

Student-Friendly Scoring Guide: Word Choice

The specific vocabulary the writer uses to convey meaning and enlighten the reader.

6 ↑ HIGH	<div>6</div> <div>EXPERT</div> <p>The words and phrases I've selected are accurate, specific, and natural sounding. My piece conveys precisely what I want to say because of my powerful vocabulary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• My piece contains strong verbs that bring it alive.• I stretched by using the perfect words and phrases to convey my ideas.• I've used content words and phrases with accuracy and precision.• I've picked the best words and phrases, not just the first ones that came to mind.
5 ↑ MIDDLE	<div>5</div> <div>WELL-DONE</div>
4 ↑ MIDDLE	<div>4</div> <div>ALMOST THERE</div> <p>My words and phrases make sense but aren't very accurate, specific, or natural sounding. The reader won't have trouble understanding them. However, he or she may find them uninspiring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I've used passive voice. I should rethink passages that contain passive voice and add "action words."• I haven't come up with extraordinary ways to say ordinary things.• My content words and phrases are accurate, but general. I might have overused jargon. I need to choose more precise words.• I need to revise this piece by replacing its weak words and phrases with strong ones.
3 ↑ LOW	<div>3</div> <div>MAKING STRIDES</div>
2 ↑ LOW	<div>2</div> <div>ON MY WAY</div> <p>My words and phrases are so unclear the reader may wind up more confused than entertained, informed, or persuaded. I need to expand my vocabulary to improve this piece.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• My verbs are not strong. Passive voice permeates this piece.• I've used bland words and phrases throughout—or the same words and phrases over and over.• My content words are neither specific nor accurate enough to make the meaning clear.• My words and phrases are not working; they distract the reader rather than guide him or her.
1 ↑ LOW	<div>1</div> <div>GETTING STARTED</div>