

Rubric

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Criteria	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXEMPLARY
ASSESSMENT 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONS/ WORKING THESIS/ TOPIC RATIONALE	Research question is not in proper format; topic may not be controversial; working thesis is not arguable or supportable; and topic rationale is unclear and underdeveloped.	Research question is in proper format; topic is controversial; working thesis may not be arguable and/or supportable; and topic rationale is clear but underdeveloped.	Research question is in proper format; topic is controversial; working thesis is arguable and is likely supportable; and topic rationale is clearly stated and mostly well-developed	Research question is in proper format; topic is controversial; working thesis is clearly arguable and supportable; and topic rationale is clearly stated and well-developed.
ASSESSMENT 1: AUDIENCE ANALYSIS	Primary audience is not identified; evaluation of audience needs and/or desires in relation to chosen topic is inaccurate or absent; rationale for selecting specific audience is irrelevant or absent; and explanation of how writer intends to approach audience is poorly planned or absent.	Primary audience is not clearly identified; evaluation of audience needs and/or desires in relation to chosen topic is superficial; rationale for selecting specific audience is unclear; and explanation of how writer intends to approach audience is poorly planned.	Primary audience is identified; the evaluation of audience needs and/or desires in relation to chosen topic is thorough; rationale for selecting specific audience is well-detailed; and explanation of how writer intends to approach audience is appropriate and mostly well planned.	Identification of primary audience is clear; evaluation of audience needs and/or desires is complex; rationale for selecting specific audience is sophisticated; and explanation of how writer intends to approach the audience is direct and well planned.
ASSESSMENT 1: APA REFERENCES PAGE	Cites some sources, though most are not credible or authoritative; demonstrates inconsistent use of APA guidelines for citations including punctuation, organization, and formatting with errors that impair meaning.	Cites at least eight sources, though some may not be credible or authoritative; demonstrates inconsistent use of APA guidelines for citations including punctuation, organization, and formatting with numerous errors.	Cites at least eight reliable academic sources; demonstrates proper use of APA guidelines for citations including punctuation, organization, and formatting though there may be some errors.	Cites at least eight reliable, authoritative academic sources; demonstrates proper use of APA guidelines for citations including punctuation, organization, and formatting with few or no errors.
ASSESSMENT 1: WRITING MECHANICS	Topic proposal's sentences reveal frequent syntax or grammar errors that impair meaning; numerous misspellings, contractions, fragments, run-on sentences, or other mechanical issues significantly impair meaning.	Topic proposal's sentences lack variety (frequently repeated opening words and sentence structure); awkward syntax and grammar confuse writer's point and may impair meaning; numerous misspellings, contractions, fragments, run-on sentences, or other mechanical issues may impair meaning.	Topic proposal's sentences are generally effective, but may lack appropriate variety (some repeated opening words and structure); syntax and grammar may be awkward in places, but do not impair meaning; a few misspellings or punctuation errors, but they do not impair meaning.	Topic proposal's sentences are marked by varying opening words and structure; effective syntax and grammar demonstrate a mastery of writing conventions and serve the author's purpose; few if any misspellings or punctuation errors.
ASSESSMENT 2: TITLE/INTRO HISTORY OF PROBLEM	Title of the essay may reflect content in a vague, generalized manner or be missing altogether; opening is ineffective, poorly organized, and undeveloped (inappropriately brief); the essay may lack clear transitions between the opening and the context or	Title of the essay reflects its content; opening is functional, but too brief and/or simplistic; essay's topic is apparent, but needs to be developed to engage the reader; the essay may lack clear transitions between the opening and the context or history of the issue; and	Title of the essay clearly reflects its content; generally engaging opening introduces the essay's topic, but may not inspire thinking about the topic; the essay logically proceeds to the context or history of the issue; and history of the topic is generally well-focused and	Title of the essay clearly and specifically reflects its content; engaging opening introduces the essay's general topic and inspires thinking about that topic; logically proceeds to the context or history of the issue; and history of topic is appropriately focused and concisely

	history of the issue; and history of the topic is unfocused and not clearly summarized.	history of the topic is generally focused and summarized.	concisely summarized.	summarized.
ASSESSMENT 2: CURRENT DEBATE	Writing does not reflect a critical, analytical understanding of the debate as it currently is presented in the literature; the writer does not clearly compare or make connections between differing viewpoints; and writer frequently uses biased language to present differing viewpoints; organization is unclear-block or alternating.	Writing sometimes reflects a critical, analytical understanding of the debate as it currently is presented in the literature; the writer compares and makes connections between some of the differing viewpoints; writer use some biased language to present differing viewpoints; organization is occasionally unclear-block or alternating.	Writing primarily reflects a critical, analytical understanding of the debate as it currently is presented in the literature; the writer compares and makes connections between most of the differing viewpoints; writer mostly uses unbiased language to present differing viewpoints; organization is generally clear-block or alternating.	Writing reflects a critical, analytical understanding of the debate as it currently is presented in the literature; the writer compares and makes connections between differing viewpoints; writer uses unbiased language to present differing viewpoints; organization is clear-block or alternating.
ASSESSMENT 2: EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS OF DEBATE	Writer does not clearly state his or her position on the current debate in a thesis statement; thesis is not easily identifiable or may be missing; the idea offered in the thesis demonstrates some awareness of the issue's nuances and details, but does not demonstrate a critical, analytical understanding; points made are mostly vague and unsubstantiated; the essay lacks focus; the essay may provide only history or background with no attempt at persuasion; and there is no sustained analysis present.	Writer states a position on the current debate in a thesis statement; thesis may not be easily identifiable; the idea offered in the thesis demonstrates basic comprehension of the issue, but not necessarily a critical, analytical understanding of it as reflected by one or more of the following: lack of focused and developed topic-guiding essay, analysis which is inconsistent or unsubstantiated, and restating the content of cited details rather than drawing conclusions from them; and writing marked and weakened by frequent generalizations, unsupported claims, assumptions, or vague statements.	Writer generally states his or her position on the current debate in a thesis statement; thesis is identifiable; the idea offered in the thesis reflects sound critical, analytical thinking but may be uneven; through clear reasoning, writer draws insightful conclusions from concrete details to support his or her position on the topic (the thesis statement); inferences are developed so that most claims and points made are well-supported and persuasive; evaluation demonstrates analytical ability, but could be developed further to better explain significance of detail and support; and a few claims may be vague, generalized, or lacking in support.	Writer clearly states his or her position on the current debate in a thesis statement; thesis is easily identifiable and well-phrased; the idea offered in the thesis reflects sound critical, analytical thinking; through clear reasoning, writer draws sophisticated, insightful conclusions from concrete details to support his or her position on the topic (the thesis statement); and inferences are developed so that all claims and points made are well-supported and persuasive.
ASSESSMENT 2: LANGUAGE STYLE / VOICE	Writing is mechanical in tone; vocabulary is simplistic and/or inappropriate; writer's voice is not discernible in the essay; writing demonstrates little or no awareness of audience and persuasive purpose; and use of first or second person and/or contractions diminishes essay's formal tone.	Writing tends to be mechanical in tone; vocabulary tends to be simplistic, marked by instances of informal or imprecise diction; writer's voice is not discernible in the essay; writing demonstrates inconsistent awareness of audience and persuasive purpose; and use of first or second person and/or contractions diminishes essay's formal tone.	Writing is primarily academic in tone; vocabulary may be simplistic or ineffective in some places; writer's voice may not be consistently persuasive, but is discernible; and writing demonstrates some awareness of audience and persuasive purpose.	Writing is academic in tone (no contractions, remains in third person), demonstrating a clear sense of purpose and audience; vocabulary and phrasing are academically appropriate, persuasive, and sophisticated; and writer's voice is evident-confident and sophisticated.
ASSESSMENT	Essay's sentences reveal	Essay's sentences lack	Essay's sentences are	Essay's sentences are

2: MECHANICS/ ORGANIZATION	frequent syntax, grammar, and/or misspelling errors that impair meaning; numerous contractions, fragments, or other significant errors that impair meaning.	variety (frequently repeated opening words and sentence structure); awkward syntax and grammar confuse writer's point and may impair meaning; and some misspellings, contractions, fragments, or other errors that impair meaning in some places.	generally effective, but may lack appropriate variety (some repeated opening words and structure); syntax and grammar may be awkward in places (but do not impair meaning); and a few misspellings that do not impair meaning.	marked by varying opening words and structure; effective syntax and grammar demonstrate a mastery of writing conventions and serve the author's purpose; and absence of misspellings, punctuation errors.
ASSESSMENT 2: SOURCES	Does not consistently integrate credible academic sources into the essay; inconsistent adherence to APA guidelines (which may compromise integrity of the essay); inaccurate References or Works Cited page (which may compromise integrity of essay); and the essay does not use at least four reliable, authoritative secondary sources.	Somewhat integrates credible academic sources into the essay; adherence to APA guidelines may be inconsistent (but does not compromise the integrity of the essay); References or Works Cited page may contain consistent errors (which do not compromise the integrity of the essay); and the essay uses at least five reliable, authoritative secondary sources.	Generally integrates credible academic sources into the essay; proper use of APA guidelines for in-text citations which may contain minor errors; accurate References or Works Cited page which may contain minor errors; the essay uses at least six reliable, authoritative secondary sources; and there may be some imbalance between quoted material and writer's analysis.	Effectively integrates credible academic sources into the essay; proper use of APA guidelines for in-text citations; accurate References or Works Cited page; the essay uses at least eight reliable, authoritative secondary sources; and appropriate balance of quoted material and writer's analysis.
ASSESSMENT 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS/ WORKING THESIS/ TOPIC RATIONALE	Title of the essay may reflect the content in a vague, generalized manner or be missing altogether; opening is ineffective, poorly organized, and undeveloped (inappropriately brief); thesis may generalize about a position rather than take one; and thesis may not address the prompt at all.	Title of the essay attempts to reflect its content; opening is functional, but too brief and/or simplistic; essay's topic is apparent, but needs to be developed to engage the reader; there may be abrupt transitions from first sentences to thesis statement; the thesis statement is present, but may be general, vague, or imprecisely phrased; and thesis may not directly address the prompt (though it still articulates an position that assesses the issue).	Title of the essay reflects its content; generally engaging opening introduces the essay's topic, but may not inspire thinking about the topic; transition to thesis is present, but may be vague; thesis is an easily identifiable statement that addresses the prompt; and the position stated in the thesis reflects mostly sound critical, analytical thinking.	Title of the essay clearly and specifically reflects its content; engaging opening introduces the essay's general topic and inspires thinking about that topic; logically proceeds to thesis; thesis is an easily identifiable, well-phrased statement that directly addresses the prompt; and the position stated in the thesis reflects sound critical, analytical thinking.
ASSESSMENT 3: AUDIENCE ANALYSIS	Essay does not have at least five paragraphs or may not have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion; topic sentences may be absent or consistently lack focused ideas, either offering general, irrelevant comments or stating facts about the issue without analysis; there is a weak or no discernible argument or point guiding the essay; concrete details are absent or insufficient; consistent lack of coherent organization of	Essay has a minimum of five developed paragraphs with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion, though its organization may be unclear; topic sentences are present, but more than one is weak in the following areas: main idea not discernible, vague explanation of evidence, and/or unclear connection to thesis; concrete details are present, but provide insufficient evidence to support topic sentences and/or are irrelevant; lack of coherent organization	Essay has a minimum of five, generally well-developed paragraphs with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion; each topic sentence generally connects to the thesis, but in one or more topic sentences the main idea may need to be clarified; concrete details are generally well-chosen though some may be irrelevant or insufficient as evidence to effectively support the thesis and/or topic sentences; paragraphs are generally	Essay has a minimum of five well-developed paragraphs with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion; each topic sentence clearly connects to the thesis statement and offers an identifiable, well-phrased idea to be proven in the paragraph; concrete details are well-chosen and incorporated; paragraphs are well-organized to create a coherent, carefully developed and supported argument; transitions between ideas are logical

	ideas within paragraphs and from one paragraph to the next; and points of paragraphs are unclear.	within individual paragraphs or from one paragraph to the next; abrupt transitions may impede smooth flow of ideas; and essay may lack consistent focus and control of argument.	well-organized, though some transitions may be awkward and there may be gaps in the development of ideas; and the point of most paragraphs is clear.	and each idea builds on the preceding; and the writer maintains focus and control of the argument so that the point of each paragraph is always clear.
ASSESSMENT 3: APA REFERENCES PAGE	Writing is mechanical in tone; vocabulary is simplistic and/or inappropriate; writer's voice is not discernible in the essay; and writing demonstrates little or no awareness of audience and persuasive purpose.	Writing tends to be mechanical in tone; vocabulary tends to be simplistic, marked by instances of informal or imprecise diction; writer's voice is not discernible in the essay; and writing demonstrates inconsistent awareness of audience and persuasive purpose.	Writing is primarily professional in tone; vocabulary in some places may be simplistic or ineffective; writer's voice may not be consistently persuasive, but is discernible; and writing demonstrates some awareness of audience and persuasive purpose.	Writing is professional in tone; demonstrates a clear sense of purpose and audience; vocabulary and phrasing are academically appropriate, persuasive, and sophisticated; and writer's voice is evident-confident and sophisticated.
ASSESSMENT 3: WRITING MECHANICS	Essay's sentences reveal frequent syntax or grammar errors that impair meaning; misspellings, contractions, fragments, run-on sentences, and/or other mechanical issues.	Essay's sentences lack variety (frequently repeated opening words and sentence structure); awkward syntax and grammar confuse writer's point and may impair meaning; and misspellings, contractions, fragments, run-on sentences, and/or other mechanical issues.	Essay's sentences are generally effective, but may lack appropriate variety (some repeated opening words and structure); syntax and grammar may be awkward in places (but do not impair meaning); and a few misspellings that do not impair meaning.	Essay's sentences are marked by varying opening words and structure; effective syntax and grammar demonstrate a mastery of writing conventions and serve the author's purpose; and absence of misspellings and/or punctuation errors.