

Student Sample 1 With Commentary

Score row	Score points:  Total = 24 (out of 30 possible points)	Scoring Commentary
Understanding and Analyzing Context	6: The report identifies and richly contextualizes the area of investigation, discusses various perspectives and draws explicit connections among those perspectives.	The report discusses government secrecy, presents evidence to support two different perspectives (that government secrecy is harmful, and that government secrecy can be beneficial), and connects these perspectives in order to draw a well-reasoned conclusion.
Understanding and Analyzing Argument	4: The report summarizes specific information with some explanation and provides a limited analysis of the line of reasoning.	The report summarizes and explains specific information, and links claims to evidence. The line of reasoning is weakened, however, in at least three ways. First, the terms “totalitarian government” and “government secrecy” are used interchangeably. While the two concepts are related, they are not one and the same. The line of reasoning is also weakened by two seemingly contradictory claims: “The majority. . .were forced to work on farms” and “the production of rice was scarce.” The report does not explain how increased farm labor resulted in decreased production of rice. A third weakness in the line of reasoning is the evidence cited to support the claim that “keeping certain things hidden is beneficial to the people” by helping to avert risk to “the military and society.” The evidence cited is the government’s choice to hide the identity of Bin Laden’s assassin, not for the security of the military or of society, but “for his personal security.” The report does not elaborate on how safeguarding the personal security of the assassin was a benefit to public safety in general.
Analyzing and Evaluating Evidence	2: The report identifies various items of information but makes few or no connections between those items of information, their relevance to the argument and their credibility.	The report identifies items of information but provides no commentary as to connections between the pieces of evidence, relevance to the argument, or credibility of sources.
Reflection	6: The reflection insightfully explains the initial views of the problem and the approach to conducting research and solving the problem. The reflection also describes some consideration of revision in writing and thinking, based on discoveries made during the research and writing process.	Although the reflection addresses the group dynamic, the focus is primarily upon the student’s individual process. The reflection offers insightful explanations of the student’s research approach and describes the student’s personal process of rethinking, revising, and discovery.
Selecting and Using Evidence	3: The report accurately attributes and cites all sources used.	The report accurately attributes and cites all sources used.
Grammar and Style	3: The report contains few flaws in grammar or style and clearly communicates to the reader.	The report is well written and communicates clearly to the reader.

### Individual Paper – Govt. Secrecy

In the United States, we have the luxury of having very close to what is considered an open government. We have the freedom to do and say what we want, unlike many other areas of the world. Multiple countries believe in controlling the people through government secrecy, and in some extreme cases, completely shutting out the citizens from the rest of the world. Is it right for these governments to control these people through secrecy? And to what extent should governments keep secrets from its citizens?

There are several countries throughout the world which have totalitarian governments. A chief example of this totalitarian government is North Korea. Although this country is very secret to the rest of the world, some have recently gotten the chance to enter North Korea and document the many ways in which North Korean citizens are controlled by their government. Forced “worshipping” of leader Kim Jong Il is very distinct in this country. An annual event called the “Mass Games” consists of major gymnastic performances which demonstrate loyalty to North Korea’s leader, and also to display themselves as disciplined communist people. All who live here believe it is their “destiny” to impress Kim Jong Il. The 2004 documentary on this particular event is “A State of Mind” by Daniel Gordon, which follows two young girls preparing for the Mass Games. These children train for many hours each day to prepare for this massive nationalistic event. This documentary not only shows children training for the major performance, but also the way in which the citizens are controlled in North Korea. Through these

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**Comment [Reader2]:** Rubric Row 2: The line of reasoning is weakened, however, in at least three ways. First, the terms totalitarian government and government secrecy are used interchangeably. While the two concepts are related, they are not one and the same.

**Comment [Reader3]:** Rubric Row 5: The report accurately attributes and cites all sources used. There are multiple examples of this throughout the paper.

<sup>1</sup> *A State of Mind*, directed by Daniel Gordon (2004; Kino International), DVD.

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Mass Games, children are trained to become “fully developed communist people,” a direct quote from Kim Jong Il himself.<sup>2</sup> This event makes the people believe that their leader is the best in the world. North Koreans are also taught false facts about the outside world, and are taught to believe that theirs is the only successful country in the world. Additionally, visitors have witnessed the pedestal North Koreans put their country and leader on. When looking at North Korea’s hermit government, it is easy to say that this type of regime does affect the citizens. By being secluded from the rest of the world, the people are subject to severe brainwashing. Extreme government secrecy is possibly beneficial to the North Korean leaders. Since the ordinary citizens are completely oblivious to what is actually going on in the outside world, they are therefore very easy to control by government.

Another example of this kind of extreme secrecy is present in China. In the past, China has used secrecy to control its citizens in major ways. This can be found during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976.<sup>3</sup> Leader Mao Zedong used this “revolution” to rid China of capitalist, cultural, and traditional ideas. He also believed in ridding China of the “Four Olds,” which were old customs, habits, cultures, and ideas.<sup>4</sup> This case is similar to North Korea’s, in that the leader wanted to control the minds of its citizens. Mao’s new communist government tortured, imprisoned, and persecuted many who were assumed to be “revisionists,” people who brought capitalist ideas into the country. Many young people of China were attracted to this “revolution” led by Mao Zedong, and were part of his plan for violent class struggle in groups called “Red Guards.”<sup>5</sup> In both North Korea and China, the young were brainwashed into

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<sup>2</sup> “Mass Games,” Koryo Tours, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Kallie Szczepanski, “What Was the Cultural Revolution?” About.com: Asian History

<sup>4</sup> “The Cultural Revolution,” History Learning Site

<sup>5</sup> Ji-li Jiang, *Red Scarf Girl* (Harper Collins, 1998)

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thinking it was okay to eliminate old ideas through violence and spread ideas of socialism.

Schools during the Cultural Revolution were required to teach these socialist ideas, while many children were not even able to study, due to enforced farming and manual labor. The majority of those who graduated high school went on to work on farms, as Mao Zedong believed there was much to be learned from farmers and peasants. This forced education resulted in the lost opportunity of valuable knowledge for many youth living during the Cultural Revolution. Students were negatively affected by this control, along with living conditions worsening due to the impending fall of China's economy. The production of rice was scarce, making prices of the commodity skyrocket.<sup>6</sup> Citizens were forced to give away many of their possessions which the "Red Guards" deemed socialist; if caught with such contraband, severe punishment ensued.

This time period in China is one of the prime examples of the negative effects secrets have on a country's people. These secrets are not only kept from the people and the rest of the world, but the citizens themselves are hidden from the outside world. The Cultural Revolution caused major secrecy in China, as no information was permitted to leave the country regarding this period. Propaganda approved by the communist party of China was the only type of information allowed to be aired in media, which was usually fabricated. Similar to North Korea, only those who were loyal to the communist party were allowed to enter China. This specific period of time in China resulted in serious social and economic hardships for its citizens.

Although government secrecy can be taken to the extreme by countries, others believe keeping certain things hidden is beneficial to the people. During wartime, military plans and destinations are hidden due to the inherent risks to public safety along with campaigns being exposed to enemies. If a specific plan is revealed to certain enemy countries, a risk could be

**Comment [Reader5]:** The line of reasoning is also weakened by two seemingly contradictory claims: "The majority...were forced to work on farms" and "the production of rice was scarce." The report does not explain how increased farm labor resulted in decreased production of rice.

**Comment [Reader6]:** Rubric Row 1: The report discusses government secrecy, presents evidence to support two different perspectives (that government secrecy is harmful, and that government secrecy can be beneficial), and connects these perspectives in order to draw a well-reasoned conclusion.

<sup>6</sup> Sam Grover, "Long Term Effects of the Cultural Revolution," eHow

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generated on the military and society. For example, following the elimination of Osama bin Laden in 2011, the identity of the assassin has been kept anonymous for his personal security due to the threat of retaliation.<sup>7</sup> In this case, secrecy is not only beneficial to the government, but is also a safety measure for the public and those involved in foreign affairs. America and many other countries have made mistakes regarding the extent of government secrecy, but have mainly used this method for the general safety of the citizens.

Throughout the world, secrecy is used and is almost inevitable. Some believe in using it for safety and others use it for control. To some extent secrecy in all countries should be maintained, in order to keep the environment of the country safe from enemies, and to allow government to create laws and policies that will benefit the people in the long run. A closed government is going too far when it is using secrets in order to control the country, as seen in North Korea and China. In order for secrecy to make a difference in the country, the government should not use the method of hiding for their own benefits, but only for the people.

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**Comment [Reader7]:** A third weakness in the line of reasoning is the evidence cited to support the claim that “keeping certain things hidden is beneficial to the people” by helping to avert risk to “the military and society.” The evidence cited is the government’s choice to hide the identity of Bin Laden’s assassin, not for the security of the military or of society, but “for his personal security.” The report does not elaborate on how safeguarding the personal security of the assassin was a benefit to public safety in general.

**Comment [Reader8]:** Rubric Row 1: The report discusses government secrecy, presents evidence to support two different perspectives (that government secrecy is harmful, and that government secrecy can be beneficial), and connects these perspectives in order to draw a well-reasoned conclusion.

**Comment [Reader9]:** Rubric Row 1: The report discusses government secrecy, presents evidence to support two different perspectives (that government secrecy is harmful, and that government secrecy can be beneficial), and connects these perspectives in order to draw a well-reasoned conclusion.

**Comment [Reader10]:**  
Rubric Row 3: The report identifies items of information but provides no commentary as to connections between the pieces of evidence, relevance to the argument, or credibility of sources.

Rubric Row 6: The report is well written and communicates clearly to the reader.

<sup>7</sup> Phil Bronstein, “Osama bin Laden’s killer struggles,” San Francisco Chronicle

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Comment [Reader11]: Rubric Row 5: The report accurately attributes and cites all sources used.

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**Reflection: Group Dynamic:**

From the very beginning, I think our group worked very well together. The majority of us had the same idea of what we wanted to research, excluding only one of our members. We eventually came up with the idea of government secrecy, which helped [name redacted] (who wasn't too sure about the topic) decide what he wanted to research. His research interests were mostly tied to military and technology, so I gave him the idea to research secret drone activity by the United States. This helped him immensely and drove his individual research.

Multiple times we attempted to meet outside of school to get our project done. Although the intent was to be productive, it usually was not. It was very difficult to even write an introduction paragraph, because of our very different writing styles and some insecurities of stepping over our boundaries. We did not have a group leader, and now that I look back on the group project I think it might have been helpful. If we did have one, we could have had that person take on the task of beginning to write the paper in their own style. Although this might have been helpful, we were still successful in going back to our final and making the paper flow well. By not having a group leader, one person was not stuck with all of the work.

Overall, I think that our group dynamic was very good. At some points we were unproductive, but in other times we got a lot done. We all agreed that it was very difficult to write a group paper, due to various writing styles and the task of successfully tying our lenses together. It was also tough to meet outside of school, because of every group member's extra-curricular activities. Through all of these challenges, all group members successfully completed what they needed to on time. After this project, we all learned a lot about ourselves and will use our new skills in the future group projects to come.

**Comment [Reader12]:** Rubric Row 4: Although the reflection addresses the group dynamic, the focus is primarily upon the student's individual process. The reflection offers insightful explanations of the student's research approach and describes the student's personal process of rethinking, revising, and discovery.

See highlighted evidence on the next page.

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Personal Perspective:

Before beginning research on this project, when I thought “government secrecy,” I thought conspiracies, but when I researched I learned it was more than that. My personal lens was cultural, researching different government techniques in various countries. Specific countries that I looked at were China, North Korea, and the United States. When I started research on China and North Korea, I didn’t know how much secrecy in government affected the citizens of the country. It was surprising to find that in order to control the people, they used government secrecy in extreme ways. In both China and North Korea, the leaders brainwash citizens in order to control them. Many people in these countries were and are taught to believe things that are just plain false. I watched documentaries and read articles regarding North Korea, and learned so much about the way people actually thought. They are oblivious to what goes on outside of their own country, living in horrible conditions with food, water, and power scarcities. At the end of my research I wondered what we could do about these governments affecting the citizens, and there’s not much. Both countries are very secretive and North Korea is the most secluded country in the world. All in all, researching these countries was very interesting to me, and I have even continued to learn more about North Korea.

When writing my individual paper, I had some trouble. I knew for a fact that North Korea would be a good country to research on, but it was difficult for me to find another secretive government. I remembered that during China’s “Cultural Revolution,” the same tactics used in North Korea were used in this period of China. This was very useful to me, and drove my individual paper significantly. It was also difficult to find ways that government secrecy was beneficial to the country. Finally I found that it is beneficial to keep military secrets from the

**Comment [Reader13]:** The reflection offers insightful explanations of the student’s research approach and describes the student’s personal process of rethinking, revising, and discovery.

**Comment [Reader14]:** The reflection offers insightful explanations of the student’s research approach.

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people and enemies, and this also helped for my local relevance by using the U.S as an example.

I will admit that it was difficult for me to get everything done on time. In the end I was successful, but I learned a lot about myself and time management. In the future, I know that I will handle my time more successfully, and this project will have helped with that. There were many ups and downs but due to this project, but I have learned a lot in group work and individual work.

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**Comment [Reader15]:** The reflection describes the student's personal process of rethinking, revising, and discovery.