

	Grade	A	B	C	D	F
	Aspect/level	Sophisticated	Proficient	Quite competent	Apparent, though not yet competent	Not yet apparent
Higher Order Concerns	Communicating an awareness of audience and context	Audience engaged consistently in nuanced ways. Successful intellectual or creative leap made appropriate to the genre. Emotional effects controlled and evoked in specific language. Awareness of multiple perspectives; engaged when necessary to further the writing.	Audience often engaged in identifiable ways. Attempt at intellectual or creative leap appropriate to the genre. Emotional effects achieved mainly via specific language. Awareness of perspectives or detracting opinions; significant success in incorporating these.	Shows an awareness of audience. Ideas or approach fairly usual, though purpose is clear. Emotional effects may need to be evoked by specifics rather than by "telling." Awareness of different or detracting points of view; may not be incorporated successfully.	Awareness of an audience, but mainly by the use of surface words and phrases. Ideas or approach tend to be on topic but not clearly targeted, perhaps because the ideas or language are general. Emotional effects rely on abstractions. Refers to different points of view; these may not be substantive.	Awareness of audience scarce or not apparent. Ideas or approach may be off topic. The emotional connection to the audience may rely mainly on cliché, sentimentality, bias, or ranting. Shows no awareness of other points of view.
	Focusing writing appropriate to the genre	Implicit focus or explicit thesis is clear, specific and finely nuanced. As appropriate, thesis presents arguable position which is at face value interesting. Focus suffuses and subtly governs the unfolding of ideas.	Implicit focus or explicit thesis is clear and specific. As appropriate, thesis presents an arguable position. Focus shapes the essay though there may be more room for nuance.	Implicit focus or explicit thesis may be evident though inconsistent, too simple, or general. Argumentative thesis may not be clearly arguable at face value (though the essay may contain an argument).	Awareness of, or attempt at focusing is apparent though not significantly carried through the writing. Argumentative thesis may be reported fact (and not arguable). Possible multiple foci.	Writing has no discernable area of focus. It may be there but crowded out by other ideas. May read like first thoughts.
	Using evidence effectively	Type and deployment of evidence is consistently precise and nuanced. Sources of evidence carefully considered and counter-evidence is dealt with elegantly. Logical, ethical, and emotional proofs work seamlessly together.	Type and deployment of evidence is always appropriate and logical. Sources of evidence are reliable and glaring counter-evidence is dealt with. There may be room for depth in the layering of evidence. Logical, ethical, and emotional proofs are appropriate to the purpose.	Evidence often well chosen but may be minor logical glitches. At times evidence may seem general. Possible use of convenient rather than reliable sources and counter-evidence may be evaded. May at times appeal to emotions when logical proofs are needed.	Evidence or support is indicated but may be insufficient or illogical. May rely on common knowledge or unreliable sources. Likely biased evidence and questionable ethos.	Little to no evidence supplied for assertions.
	Developing and deepening writing	A wealth of analysis, implicit or explicit, finely attuned to the focus, points, and evidence. Original thinking goes	A pattern of analysis, implicit or explicit, attuned to the focus, points, and evidence. Clear examples of	Significant attempt to incorporate analysis. Some interesting connections made resulting	Shows awareness of the need to make sense of the material presented, but these may be read as	Shows little to no awareness that analysis needs to be incorporated. May result from flat declarations of fact or passing

		beyond what's apparent in sources, via consistently nuanced points.	original thinking though may not always address nuances.	from points and evidence. May be general at times and could often go further.	placeholders where analysis could be developed.	on information from sources uncritically.
	Structuring writing particular to the situation	Apparently seamless organization. Sections build upon one another as meaning accrues within and between paragraphs. The structure works as an element furthering meaning.	Well organized and easy to follow. Sections are ordered to build on each other. Though transitions are logical they may occasionally seem halting. Could need some rearranging within and between paragraphs to further meaning.	Organized to read clearly, though the sections may appear interchangeable. Or the sections may build but transitions obscure this. May be essentially well organized overall but repetitions and/or mixed paragraphs detract.	Clear effort at structuring but organization within and between paragraphs is most often hard to follow. Possibly due to repetition, mixed paragraphs, need of logical connections, or unclear transitions.	Little to no apparent organization. Ideas crop up so as to seem random. Excessive repetition, mixed paragraphs, need of logical connections, or unclear transitions.
Lower Order Concerns	Using appropriate tone, diction and word choice	Consistently appropriate to audience, genre, and purpose. Precision and subtle distinctions in diction, word choice, and tone are persuasive.	Most often appropriate to audience, genre, and purpose. Tone and level of diction are well suited with occasional glitches. Word choice is most often precise.	Suited overall to audience, genre, and purpose. May be a pattern of distracting shifts in tone or diction, or a pattern of errors in word choice.	Awareness of the need to adapt a particular tone or diction for particular situations, but overall unsuccessful. Significant pattern of errors in word choice.	Tone or diction may be inappropriate for the writing situation and doesn't appear to have been considered. Excessive number of word choice errors.
	Making sentences clear, vivid, and fluid	The style is agile and elegant. Sentences consistently use vivid, concrete language, yet are concise with very few wasted words (often uses verbs very well). Clear and fluid with only minor glitches. Syntax and sentence length further the meaning.	Sentences most often use clear, concrete language. Some attempts to make the writing vivid (like adverbs) may bog the writing down. Sentences are most often clear and fluid, though some errors may exist. Syntax and sentence length are varied.	Sentences are clear though the language may be general. May tend to rely on weaker verbs too much (like "to be"). Because syntax may not always be the most efficient, sentences could be more concise or say more. Syntax monotony and grammatical errors may interrupt sentences.	Sentences may frequently be confusing or there may be a substantial pattern of significant grammatical errors.	May be very difficult to get through, because of number and frequency of confusions and errors.
	Academic and writing conventions	Has a compelling title. All sources are cited and smoothly integrated using correct MLA format. References are appropriately listed in a works cited page. Punctuation, spelling, numbers, titles of works and capitalization	Has a pretty good title. All sources are cited and appropriately integrated using correct MLA format. References are appropriately listed in a works cited page. Punctuation, spelling, numbers, titles of works and capitalization	Has a title. All sources are cited and integrated using correct MLA format. References are listed in a works cited page. Punctuation, spelling, numbers, titles of works and capitalization are correct though errors may stand out.	Has the title "Title: or "Untitled." All sources are cited and references listed, though the format may not be correct. Evident pattern of errors in punctuation, spelling, numbers, titles of works and capitalization.	Title left blank. Profusion of errors and typos. Failure to cite sources or list works cited. Please note that failure to cite any source (even if you've cited others) could be seen as plagiarism and can result in a zero for the

		are correct with virtually no errors.	are correct with few errors.			assignment, failure of the course, and disciplinary action by the Dean.
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