

4-Point Argumentative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 6–11)

SCORE	4 POINTS	3 POINTS	2 POINTS	1 POINT	NS
ORGANIZATION AND PURPOSE	<p>The response has a clear and effective organizational structure, creating a sense of unity and completeness. The organization is fully sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is consistently and purposefully focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim is introduced, clearly communicated, and the focus is strongly maintained for the purpose and audience consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas effective introduction and conclusion logical progression of ideas from beginning to end; strong connections between and among ideas with some syntactic variety alternate and opposing argument(s) are clearly acknowledged or addressed* 	<p>The response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness. Though there may be minor flaws, they do not interfere with the overall coherence. The organization is adequately sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is generally focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim is clear, and the focus is mostly maintained for the purpose and audience adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety to clarify relationships between and among ideas adequate introduction and conclusion adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end; adequate connections between and among ideas alternate and opposing argument(s) are adequately acknowledged or addressed* 	<p>The response has an inconsistent organizational structure. Some flaws are evident, and some ideas may be loosely connected. The organization is somewhat sustained between and within paragraphs. The response may have a minor drift in focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim may be somewhat unclear, or the focus may be insufficiently sustained for the purpose and/or audience inconsistent use of transitional strategies and/or little variety introduction or conclusion, if present, may be weak uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end; and/or formulaic; inconsistent or unclear connections among ideas alternate and opposing argument(s) may be confusing or not acknowledged * 	<p>The response has little or no discernible organizational structure. The response may be related to the claim but may provide little or no focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim may be confusing or ambiguous; response may be too brief or the focus may drift from the purpose and/or audience few or no transitional strategies are evident introduction and/or conclusion may be missing frequent extraneous ideas may be evident; ideas may be randomly ordered or have unclear progression alternate and opposing argument(s) may not be acknowledged * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

*Acknowledging and/or addressing the opposing point of view begins at grade 7.

Sample A

A recent study showed that the U.S. penny costs more than 1.41 cents it is worth. This is not a new problem. Canada stopped its mint from producing the penny recently. Many other countries are faced with the same debate. The question for the U.S. is should they keep the penny, or stop minting it? The U.S. penny costs more money to produce than it is worth, and therefore, it is creating inflation in the U.S. economy.

The subject of should we keep the penny is not a new concept. The Canadian government has stopped their mint from producing pennies. Jim Flaherty, the Canadian finance minister says that, “Pennies take up too much space on our dressers at home.” (source 1). And it costs 2.41 cents for the U.S mint to produce and distribute the penny (source 1). Clearly pennies cost more to produce than they are worth. However, Washington Middle School would disagree. They recently hosted a Penny Drive for charity. “Students from every grade brought in bags and jars of pennies, and, with everyone’s assistance, they raised over \$3000 in one week!” writes Waterhouse. One student Waterhouse interviewed said, “Pennies don’t really matter much...”. The either grade, Michael Cooper was wrong about that. Pennies add up. Waterhouse later said that pennies, “can add up quickly...” (source 3)

But, pennies aren’t the only things that add up quickly argues Dr. Robert Whaples. Whaples is concerned about how much money businesses lose because of counting money. Whaples believes that when a retail clerk counts pennies, it takes an extra 2.5 seconds, since retail business pay their clerks by the hour, then those 2.5 seconds at up to \$200 million that these businesses have to pay their clerks in extra time spent working. (source 2) One might argue that, based on this information, the U.S government should eliminate the penny.

However, many people believe that the penny should not be totally eliminated. These people think that if they make the penny cheaper to produce, then they can keep it. But, we have already tried that once and pennies still cost more than they are worth. And unfortunately, it is not just the penny that is creating this inflation, it is also the nickel. Francis Verse, an expert on the history of small change, says that, “the serious, simple solution is to do away with the penny.” (source 1)

Removing the penny from the U.S. economy would be an important move for congress to make. The penny is minted in large numbers, and if it costs more than it is worth, then it creates inflation. And removing the penny doesn’t have to cause problems. The United State foreign military bases use a system of rounding to the nearest 5-cents to charge transactions. An example from Rachel Mancuso’s article would be a lunch bill charging a \$9.06, it would be rounded down to \$9.05. The rounding system works well for the military, therefore, it is expected to work well in the United States economy if needed. (source 2)

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In conclusion, the United States should remove the penny from their economy because it is creating inflation. After removing the penny, the country would have to use the rounding system to balance out changes and transaction. By eliminating the penny it would save businesses \$700 million nationwide per year. And although we are still attached to our pennies, we would not have to turn them in. After all, a penny saved is a penny earned.

Sample B

Do we really need pennies? If we get rid of them, it certainly wouldn't anger Jim Flaherty who says "Pennies take up too much space on our dressers at home". It turns out, pennies cost more to make than they are worth. But, some people say a penny saved is a penny earned. There are two different sides to this story . . . what do you think?

Pennys can be very helpful to people, in many diferent ways including helping businesses by slowly gaining more and more money over time. But, if we get rid of the penny and round up or down accordingly, businesses would get even more money overtime. By keeping pennies, people who can afford to throw them into fountains could put them in charity boxes that will eventually add up to help people in need.

If America banned the penny it wouldn't be the end of the world. It would hurt many organizations, and many different things. But, it would also help them, by rounding, everything would be more simple. Businesses and organizations would get more money and overall help the community.

Sample C

Why should we keep the penny when it costs more than it is worth? The obvious solution would be to simply remove the penny. “The United States government...lost 60.2 million on the production and distribution of pennies...in the 2011 fiscal year...and the losses have been mounting” (Sommer). It is clearly foolish to continue making pennies when we are losing millions each year, millions that could be used to better people’s lives. Instead we waste it on minting out coins that are only worth one cent.

The main reason why we should remove the penny is that it wastes both time and money. “His study shows that the time wasted on counting pennies could add up to \$700 million per year...” (Mancuso). The time spent counting pennies should be used much more productively and imagine if those businesses could donate \$700 million to charity.

Even the Department of Defense doesn’t use pennies anymore. “For over 30 years, pennies haven’t been used on foreign military bases. Pennies are ‘too heavy and are not cost effective to ship’ “ (Mancuso). It is a complete waste to continue using pennies, and even the military agrees. If such a major part of our government refuses to use pennies, the rest of us should take the hint.

Some people think that removing the penny is not a good idea in fears of inflation and economic problems. This is not the case. “A number of countries, including Australia, new Zealand, brazil, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and Britain, have already dropped their lowest-denominated coins, without dire consequences” (Mancuso). If all of these countries can drop their lowest value coin without their economy collapsing, it seems reasonable to assume that we would be fine too. Even more proof is that Canada has stopped minting out pennies, and with all of our cultural, economic, and political similarities it would seem that it may be best for us to stop penny-producing too.(Mancuso). If Canada has found enough valid reasons to stop minting the penny, then we should follow their example.

Ceasing production of the penny would save millions of dollars and time, and could make people’s lives better. Fears of economic collapse are unfounded. The clear course of action is to remove the penny.

Sample D

Pennies – The Real Cost

I don't believe that pennies are needed in our society today. Multiple countries have already made a change to stop the use of pennies including Australia, Brazil, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and Britain and there seems to be more pro's than there are con's. I think that getting rid of the penny will be beneficial to the United States.

Military bases have started rounding bills to the nearest 5-cents, and it seems to be working well. Some people fear that the rounding may result in costing us extra money, but some businesses will be sure to round down to balance it out. Others think that the history of the penny is important to our American culture. Although this is true, the negative sides to this story outweigh the good. For example, the penny costs more to produce than it is worth. It costs almost 2.41 cents to produce and distribute and is only worth 1 cent. Although people think that getting rid of the penny is unneeded, I believe that it will be beneficial to our society.

Getting rid of the penny will help our country for many reasons. In source #1, Jeff Flaherty states "We often store them in jars, throw them in water fountains, or refuse them as change." They are worth so little that countries like Canada don't bother to use them at all. Unless the government can find a way to make pennies with a more cost efficient material, I think the cost is not worth it.

In conclusion, I don't believe that pennies are needed in our society today. Rounding bills to the nearest 5-cents has proven itself to be a better method. Pennies are expensive to produce and distribute; almost 2.41 cents! Lots of people refuse pennies as change (according to source #1) and we often store them in jars. I think that getting rid of the penny would be beneficial to today's society.

Sample E

I think they should stop making the penny. The reason is it costs more to make then its worth.

The reason I think it costs more to make then its worth is because of the facts they gave me it the sources. One example of the fact they gave me is the mint lost \$56.5 million in the last year. Another fact they gave me is it 1.8 cents to produce a penny.

In conclusion those are just some facts they gave me to prove it costs more money to make a penny then its worth.

Sample F

Should We Keep the Penny?

Should we keep the penny? My thought on this yes, we should keep the penny. There are many things that would be effected if we got rid of it. For exsample if we got rid of the penny then the amount of money for things would be rounded up or down. “. . . a lunch bill comes out to \$9.06, it would be rounded down to \$9.05. If it was \$9.09, it would be rounded up to \$9.10,” This was stated in the second source. But this would be more like a tax because most stores would round up more often then not so this would cost people \$600 million each year. The penny is a big part of our history too. “The first pennies, minted until 1857, were very large . . .” The penny has changed over the years with us. It is also in many popular idioms. “‘a penny for your thoughts’ . . . ‘not one red cent’.” Also somethings for exsample penny candy.

But the counter argument would also have points. The penny does cost more to make than it’s worth, but that can be fixed by changing how it’s made. Also most of the time people refuse to have it in change and don’t normally use them.

But I still think we should keep the penny. I feel this way because they add up. A penny drive “. . . raised over \$3000 in one week!” They raised this much money because people will willingly give up pennies because you can’t buy much with them. So donating them adds up to alot of money. But if you had a quater drive not many people will donate because you can do stuff with quaters.

In conclusion I feel we should keep the penny. Its a big part of our history and is used in common phrases. It maybe more expensive to make than it’s worth but that can be fixed by being made out of different things. Saving up pennies can really add up. We truely need the penny.

Sample G

I think we should just we just stop producing pennies because it it was a waste of money for example in source #2 it says “estimated \$700 million in wages that businesses pay retail clerks to count pennies” that’s Cleary is a lot of money just for counting pennies!

Another reason I think the government should stop making pennies is were not making a profit when making the pennies we are losing money little by little for example in source #4 it says “just over 1.8 cents to make a penny.” This is telling you by each penny they are making they are losing about 0.8 cents and so on top of the 700 million dollars they are wasting the are also losing a total of 0.8 cents each penny they are making. A lot of people that I know don’t even use pennies they just throw them away.

I think somebody would disagree with me by saying the penny should keep being produced because at some cases you might need the penny in case something is 5.04 dollars but you only have 5.03 dollars that penny could be very useful but I could disagree with that person because even some workers at stores don’t really care if you don’t have that penny. And the government is just losing money out of making pennies that is why I think the penny should stop being made.

Sample H

The production of the penny in the United States should continue because it has been in our world for more than 200 years. If we eliminate it now, it will change something huge. For example, “The history of a penny reveals more than just a coin – it exposes a piece of American culture” (The Ever-Changing Penny). This shows that the penny has more of a meaning than most people think.

Also, “Many argue that price-rounding cannot be done fairly, and that finding a way to make pennies cheaper is a better approach” (Is the Penny Worth It?). This illustrates that people want to lower the price so the penny can continue to be produced.

Some people might not agree with this. They might say that it takes up too much space and it’s not useful anymore. However Ted Waterhouse writes, “Pennies might be a little bulky, but they add up; moreover, because they are worth so little, people don’t mind donating them to charity” (Give a Penny-Save the Day). This shows that pennies can be useful, even if they are worth only one cent.

Pennies are not only a piece of American culture; they are also useful for good causes. This is important because pennies are a good thing for America.