Oklahoma Bar Association
Law Day Writing Contest
High School Entry Rubric

Category	4	3	2	1
Ideas and Development	• The content is well suited for the audience, purpose, and mode • The main idea or thesis is clear • Ideas are fully developed and elaborated using details, examples, reasons, or evidence • The writer expresses an insightful perspective towards the topic	• The content is adequate for the audience, purpose, and mode • The main idea is evident but may lack clarity • Ideas are developed using some details, examples, reasons, and/or evidence • The writer sustains his/her perspective toward the topic throughout most of the composition	• The content is inconsistent with the audience, purpose, and mode • The main idea is not focused and leaves the reader with questions and making inferences to understand the main idea • Ideas are minimally developed with few details • May simply be a list of ideas • The writer has difficulty expressing his/her perspective toward the topic	• The content is irrelevant to the audience, purpose, and mode • The composition lacks a central idea • Ideas lack development or may be repetitive • The writer has little or no perspective on the topic
Organization, Unity, and Coherence	• Introduction engages the reader • Sustained or consistent focus on the topic • Logical and appropriate sequencing and balanced with smooth, effective transitions • Order and structure are strong and move the reader through the text • Conclusion is satisfying	• Evident introduction to the topic • Adequate focus • Adequate sequencing • Stays on topic with little digression • Uses limited but effective transitions • Order and structure are present • Conclusion is appropriate	• May lack a clear organizational structure • Weak evidence of unity • Little or limited sequencing and/or transitions • Details may be randomly placed	• Lacks logical direction • No evidence of organizational structure

Word Choice	• Appropriate word choice which conveys the correct meaning and appeals to the audience in an interesting, precise, and natural way
	• The writing may be characterized by, but not limited to:
	  ○ Lively verbs
	  ○ Vivid nouns
		• Words generally convey the intended message
		• The writer uses a variety of words that are appropriate but do not necessarily energize the writing
		• The writing may be characterized by attempts at figurative language and dialogue
			• Word choice lacks precision and variety or may be inappropriate to the audience and purpose
			• May be simplistic and/or vague
			• Relies on overused or vague language (a lot, great, very, really)
				• Word choice indicates an extremely limited or inaccurate vocabulary
				• No attempts at figurative language
				• General, vague words that fail to communicate meaning

	- o Imaginative adjectives - o Figurative language - o Dialogue - No vague, overused, repetitive language is used (a lot, great, very, really) - Words that evoke strong images such as sensory language - Ordinary words used in an unusual way	- Some use of lively verbs, vivid nouns, and imaginative adjectives - Few vague, overused, and repetitive words are used	- Few attempts at figurative language and dialogue - Word choice is unimaginative and colorless with images that are unclear or absent.	Text may be too short to demonstrate variety
Sentences and Paragraphs	- Writing clearly demonstrates appropriate sentence structure - Writing has few or no run-on or fragment errors - Writing has a rich variety of sentence structure, types, and lengths - Ideas are organized into paragraphs that blend into larger text	- Writing adequately demonstrates appropriate sentence structure - Writing may contain a small number of run-on or fragment errors that do not interfere with fluency - Writing has adequate variety of sentence structure - Ideas are organized into paragraphs	- Writing demonstrates lack of control in sentence structure - Writing contains errors such as run-ons and fragments that interfere with fluency - Writing has limited variety of sentence structure - Writing may show little or no attempt at paragraphing	- Inappropriate sentence structure - Many errors in structure (run-ons, fragments) - No variety in structure - No attempt at paragraphing
Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics	- The writer demonstrates appropriate use of correct - o Spelling - o Punctuation - o Capitalization - o Grammar - o Usage - Errors are minor and do not affect readability	- The writer demonstrates adequate use of correct - o Spelling - o Punctuation - o Capitalization - o Grammar - o Usage - Errors may be more noticeable but do not significantly affect readability	- The writer demonstrates minimal use of correct - o Spelling - o Punctuation - o Capitalization - o Grammar - o Usage - Errors may be distracting and interfere with readability	- The writer demonstrates very limited use of correct - o Spelling - o Punctuation - o Capitalization - o Grammar - o Usage - Errors are numerous and severely impede readability