

Essay Grading Rubric

CRITERIA		EXCELLENT	ADEQUATE	NEEDS WORK
Organization	Title, Introduction, Conclusion	Title includes both subject and a hint about the thesis or point of view; engaging introduction that prepares the reader accurately for the body paragraphs; thought-provoking or interesting conclusion that ties everything back together and takes the thesis further	Most but not all of the qualities listed under "Excellent" - there may be roughness or confusion in the introduction or conclusion	No title; introduction and/or conclusion seem to have little to do with the body of the essay
	Thesis/Focus	Excels by responding to the assignment with a clear argumentative thesis in the first paragraph that continues to be the focus of the paper	Has a clearly stated argumentative thesis that the paper basically focuses on.	Thesis is implied or absent, or is stated, but the paper doesn't connect back to it
	Organization	one main idea per paragraph, good use of transitions, clear topic sentences, smooth connections between paragraphs, if an order is set in the introduction, it is followed	mostly one idea or point per paragraph, some transitions, mostly clear topic sentences, okay connections between paragraphs	many ideas per paragraph, missing topic sentences, abrupt transition, and/or missing or rough connections between paragraphs
Development	Development: Support	Uses specific, concrete, relevant details, examples, evidence and numerous references to source material to substantiate and explain thesis	uses support, but it may be insufficient in some areas, or connections between the evidence and ideas might not be clear	lacks sufficient details and examples to support ideas; has insufficient or irrelevant evidence
	Development: Analysis	explains the connections between evidence and main ideas thoughtfully and thoroughly, makes connections explicit, discusses implications, relevance or significance.	mostly explains connections between ideas and evidence, although explanation may be incomplete, or may be missing in some paragraphs. Little discussion of facts and info	does not clearly explain connections between evidence and ideas; does not elaborate beyond basic or obvious conclusions, and/or analysis is too general or brief to be convincing
Mechanics	Sentence Craft & Style	Demonstrates excellent use of language; precisely chosen words, complex and varied sentence structure; appropriate tone and style	adequate use of language, although some words may be vague or imprecise; sentence structure may be simple or awkward in spots, mostly appropriate tone and style	vague and abstract language; words misused; sentences may be monotonous or choppy tone or style may be inappropriate for the assignment
	Mechanics: (Grammar and spelling)	is almost entirely free of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors (one per page or less)	contains a few errors which may distract the reader but not impede meaning (about 2-3 errors per page)	has frequent or extensive errors in diction grammar, punctuation, spelling (more than 4 errors per page)
	Mechanics: MLA	Has smoothly used signal phrases and parenthetical citation in-text; has a citation for every fact or quote; has correctly formatted Works Cited page with few or no errors	mostly cites in-text correctly, but doesn't introduce citations smoothly or uses signal phrases/parenthetical citation inaccurately; Works Cited page has more than a few errors	missing many in-text citations, missing Works Cited page, Works cited page contains only URLs or has other significant omissions or errors