

SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Scientific explanation title: _____

Grade awarded: _____

	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
Purpose	_____	_____	_____
Understands the purpose of writing a scientific explanation — to explain how or why something happens using factual information			
Craft (structure, features, voice)			
Uses structure appropriate to subject, topic, and audience (e.g., writes in paragraph form rather than poetic form)			
Uses features such as bolded words, parenthetical pronunciations, table of contents, index, etc.			
Uses topic-specific vocabulary			
Begins writing with an opening general statement about the subject			
Concludes with a summary statement			
Expresses ideas using own language as opposed to copying down what others say			
States information in a unique or surprising manner			
Uses illustrations, tables, or diagrams			
Research Skills			
Locates appropriate information from a variety of sources			
Interprets and talks about information found in own words			
Mechanics			
Handwriting is neat and legible			
Shows improvement in attempts at spelling words			
Uses grammatically correct language			
Shows improvement in use of punctuation			
Uses an appropriate publishing format			
Work is generally well presented			

Key: N= Not in evidence S= Showing Signs M= Mostly N/A= Not applicable

Adapted from Stead, T. (2001). *Is that a fact: Teaching nonfiction writing K-3*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, p. 114.