

College-Level Writing Rubric

	Masterful	Skilled	Able	Developing	Novice	(Way Off)
Focus, Purpose, Thesis (Controlling Idea)	Engaging and full development of a clear thesis as appropriate to assignment purpose.	Competent and well-developed thesis; thesis represents sound and adequate understanding of the assigned topic.	Mostly intelligible ideas; thesis is weak, unclear, too broad, or only indirectly supported.	Mostly simplistic and unfocused ideas; little or no sense of purpose or control of thesis.	Ideas are extremely simplistic, showing signs of confusion, misunderstanding of the prompt; thesis is essentially missing or not discernable.	Shows complete confusion about the topic or inability to grasp it; thus conspicuous absence of thesis and lack of purpose.
Ideas, Support & Development (Evidence)	Consistent evidence with originality and depth of ideas; ideas work together as a unified whole; main points are sufficiently supported (with evidence); support is valid and specific.	Ideas supported sufficiently; support is sound, valid, and logical.	Main points and ideas are only indirectly supported; support isn't sufficient or specific, but is loosely relevant to main points.	Insufficient, non-specific, and/or irrelevant support.	Lack of support for main points; frequent and illogical generalizations without support.	Clear absence of support for main points.
Structure, Organization	Organization is sequential and appropriate to assignment; paragraphs are well developed and appropriately divided; ideas linked with smooth and effective transitions.	Competent organization, without sophistication. Competent paragraph structure; lacking in effective transitions.	Limited attempts to organize around a thesis; paragraphs are mostly stand-alones with weak or non-evident transitions.	Organization, while attempted, was unsuccessful. Paragraphs were simple, disconnected and formulaic. No evident transitions or planned sequence.	Organization, if evident at all, is confusing and disjointed; paragraph structure is weak; transitions are missing, inappropriate and/or illogical.	Paragraph structure does not exist; or is a single rambling paragraph or series of isolated paragraphs.
Audience, Tone, and Point-of View	Clear discernment of distinctive audience; tone and point-of-view appropriate to the assignment.	Effective and accurate awareness of general audience; tone and point-of-view satisfactory.	Little or inconsistent sense of audience related to assignment purpose; tone and point-of-view not refined or consistent.	Shows almost no awareness of a particular audience; reveals no grasp of appropriate tone and/or point-of-view for given assignment.	Lacks awareness of a particular appropriate audience for assignment; tone and point-of-view somewhat inappropriate or very inconsistent.	No evident awareness of audience as appropriate to assignments; tone completely inappropriate to assignment.
Sentence Structure (Grammar)	Each sentence structured effectively, powerfully; rich, well-chosen variety of sentence styles and length.	Effective and varied sentences; errors (if any) due to lack of careful proofreading; syntax errors (if any) reflect uses as colloquialisms.	Formulaic or tedious sentence patterns; shows some errors in sentence construction; some non-standard syntax usage.	Sentences show errors of structure; little or no variety; no grasp of sentence flow.	Simple sentences used excessively, almost exclusively; frequent errors of sentence structure.	Contains multiple and serious errors of sentence structure: <i>i.e.</i> , fragments, run-ons. Unable to write simple sentences.
Mechanics and Presentation	Virtually free of punctuation, spelling, capitalization errors; appropriate format and presentation for assignment.	Contains only occasional punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization errors. Few formatting errors. Most errors likely careless.	Contains several (mostly common) punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization errors. Several errors in formatting or formatting is inconsistent,	Contains many errors of punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization. Errors interfere with meaning in places. Formatting incorrect in most places.	Contains many and serious errors of punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization; errors severely interfere with meaning. Formatting weak.	Frequent errors in spelling and capitalization; intrusive and/or inaccurate punctuation, communication is hindered. No formatting as appropriate to assignment.
Vocabulary and Word Usage	Exceptional vocabulary range, accuracy, and correct and effective word usage.	Good vocabulary range and accuracy of usage.	Ordinary vocabulary range, mostly accurate; some vernacular terms.	Errors of diction, and usage, while evident, do not interfere with readability.	Extremely limited vocabulary; choices lack grasp of diction; usage is inaccurate.	Diction and syntax make communication meaningless or very confusing at best.
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