vision could tell us more about the flies.”
- **Has very few or no errors in usage and conventions.**
 - There are errors in spelling:
 - ▶ “freuently” “likley” “were” “headstart” “flie’s” “reaserching”
 - Errors in usage:
 - ▶ “moves” for move, “of” for on, “to” for too, “death” for deaths
 - And errors in punctuation
 - ▶ “researchers” (missing apostrophe)
- **Uses a voice that enhances the overall response.**
 - The writing is consistently persuasive and confident, assisted by effective word choice and phrasing, as the writer convinces the reader of the validity of the argument:
 - ▶ “If the hypothesis about biting flies is true, it can prevent millions of deaths each year. In places like Africa, bugs like mosquitos carry deadly diseases like Malaria to places it really can’t be treated. This results in mosquitos being the deadliest animal, statistically.”
 - ▶ “One may say that why Zebras have stripes is like asking why the sky is blue, and that it’s to time consuming and expensive to keep reaserching.”

Score Justification

- There is a clear claim, and the focus is maintained on that claim throughout the response.
- There is an effective organizational structure which introduces the supporting reasons to be developed within the response and restates those reasons in the conclusion.
- There are varied transitional words and phrases to connect ideas.
- The skillful and effective elaboration of ideas includes original thinking combined with text evidence to support the argument.
- A counterclaim is acknowledged and refuted.
- Precise word choice enhances the response.

Suggestions for Improvement

- The introduction and conclusion closely mirror each other. The response would be more effective if the claim were explained more thoroughly in the introduction. The conclusion would be more effective if, instead of restating the supporting ideas, it showed the writer's final thoughts about these ideas.
- Evidence from other parts of the passage should be used to demonstrate a more thorough understanding of passage ideas.

Sample 2 Student Response – Score Point 4

Scientific reasearch is important. It allows humans to further understand the world and its inhabitants while providing us with the neccessary knowladge for inovation. Most reasearch will give humans something of value in resources or knowladge. Due to this, I believe that investigating the reason for zebra’s stripes is important as, previously stated, it can provide scientists with correct information and valuble knowladge that can be used to help people.

First, through reasearch, facts and ideas can be proven right or wrong. This is supported through the paragraphs *Socialization* and *Body Temperature* as they are both about ideas that were once proposed as reasons for zebra’s stripes, but have now been deemed unlikely. Through this, the reader is shown how reaserach allows for scientists to aquire true information. By knowing this, scientists can avoid trying to implement these past ideas of stripes usefulness to other areas. Reasearch allows scientists to avoid spreading false information about socialization and body temperature. The research is worth it so we know if ideas are true and can be applied to other areas.

Second, research allows for innovation as the knowledge aquired through research can be used to develop or create a new idea. In the section, “*A Past Hypothesis Renewed*,” the hypothesis that zebra’s stripes allow them to evade bug bites is supported, the author writing, “Researchers found that some insects avoid landing on zebra’s black and white stripes. This hypothesis is further supported by the disocery that zebras living in regions with large fly populations have more stripes than zebras living in other locations.” Due to this, the reader is able to see that scientists have been able to aquire knowledge because of the reasearch on the reason for zebra’s stripes. This could be used to help people as striped clothing could be used to evade some bugs in areas where bug spray is not accesible, showing that researching the reason for zebra’s stripes is not useless. Research is critical for every invention and idea, and every area of reasearch provides the critical information needed for those ideas to be made into reality.

Now some claim that the investigation of the reasons for zebra’s stripes is useless and a large waste of money and time. This is a valid arguement as money and time are used to aquire information from research, but it should also be taken into acount that the information from this reasearch can be beneficial. By using the knowledge aquired to help others or make a profit, the time, money, and energy used to aquire said knowledge would not have been wasted. While the investigation for the reasons behind zebra’s stripes is not our biggest need, it would still be able to allow so many to be helped.

Lastly, the investigation for the question, “*Why do Zebras Have Stripes*,” should countinue as it allows for new and true information to be aquired and applied in new ideas and creations. All creations and ideas are not possible without reasearch. Humans have only advanced this far because we are able to investigate and apply knowledge to our lives and creations. So, if reasearch provides so much for us, why should we not invest a little more into finding out more about the striped animal?

Sample 2 Annotation – 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

- **Effectively introduces a claim(s) focused on the task:**
 - “I believe that investigating the reason for zebra’s stripes is important as, previously stated, it can provide scientists with correct information and valuable knowledge that can be used to help people.”
- **Skillfully maintains the claim throughout the response:**
 - The writer consistently argues the position that research and acquired knowledge are beneficial to society and are worth the effort. The writer remains focused on the importance of discovering the truthfulness of ideas to learn which ideas are pertinent to helping people. The argument is supported by text evidence and original thinking, with some elaboration from the writer’s personal knowledge.
- **Uses an organizational structure that effectively strengthens the response.**
 - The writer leads the reader through the argument that the research project is worth the effort. Sentence variety and the use of introductory phrases create a strong progression of ideas, within and between body paragraphs. Reasons are supported with text and original thought that is focused on the importance of acquiring accurate knowledge that will be of benefit to society:
 - ▶ “First, through reasearch, facts and ideas can be proven right or wrong.”
 - ▶ “Second, research allows for innovation as the knowledge aquired through research can be used to develop or create a new idea.”
 - The presentation of the counterclaim allows the writer to prove the superiority of the original claim, and the conclusion reiterates the idea that the new information discovered will be applicable to human life, thereby supporting the idea that the research is vital to humanity.
- **Uses varied transitional words and phrases to skillfully create cohesion and clarify the relationships between the claim(s), a counterclaim, reasons, and evidence.**
 - Transitional words and sentence variety serve to make connections between ideas:
 - ▶ “Due to this” “First, through reasearch” “This is supported” “Through this” “By knowing this” “Second” “In the section” “Now some claim” “While the investigation” “Lastly” “So, if”

- **Provides an effective introduction and a concluding statement or section that supports the argument presented.**
 - The introduction presents the concept of the importance of scientific research before stating the claim:
 - ▶ “Scientific reasearch is important. It allows humans to further understand the world and its inhabitants while providing us with the neccessary knowladge for inovation. Most reasearch will give humans something of value in resources or knowladge. Due to this, I believe that investigating the reason for zebra’s stripes is important as, previously stated, it can provide scientists with correct information and valuble knowladge that can be used to help people.”
 - The conclusion reiterates ideas and reminds the reader that learning and applying knowledge to humans has made lives better, so the research is worth the investment:
 - ▶ “Lastly, the investigation for the question, ‘*Why do Zebras Have Stripes,*’ should countinue as it allows for new and true information to be aquired and applied in new ideas and creations. All creations and ideas are not possible without reasearch. Humans have only advanced this far because we are able to investigate and apply knowledge to our lives and creations. So, if reasearch provides so much for us, why should we not invest a little more into finding out more about the striped animal?”

DEVELOPMENT

- **Effectively demonstrates a thorough understanding of the task and topic:**
 - The writer consistently supports ideas with relevant text evidence and elaboration to convince the reader of the validity of the claim, demonstrating an understanding of the task. The elaboration shows deeper thinking about passage ideas, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the topic.
- **Integrates reasons that are supported by facts and relevant evidence from the text(s).**
 - The first reason has paraphrased text support:
 - ▶ “First, through reasearch, facts and ideas can be proven right or wrong.”
 - ▶ “This is supported through the paragraphs *Socialization* and *Body Temperature* as they are both about ideas that were once proposed as reasons for zebra’s stripes, but have now been deemed unlikely.”
 - The second reason has quoted text support:
 - ▶ “Second, research allows for innovation as the knowledge aquired through research can be used to develop or create a new idea.”
 - ▶ “Researchers found that some insects avoid landing on zebra’s black and white stripes. This hypothesis is further supported by the disocery that zebras living in regions with large fly populations have more stripes than zebras living in other locations.”

- **Smoothly integrates elaboration of thoughts which includes original student thinking combined with summary, paraphrasing, and/or text evidence to support the argument.**
 - For the first reason, the elaboration clarifies why it is important to do research to debunk old (and false) ideas:
 - ▶ “Through this, the reader is shown how reaserach allows for scientists to aquire true information. By knowing this, scientists can avoid trying to implement these past ideas of stripes usefulness to other areas. Reasearch allows scientists to avoid spreading false information about socialization and body temperature. The research is worth it so we know if ideas are true and can be applied to other areas.”
 - For the second reason, the elaboration clarifies how the valuable knowledge acquired during the research can be helpful to people:
 - ▶ “Due to this, the reader is able to see that scientists have been able to aquire knowledge because of the reasearch on the reason for zebra’s stripes. This could be used to help people as striped clothing could be used to evade some bugs in areas where bug spray is not accesible, showing that researching the reason for zebra’s stripes is not useless. Research is critical for every invention and idea, and every area of reasearch provides the critical information needed for those ideas to be made into reality.”
- **Acknowledges a counterclaim.**
 - The counterclaim is acknowledged and rebutted with original thought and reasoning to show the reader the superiority of the writer’s original claim:
 - ▶ “Now some claim that the investigation of the reasons for zebra’s stripes is useless and a large waste of money and time. This is a valid arguement as money and time are used to aquire information from research, but it should also be taken into acount that the information from this reasearch can be beneficial. By using the knowledge aquired to help others or make a profit, the time, money, and energy used to aquire said knowledge would not have been wasted. While the investigation for the reasons behind zebra’s stripes is not our biggest need, it would still be able to allow so many to be helped.”

LANGUAGE

- **Integrates precise vocabulary to skillfully strengthen and further ideas, showing a command of the expression of ideas:**
 - “inhabitants” “inovation” “resources” “implement” “allows for” “aquired” “evade” “accesible” “disocery” “critical” “made into reality” “beneficial” “make a profit” “biggest need” “advanced this far” “investigate” “apply knowledge” “invest a little more”
- **Skillful use of varied sentence types and phrasing to contribute to the fluidity of ideas:**
 - “This is a valid arguement as money and time are used to aquire information from research, but it should also be taken into acount that the information from this reasearch can be beneficial. By using the knowledge aquired to help others or make a profit, the time, money, and energy used to aquire said knowledge would not have been wasted. While the investigation for the reasons behind zebra’s stripes is not our biggest need, it would still be able to allow so many to be helped.”

- **Has very few or no errors in usage and conventions.**
 - There are some errors in spelling:
 - ▶ “reasearch” “inovation” “neccesary” “knowladge” “valuble” “unlikly” “aquire” “accesible” “arguement” “acount” “countinue”
 - And a missing apostrophe:
 - ▶ “stripes usefulness”
- **Uses a voice that enhances the overall response.**
 - The language is formal as the knowledgeable writer argues for the benefits of research and knowledge gained:
 - ▶ “Due to this, the reader is able to see that scientists have been able to aquire knowledge because of the reasearch on the reason for zebra’s stripes. This could be used to help people as striped clothing could be used to evade some bugs in areas where bug spray is not accesible, showing that researching the reason for zebra’s stripes is not useless. Research is critical for every invention and idea, and every area of reasearch provides the critical information needed for those ideas to be made into reality.”

Score Justification

- **The response has a strong organizational structure, with internal transitions to effectively connect ideas.**
- **The response effectively introduces the claim and maintains focus on presenting an argument in favor of that claim.**
- **A counterclaim is acknowledged and rebutted.**
- **Relevant evidence and elaboration, including original thinking, demonstrate thorough understanding of the task and topic. A strength of the response is the deeper thinking demonstrated by the writer. The elaboration goes far beyond explaining the literal meaning of the quotes. Instead, the writer thinks deeply about the ideas and explains their importance.**
- **The use of precise vocabulary, a variety of sentence types, and voice enhance the response.**

Suggestions for Improvement

- **The use of more varied transitions would help to lead the reader smoothly through the response.**
- **Instead of using blocks of text support, it would be more effective to integrate relevant paraphrased text with the elaboration.**

Sample 3 Student Response – Score Point 3

If you never look into something, you will never find out about it. This means if you want to research something and someone convinces you to not do it you will never know all the interesting things about it. In the passage 'Why Do Zebras Have Stripes?', scientist make hypotheses and do experiments to learn about the stripes on zebras. It is useful and worth the time to research about the stripes on zebras.

First, zebras striped fur is a mystery but scientis are closer than they were before to figuring it out. In the passage it says, "Recently, a research team may be getting closer to solving the mystery." This means that as researchers keep looking into why zebras have striped fur they are getting closer to the solution. This matters because if you keep looking into something your intrested in you could possibly find a solution to an unanswered problem.

Second, Scientist went back on an old hypothesis to test it out. In the passage it says, "An old hypothesis that is now gaining renewed acceptance among today's researchers is that zebras have stripes to evade biting insects. These researchers found that some insects avoid landing on a zebra's black-and-white stripes." This means that even though the hypothesis was an older one scientist still tested it out to see if it was the solution. This matters because when your doing research you can realize that an old solution you found could be the right answer.

Third, scientist did an experiment with the old hypothesis and came out with some useful information. In the passage it states, "flies avoided the striped cloths covering the horses but did land on their uncovered heads, and flies more frequently landed on solid-colored cloths than on striped cloths.". This means that when they put a striped cloth on the horse they avoided it and landed on the solid colors. This matters because farmers can use this information to protect their caddle from bugs.

Finaly to counteract this claim, many others wont always agree with what your doing and can make questions about why you would do it. In the passage it states, "there are those who believe it is a waste of time. Their reasoning revolves around many questions, including the following: Why is it important to know why zebras have stripes?" This statement meas that while some want to know the answer to why zebras have stripes others might just think it's a waste of time and money. This is important because others may not agree if what your doing is important enough to spend time and money to research it and they could possibly bring you down.

In conclusion researching why zebras have stripes is useful and can be used in many ways. Learning that flies and bugs tend to avoid the striped fur of zebras farmers could use this information to protect their livestock.

Sample 3 Annotation – Score Point 3

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

STRUCTURE

- **Introduces a claim(s) that is focused on the task:**
 - “It is useful and worth the time to research about the stripes on zebras.”
- **Maintains a claim(s) throughout the response:**
 - The response remains focused on how it is possible to learn something by going back to an old hypothesis, making the research worthwhile. The focus is maintained from the introduction, through the positive supporting reasons and counterclaim, to the conclusion.
- **Uses an organizational structure that strengthens the response.**
 - In the body of the response, supporting reasons are developed with text evidence and elaboration that includes original thinking:
 - ▶ “First, zebras striped fur is a mystery but scientists are closer than they were before to figuring it out.”
 - ▶ “Second, Scientist went back on an old hypothesis to test it out.”
 - ▶ “Third, scientist did an experiment with the old hypothesis and came out with some useful information.”
- **Uses transitional words and phrases to create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claim(s), a counterclaim, reasons, and evidence:**
 - “If you never” “In the passage” “First” “This matters” “Second” “This means” “Third” “Finally” “In conclusion”
- **Provides an introduction and concluding statement or section that supports the argument presented.**
 - The introduction discusses generally the importance of doing research and then narrows the focus to the research on zebras before stating the claim:
 - ▶ “If you never look into something, you will never find out about it. This means if you want to research something and someone convinces you to not do it you will never know all the interesting things about it. In the passage ‘Why Do Zebras Have Stripes?’, scientist make hypotheses and do experiments to learn about the stripes on zebras. It is useful and worth the time to research about the stripes on zebras.”
 - The conclusion reiterates ideas presented in the response:
 - ▶ “In conclusion researching why zebras have stripes is useful and can be used in many ways. Learning that flies and bugs tend to avoid the striped fur of zebras farmers could use this information to protect their livestock.”

DEVELOPMENT

- **Demonstrates an understanding of the task:**
 - The argument is supported with reasons which are developed with text evidence and explanation to show how the research is worthwhile.
- **Integrates elaboration of thoughts which includes original student thinking combined with summary, paraphrasing, and/or text evidence to support the argument:**
 - For each reason that supports the claim that the research is worthwhile, there is a supporting text quote followed by a weak inference (this means) that explains the meaning of the quote. The elaboration is then clarified by an explanation (this matters) which connects these ideas to the reason presented in the topic sentence.
 - For the first reason:
 - ▶ “First, zebras striped fur is a mystery but scientists are closer than they were before to figuring it out.”
 - ▶ “Recently, a research team may be getting closer to solving the mystery.”
 - ▶ “This means that as researchers keep looking into why zebras have striped fur they are getting closer to the solution. This matters because if you keep looking into something you are interested in you could possibly find a solution to an unanswered problem.”
 - For the second reason:
 - ▶ “Second, Scientist went back on an old hypothesis to test it out.”
 - ▶ “An old hypothesis that is now gaining renewed acceptance among today’s researchers is that zebras have stripes to evade biting insects. These researchers found that some insects avoid landing on a zebra’s black-and-white stripes.”
 - ▶ “This means that even though the hypothesis was an older one scientist still tested it out to see if it was the solution. This matters because when you are doing research you can realize that an old solution you found could be the right answer.”
 - For the third reason:
 - ▶ “Third, scientist did an experiment with the old hypothesis and came out with some useful information.”
 - ▶ “flies avoided the striped cloths covering the horses but did land on their uncovered heads, and flies more frequently landed on solid-colored cloths than on striped cloths.”
 - ▶ “This means that when they put a striped cloth on the horse they avoided it and landed on the solid colors. This matters because farmers can use this information to protect their cattle from bugs.”

- **Acknowledges a counterclaim.**
 - The counterclaim is supported with text and explained with elaboration:
 - ▶ “. . .many others wont always agree with what your doing and can make questions about why you would do it.”
 - ▶ “there are those who believe it is a waste of time. Their reasoning revolves around many questions, including the following: Why is it important to know why zebras have stripes?”
 - “This statement meas that while some want to know the answer to why zebras have stripes others might just think it’s a waste of time and money. This is important because others may not agree if what your doing is important enough to spend time and money to research it and they could possibly bring you down.”

LANGUAGE

- **Integrates vocabulary to strengthen and further ideas:**
 - “look into” “convinces” “avoided” “counteract” “livestock”
- **Uses varied sentence types and phrases to contribute to the fluidity of ideas:**
 - “If you never look into something, you will never find out about it. This means if you want to research something and someone convinces you to not do it you will never know all the intresting things about it.”
- **Has a few minor errors in usage and conventions with no significant effect on meaning.**
 - In addition to missing commas in compound and complex sentences, there are spelling errors:
 - ▶ “intresting” “expieriments” “scientis” “caddle” “Finaly” “meas”
 - There are usage errors:
 - ▶ “scientist” for scientists “your” for you’re
 - And missing apostrophes:
 - ▶ “wont” “zebras striped fur”

Score Justification

- The claim is clear and the focus is sustained throughout the response.
- The organizational structure is appropriate as the writer explains the importance of researching an old hypothesis by presenting relevant and developed supporting ideas.
- A developed counterclaim is also provided, as well as an adequate introduction and conclusion.
- The adequate elaboration includes some text evidence, reasoning, and original thought that explains how ideas support the claim.

Suggestions for Improvement

- The use of more transitional words and phrases would help to connect ideas and enhance the development of the argument.
- For development, include more text-based evidence and original thinking to further elaborate on ideas.
- Use more precise language and sentence variety.

Sample 4 Student Response – Score Point 3

We all know zebras have stripes, but do we need to know why? It has been an argument of whether or not it is worth the time and money spent for years. It is a waste of time and money researching why zebras have stripes because it doesn't give us any valuable information and we could be using the resources to help people.

We should not research why zebras have stripes because it doesn't give us important information. In the passage it says, "Is any information gained from the research worth the cost of finding out?" This is a valid question because figuring out why zebras have stripes will not advance the economy or help save endangered animals. The text also says, "flies more frequently landed on solid-colored cloths than on striped cloths." This means that they are spending money and time learning what patterns flies prefer. We should be using our resources to find out things that will benefit us instead of things that don't matter.

Another reason it is a waste of time and money is because we should be helping people that need it instead of doing something that doesn't help anyone. The text says, "Why do zebras have stripes? Scientists have searched for possible answers to this question for many years." This shows that researchers have been spending money and time on this for a long time when they could have been funding wells for people in Africa or finding a cure to cancer. The text says, "Further research is needed to answer the question: Why do biting flies avoid striped surfaces?" This further shows that there will be more and more research to do. We need to focus on saving people rather than continue researching this money hole.

In conclusion, it is a waste of time to research the question "Why do zebras have stripes?" because the information learned isn't necessary and we could be helping many people's lives. Some people might say that understanding why zebras have stripes could prove valuable. However, this is not a good reason because we could be working on something we know is important and good for the world. We need to stop wasting our time and money on finding out why zebras have stripes and do something useful.

Sample 4 Annotation – Score Point 3

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

STRUCTURE

- **Introduces a claim(s) that is focused on the task:**
 - “It is a waste of time and money researching why zebras have stripes because it doesn’t give us any valuable information and we could be using the resources to help people.”
- **Maintains a claim(s) throughout the response.**
 - Supporting ideas are organized and adequately developed with evidence and elaboration to support the claim:
 - ▶ “We should not research why zebras have stripes because it doesn’t give us important information.”
 - “Another reason it is a waste of time and money is because we should be helping people that need it instead of doing something that doesn’t help anyone.”
- **Uses an organizational structure that strengthens the response.**
 - Each reason is introduced with a topic sentence and then developed with text support and elaboration, which includes original thinking. Each body paragraph ends with a concluding sentence that reinforces the idea presented in the topic sentence:
 - ▶ “We should be using our resources to find out things that will benefit us instead of things that don’t matter.”
 - ▶ “We need to focus on saving people rather than continue researching this money hole.”
- **Uses transitional words and phrases to create cohesion and clarify the relationships between claim(s), a counterclaim, reasons, and evidence:**
 - “. . .but do we need to know why?” “In the passage” “The text also says” “This means” “Another reason” “This shows” “This further shows” “In conclusion” “However”
- **Provides an introduction and concluding statement or section that supports the argument presented.**
 - The introduction provides some context for the response and then states the claim, giving the supporting reasons:
 - ▶ “We all know zebras have stripes, but do we need to know why? It has been an argument of whether or not it is worth the time and money spent for years.”
 - ▶ “It is a waste of time and money researching why zebras have stripes because it doesn’t give us any valuable information and we could be using the resources to help people.”

- The conclusion reiterates these ideas and then provides a counterclaim which is rebutted:
 - ▶ “In conclusion, it is a waste of time to research the question ‘Why do zebras have stripes?’ because the information learned isn’t necessary and we could be helping many people’s lives.”
 - ▶ “Some people might say that understanding why zebras have stripes could prove valuable. However, this is not a good reason because we could be working on something we know is important and good for the world. We need to stop wasting our time and money on finding out why zebras have stripes and do something useful.”

DEVELOPMENT

- **Demonstrates an understanding of the task.**
 - The argument is supported with reasons which are developed with text evidence.
- **Develops the topic adequately using relevant facts, definitions, details, and/or quotes:**
 - Supporting reasons are developed with multiple text quotes and elaboration. The explanations integrated with the text examples show why the research should not be conducted, demonstrating a sufficient understanding of the task and passage ideas.
- **Integrates elaboration of thoughts which includes original student thinking combined with summary, paraphrasing, and/or text evidence.**
 - For the first reason, “because it doesn’t give us important information,” there are text quotes from the passage which support the idea that the research is unnecessary. The first quote is a rhetorical question which is then answered, while the second quote provides an example of research the writer considers useless:
 - ▶ “Is any information gained from the research worth the cost of finding out?”
 - ▶ “flies more frequently landed on solid-colored cloths than on striped cloths.”
 - The elaboration includes some original thinking and specific examples from personal knowledge to bring together the writer’s ideas:
 - ▶ “This is a valid question because figuring out why zebras have stripes will not advance the economy or help save endangered animals.”
 - ▶ “This means that they are spending money and time learning what patterns flies prefer. We should be using our resources to find out things that will benefit us instead of things that don’t matter.”
 - For the second reason, that “because we should be helping people that need it instead of doing something that doesn’t help anyone,” there are text quotes which provide examples of research that the writer believes to be unnecessary:
 - ▶ “Why do zebras have stripes? Scientists have searched for possible answers to this question for many years.”
 - ▶ “Further research is needed to answer the question: Why do biting flies avoid striped surfaces?”
 - The elaboration includes some original thinking and specific examples from personal knowledge to bring together the writer’s ideas:
 - ▶ “This shows that researchers have been spending money and time on this for a long time when they could have been funding wells for people in Africa or finding a cure to cancer.”

- ▶ “This further shows that there will be more and more research to do. We need to focus on saving people rather than continue researching this money hole.”
- **Acknowledges a counterclaim.**
 - The conclusion provides the counterclaim and the rebuttal:
 - ▶ “Some people might say that understanding why zebras have stripes could prove valuable. However, this is not a good reason because we could be working on something we know is important and good for the world. We need to stop wasting our time and money on finding out why zebras have stripes and do something useful.”

LANGUAGE

- **Integrates vocabulary to strengthen and further ideas.**
 - There is some precise word choice:
 - ▶ “whether or not” “resources” “valid” “advance the economy” “endangered” “prefer” “funding” “focus on”
- **Uses varied sentence types and phrases to contribute to the fluidity of ideas:**
 - “In conclusion, it is a waste of time to research the question ‘Why do zebras have stripes?’ because the information learned isn’t necessary and we could be helping many people’s lives. Some people might say that understanding why zebras have stripes could prove valuable. However, this is not a good reason. . .”
- **Has a few minor errors in usage and conventions with no significant effect on meaning.**
 - There are errors in spelling:
 - ▶ “arguement” “necesary”

Score Justification

- **The claim is clear and the focus is sustained throughout the response.**
- **The introduction is basic and the conclusion, which includes the counterclaim, is sufficient.**
- **The organization is adequate, as are the transitions which connect ideas.**
- **Understanding of the task is demonstrated, with reasons supported by evidence and elaboration that includes quotes and some original thinking.**
- **The vocabulary and sentence variety are sufficient.**

Suggestions for Improvement

- **For development, include more text-based evidence and original thinking to support the elaboration of ideas.**
- **Use more varied transitions to connect ideas within and between paragraphs.**
- **The rebuttal of the counterclaim would be more effective if the reasons were supported with text evidence.**

Sample 5 Student Response – Score Point 2

If you've ever done a research project, you should know that they cost a lot of money. I don't think that researching and conducting projects on why zebras have stripes is worth the money or the time and effort put in. People might argue that it is interesting to find out why animals are the way they are. While I do agree with that, it isn't worth the money or the time just to figure out why zebras have stripes on their bodies.

Scientific research and projects can end up using a whole lot of money. If we use a lot of money on projects like "Why Do Zebras Have Stripes?", then we won't have a lot of money for other projects, some of which could be way more important. The text says, "There is speculation that the stripes may disrupt the insects' vision." To test this, they would have to conduct an experiment that would probably cost quite a bit of money to do. It just isn't worth the money.

Another thing is that people are taking their time to work on research and putting in a lot of effort just to figure out why zebras have stripes. They could use this time and effort to do other things that are more important. The text states, "In 2019, a research team experimented with horses and zebras by observing how a specific kind of fly responded to each type of mammal." This proves my point because they are taking the time to have flies react with stripes and non-stripes when they could be researching something else like bacteria that make people sick.

To conclude, it isn't worth the time or money to conduct research on things that don't matter like why zebras have stripes. While it can be interesting, we don't really gain anything out of doing this.

Sample 5 Annotation – Score Point 2

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

STRUCTURE

- **Introduces a claim(s) that may be unclear:**
 - “If you’ve ever done a research project, you should know that they cost a lot of money. I don’t think that researching and conducting projects on why zebras have stripes is worth the money or the time and effort put in.”
- **Inconsistently maintains the claim throughout the response:**
 - Ideas are supported with text details, but the elaboration is repetitive and lacks original thought.
- **Uses a weak, inconsistent, or repetitive organizational structure.**
 - Body paragraphs are focused separately on the ideas of money and time. In each case, the paragraph begins with a topic sentence which is followed by a reason, some text support, and then a weak inference. The language used is repetitive:
 - ▶ “If we use a lot of money on projects like ‘Why Do Zebras Have Stripes?’, then we won’t have a lot of money for other projects, some of which could be way more important.”
 - ▶ “. . . people are taking their time to work on research and putting in a lot of effort just to figure out why zebras have stripes. They could use this time and effort to do other things that are more important.”
- **Uses transitions to connect ideas but cohesion is inconsistent.**
 - The response is formulaic, and many of the transitions do not clarify the connections between ideas:
 - ▶ “If you’ve” “While I do agree” “If we use” “The text says” “To test this” “Another thing” “This proves” “To conclude” “While it can”
- **Provides an introduction and concluding statement or section that may be weak, repetitive, or ineffective.**
 - The introduction provides the context of the response, states the claim, and then presents the alternative perspective and weak rebuttal:
 - ▶ “If you’ve ever done a research project, you should know that they cost a lot of money. I don’t think that researching and conducting projects on why zebras have stripes is worth the money or the time and effort put in. People might argue that it is interesting. . . While I do agree with that, it isn’t worth the money or the time. . .”
 - The conclusion briefly reminds the reader of the claim, once again weakly rebutting the alternative perspective:
 - ▶ “To conclude, it isn’t worth the time or money to conduct research on things that don’t matter like why zebras have stripes. While it can be interesting, we don’t really gain anything out of doing this.”

DEVELOPMENT

- **Response may demonstrate a partial understanding of the task by providing elaboration that is repetitive without adequate explanation or original thought:**
 - The elaboration is repetitive, rather than expanding on ideas by providing more thoughtful explanations. It's unclear whether the writer understands the possible consequences of the research findings that insects appear to avoid striped cloth.

- **Inconsistently develops the argument using facts and evidence that may not support the claim(s).**
 - The first reason (about money) has evidence about stripes disrupting insects' vision, but the elaboration does not clarify why it's a bad idea to spend money on the research, thereby not making an adequate connection to the claim to support the argument:
 - ▶ “There is speculation that the stripes may disrupt the insects' vision.’ To test this, they would have to conduct an experiment that would probably cost quite a bit of money to do.”
 - The second reason (about time) has evidence about the experiment comparing insect interaction with horses and zebras, but the idea of “taking their time” is repeated without explaining why it isn't a good idea to spend time on this research and why the time should be spent on something else:
 - ▶ “In 2019, a research team experimented with horses and zebras by observing how a specific kind of fly responded to each type of mammal. . .they are taking the time to have flies react with stripes and non-stripes when they could be researching something else like bacteria that make people sick.”

- **Relies too heavily on the text or may be repetitive.**
 - The elaboration is repetitive and tends to restate the same ideas that have already been provided as part of the topic sentences and reasons:
 - ▶ “. . .projects can end up using a whole lot of money...we won't have a lot of money for other projects. . .they would have to conduct an experiment that would probably cost quite a bit of money to do.”
 - ▶ “. . .people are taking their time to work on research and putting in a lot of effort. . .could use this time and effort to do other things. . .This proves my point because they are taking the time to have flies react with stripes and non-stripes when they could be researching something else like bacteria that make people sick.”
 - For both supporting ideas, the writer vaguely alludes to something “more important,” but gives a specific example only for the second supporting idea without explaining why researching bacteria would be better:
 - ▶ “. . .do other things that are more important.”
 - ▶ “. . .when they could be researching something else like bacteria that make people sick.”

- **Acknowledges a counterclaim.**
 - There is an acknowledgment of a counterclaim and a weak rebuttal in the introduction:
 - ▶ “People might argue that it is interesting to find out why animals are the way they are. While I do agree with that, it isn’t worth the money or the time just to figure out why zebras have stripes on their bodies.”
 - And in the conclusion:
 - ▶ “While it can be interesting, we don’t really gain anything out of doing this.”

LANGUAGE

- **Vocabulary and word choice may be limited or inconsistently used, showing a partial command of the expression of ideas:**
 - “conducting” “quite a bit of money” “putting in a lot of effort” “taking the time” “things that don’t matter”
- **Uses varied sentence types and phrases inconsistently:**
 - “People might argue that it is interesting to find out why animals are the way they are. While I do agree with that, it isn’t worth the money or the time just to figure out why zebras have stripes on their bodies.”
- **Has a few minor errors in usage and conventions with no significant effect on meaning.**
 - Minor errors in spelling do not interfere with readability:
 - ▶ “interesting”

Score Justification

- **The introduction and conclusion both reference the claim, as well as the alternative perspective.**
- **Body paragraphs separately address the supporting ideas of “money” and “time.”**
- **Formulaic transitions are used in an attempt to connect ideas.**
- **The argument is partially developed with repetitive elaboration, rather than expanding on ideas.**
- **The vocabulary is basic and repetitive.**
- **There is some sentence variety.**

Suggestions for Improvement

- **Text evidence that is more specifically related to ideas should be included.**
- **Elaboration should include explanations that clarify why the facts in the text are important and how they relate to the claim.**
- **The addition of some original thought as part of the reasoning/elaboration would demonstrate a deeper understanding of the topic.**
- **The use of more precise vocabulary would enhance the response.**

Sample 6 Student Response – Score Point 2

Why Do Zebras Have Stripes? It is a good idea to find out way Zebras have black and white strips because we can use that knowage for other experiments in the furture.

Having the black and white stripes can be really helpful to the Zebras and other animals. Finding out that some fly don't like the black and white stripes we can use that like a bug replenant.

We can use the facted that some bugs don't like the black and white stripes to help people who are allergrict to certain bug to help them get bit by the bugs less.

Finding out why Zebras have stripes can be worth it we can learn more about how animals live and interact with there emoriment. If we find out animals interact with life it can help us make the world a better place for humans and animals.

It might not be a good thing to spent a lot of money on finding out why Zebras have stripes. A lot of people think that it is worthless to find out why Zebras have stripes. It might be worthless in mght not be we don't know unless we try.

Finding out why Zebras have stripes might be a good or bad thing money whys, but it may be able to help some people if we know why Zebras have stripes. We could help people with allrges to be less scread of some animals that they are allgrect to.

Sample 6 Annotation – Score Point 2

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

STRUCTURE

- **Introduces a claim(s) that may be unclear:**
 - “It is a good idea to find out way Zebras have black and white strips because we can use that knowage for other experiments in the furture.”
- **Inconsistently maintains the claim throughout the response:**
 - While the writer presents ideas to support the positive perspective, these ideas are not sufficiently elaborated with text and explanation.
- **Uses a weak, inconsistent, or repetitive organizational structure:**
 - The body of the response is a list of reasons which describe positive and negative aspects of the research.
- **Uses transitions to connect ideas but cohesion is inconsistent:**
 - “Having the” “Finding out why” “If we find out”
- **Provides an introduction and concluding statement or section that may be weak, repetitive, or ineffective.**
 - The introduction states the claim and provides a general reason as support:
 - ▶ “Why Do Zebras Have Stripes? It is a good idea to find out way Zebras have black and white strips because we can use that knowage for other experiments in the furture.”
 - The conclusion reiterates ideas already presented in the response:
 - ▶ “Finding out why Zebras have stripes might be a good or bad thing money whys, but it may be able to help some people if we know why Zebras have stripes. We could help people with allrges to be less scread of some animals that they are allgrect to.”

DEVELOPMENT

- **Response may demonstrate a partial understanding of the task by providing elaboration that is repetitive without adequate explanation or original thought.**
- **Inconsistently develops the argument using facts and evidence that may not support the claim(s).**
 - There are vague allusions to facts from the text to support ideas:
 - ▶ “Having the black and white stripes can be really helpful to the Zebras and other animals.”
 - ▶ “We can use the facted that some bugs don’t like the black and white stripes. . .”
 - ▶ “. . .we can learn more about how animals live and interact with there emoriment.”

- **Relies too heavily on the text or may be repetitive.**
 - The elaboration is brief, not completely explaining why the text examples and reasons given support the claim. For the first two reasons, there are specific examples (bug repellent, allergies) to demonstrate understanding of the possible positive consequences of the research:
 - ▶ “Having the black and white stripes can be really helpful to the Zebras and other animals. Finding out that some fly don’t like the black and white stripes we can use that like a bug replenent.”
 - ▶ “We can use the facted that some bugs don’t like the black and white stripes to help people who are allergrict to certain bug to help them get bit by the bugs less.”
 - Elaboration for the last reason is vague since the elaboration doesn’t explain how the world will be a better place:
 - ▶ “Finding out why Zebras have stripes can be worth it we can learn more about how animals live and interact with there emoriment. If we find out animals interact with life it can help us make the world a better place for humans and animals.”
- **There is acknowledgment of a counterclaim:**
 - “It might not be a good thing to spent a lot of money on finding out why Zebras have stripes.”
 - There is vague support for this counterclaim, and a vague rebuttal attempt:
 - ▶ “A lot of people think that it is worthless to find out why Zebras have stripes. It might be worthless in mght not be we don’t know unless we try.”

LANGUAGE

- **Vocabulary and word choice may be limited or inconsistently used, showing a partial command of the expression of ideas:**
 - “knowage” “interact” “make the world a better place”
- **Uses varied sentence types and phrases inconsistently:**
 - “If we find out animals interact with life it can help us make the world a better place for humans and animals.”
- **Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that sometimes interfere with readability.**
 - There are spelling errors:
 - ▶ “strips” “knowage” “furture” “replenant” “facted” “allergrict” “there” “emoriment” “mght” “money whys” “allrges” “scread”
 - Usage errors:
 - ▶ “way” for why, “fly” for flies, “bug” for bugs, “bit” for bitten, “spent” for spend, “in” for and
 - And run-on sentences:
 - ▶ “Finding out why Zebras have stripes can be worth it we can learn more about how animals live and interact with there emoriment.”
 - ▶ “It might be worthless in mght not be we don’t know unless we try.”

Score Justification

- The introduction presents a claim that the research is worth the time and money.
- The body of the response is an elaborated list of reasons why the research should be done.
- There is little text evidence to show the reader details of the research, and little elaboration to explain why the research should be conducted.
- There are few transitions to connect ideas.
- Vocabulary is basic and drawn from the passage.

Suggestions for Improvement

- The introduction would be more effective if it gave the reader some information about the research and the reasons that it might be a positive thing to do.
- The organizational structure would be improved by adding transitions to connect ideas.
- Ideas need to be elaborated with more text evidence and more original thinking to show the reader why the research is worth the time and money.
- The use of more specific vocabulary would assist the expression of ideas.

Sample 7 Student Response – Score Point 1

It is not worth the money and time to research why zebras have stripes. The socialization hypotheses is a waste of time because other animals that don't have stripes can tell each other apart. The body temperature hypothese some what makes senes because dark colors absorb heat and light colors don't but that seems a little too oveus. The exsperment were people got horses was a waste of time becасue the flies bit booth of them.

Sample 7 Annotation – Score Point 1

Does Not Meet Expectations: A weak attempt to write an argument and does not support claims with adequate text-based evidence.

STRUCTURE

- **Introduces a claim that is focused on the task:**
 - “It is not worth the money and time to research why zebras have stripes.”
- **Demonstrates little to no organizational structure.**
 - The body of the response is a list of reasons describing why particular hypotheses/ experiments were a waste of time. The order of these reasons could be rearranged without changing the meaning of the response:
 - ▶ “The socialization hypotheses is a waste of time. . .”
 - ▶ “The body temperature hypothese some what makes senes. . .”
 - ▶ “The exsperment were people got horses was a waste of time. . .”
- **Transitions may be missing or confusing.**
 - Conjunctions are used to make some connections:
 - ▶ “because” “but”
- **Introduction and concluding statement or section may be missing or unrelated to the response.**
 - The response has an introductory statement which states a claim using prompt language:
 - ▶ “It is not worth the money and time to research why zebras have stripes.”
 - A concluding statement is missing.

NOTE: The writer here states a clear claim. Although the claim is clear, the lack of support, transitions, and a concluding statement places the writer at a score point of 1.

DEVELOPMENT

- **Response may be too brief to demonstrate an understanding of the topic or may consist mostly of a summary of the text(s):**
 - The response reads like an introduction to a developed response.
- **Evidence from the text(s) may be absent or confusing.**
 - Although text support is provided for each reason to show why each hypothesis/experiment is a waste of time, there is no explanation to clarify for the reader how the text examples show that the writer’s ideas are valid and support the claim:
 - ▶ “. . .because other animals that don’t have stripes can tell each other apart.”
 - ▶ “. . .because dark colors absorb heat and light colors don’t. . .”
 - ▶ “. . .becasue the flies bit booth of them.”
- **Elaboration of thoughts may consist of vague or confusing ideas.**
 - A vague inference is drawn for the second reason, but there is no further explanation as to why something is obvious:
 - ▶ “. . .but that seems a little too oveus.”
- **Does not acknowledge a counterclaim.**

LANGUAGE

- **Vocabulary and word choice may be unclear or confusing.**
 - Vocabulary is drawn from the text, with word choice that is limited or inconsistently used:
 - ▶ “waste of time” “some what makes senes” “a little too oveus”
- **Sentence structure may be confusing.**
 - Uses varied sentence types and phrases inconsistently, including compound/complex sentences:
 - ▶ “The body temperature hypothese some what makes senes because dark colors absorb heat and light colors don’t but that seems a little too oveus.”
- **Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that interfere with readability.**
 - Errors in spelling may interfere with meaning:
 - ▶ “hypotheses” “some what” “senes” “oveus” “exsperment” “becasue” “were” “booth”

Score Justification

- The introductory statement presents the claim.
- There is little organizational structure in the body of the response and no conclusion.
- There are few transitions to provide connections between ideas.
- The body of the response is a list of reasons, each supported with text, but there is little elaboration to explain to the reader how these reasons support the claim.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Supporting reasons in the body of the response should be organized and connected with transitions to show the reader how those ideas are connected to each other and how they support the claim.
- Ideas should be developed with relevant text support.
- Elaboration should include original thinking to explain how text evidence shows that the research is a waste of time and money.
- A concluding statement/section should remind the reader of how the ideas presented support the writer's claim.

Sample 8 Student Response – Score Point 1

No I don't feel like it is worth the money and time because some people may wonder why do Zebras have stirps. And reading this it's just make you wonder & wonder about. Why do Zebras have stirps? But it's very cool how get to learn about how Zebras stirps help them live. Zebras have stirps to protect them selfs from insects, like biting flies. The researchers found out that biting flies don't land on striped cloths and they more frequently lands on solid-colored cloths.

Sample 8 Annotation – Score Point 1

Does Not Meet Expectations: 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.**
 - The writer states a claim without telling the reader what is not worthwhile:
 - ▶ “No I don’t feel like it is worth the money and time. . .”
- **Demonstrates little to no organizational structure:**
 - The response is a list of statements that could be rearranged without changing the meaning of the response.
- **Transitions may be missing or confusing.**
 - Conjunctions are used in an attempt to make some connections, but they do not clarify the transition from negative to positive perspective:
 - ▶ “And” “But”
- **Introduction and concluding statement or section may be missing or unrelated to the response.**
 - There is an introductory statement which presents the claim:
 - ▶ “No I don’t feel like it is worth the money and time because some people may wonder why do Zebras have stirps.”
 - A concluding statement is missing.

DEVELOPMENT

- **Response may be too brief to demonstrate an understanding of the topic or may consist mostly of a summary of the text(s):**
 - Much of the response consists of facts from the passage with little elaboration to show how those details support the claim.
- **Evidence from the text(s) may be absent or confusing.**
 - The text evidence supports the alternative perspective by describing positive aspects of the research:
 - ▶ “Zebras have stirps to protect them selfs from insects, like biting flies.”
 - ▶ “The researchers found out that biting flies don’t land on striped cloths and they more frequently lands on solid-colored cloths.”
- **Elaboration of thoughts may consist of vague or confusing ideas.**
 - It’s not clear how “wondering” supports the negative perspective:
 - ▶ “. . .some people may wonder why do Zebras have stirps. And reading this it’s just make you wonder & wonder about. Why do Zebras have stirps?”

- **Does not acknowledge a counterclaim.**
 - Acknowledges an alternative perspective which is supported with text evidence:
 - ▶ “But it’s very cool how get to learn about how Zebras stirps help them live.”

LANGUAGE

- **Vocabulary and word choice may be unclear or confusing.**
 - Ideas are vague due to unclear word choice:
 - ▶ “. . .make you wonder & wonder about.”
 - ▶ “. . .it’s very cool how get to learn. . .”
- **Sentence structure may be confusing.**
 - There are missing words which contribute to the confusion:
 - ▶ “And reading this it’s just make you wonder & wonder about.”
 - ▶ “But it’s very cool how get to learn about how Zebras stirps help them live.”
- **Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that interfere with readability.**
 - There are errors in spelling:
 - ▶ “stirps” “them selfs”
 - There are errors in usage:
 - ▶ “it’s” for it, “make” for makes, “lands” for land

Score Justification

- **The claim is unclear as the writer provides both negative and positive perspectives.**
- **Transitions are missing, and there is no conclusion.**
- **The elaboration is minimal, and it is not clear how it supports the negative perspective.**
- **The alternative perspective is supported with text examples that describe how the research shows that “Zebras stirps help them live.”**

Suggestions for Improvement

- **The writer should take a position, make a specific claim, and provide an introduction that sets up the context of the response.**
- **Supporting ideas should be organized in the body of the response, with transitions to provide connections between ideas.**
- **Ideas should be supported with more text evidence, and the elaboration should include explanations to clarify how that evidence supports the claim.**
- **A concluding statement/section that reminds the reader of the ideas presented would strengthen the argument.**

Sample 9 Student Response – Score Point 0

Yes It Is worth spending all your time and money because ilke zebras they are pretty cool, Another unsupported hypothesis about why zebras have stripes is related to body temperaure regulation, flies slowed down before landing on horses and flies didnt slowdown when nearing zebras, Since the dark colors absorb more heat energy than light colors, As part of their observtion the research team recorded the number of flies buzzing around landing on and biting the mammals, but researcher covered each horse with a solid white coth balck and white striped cloth, Only the horses heads and ears remained uncovered.

Score Justification

The response is too limited to score because there is too little original student writing. The claim is stated by paraphrasing the prompt “Yes It Is worth spending all your time and money. . .” This idea is extended with a vague reason “. . .because ilke zebras they are pretty cool. . .” This is followed by copied text, but there is no explanation to clarify how the text evidence supports the claim. To obtain a score 1, the writer needs to clarify how the text shows that zebras are cool or why the research is necessary. Instead of a block of copied text, specific reasons supported with relevant text examples should be provided, along with explanations to clarify for the reader why those reasons are valid and why the research should be conducted.

Sample 10 Student Response – Score Point 0

There is a hypothesis called socialization that is related to the possible function of zebra stripes. Yes, Because it goes into the story and it tells you about the zebras stripes and all. There will always be questions on readers mind.

Score Justification

The response is too limited to score. The writer begins by providing text evidence with the wording slightly changed “There is a hypothesis called socialization that is related to the possible function of zebra stripes.” This is followed by a vague claim “Yes, Because it goes into the story and it tells you about the zebras stripes and all,” but there is no explanation to clarify why the socialization hypothesis is important or why this research should be conducted. Instead, the vague attempt to elaborate “There will always be questions on readers mind” does not explain how the text example supports the writer’s positive perspective. To obtain a score 1, the writer needs to present a more specific claim that states why the research is important and should provide relevant text as support. The elaboration should include some explanation to clarify how the provided text examples support the claim that the research is worth the time and money.