

Rating Abbreviations:
N=Naive
W=Weak
C=Competent* A rating of “Competent” is given when the qualities fall between the descriptors for “Proficient” and
P=Proficient “Sophisticated”
S=Sophisticated

Writing Assessment Rubric

Criteria	Critical Questions	Naïve	Weak	Proficient	Sophisticated
Rhetorical Qualities Rating _____	<i>Does the writing have appropriate purposes? Does the writing make a transaction with its intended audience? Does the writer present herself appropriately and effectively?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purposes are unclear, not interesting, or inappropriate. The needs and/or expectations of the audience are not met. The writer’s persona is inappropriate and/or ineffective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purposes are weak. Strategies are inappropriate or inadequate to purposes (e.g., anecdotes instead of analysis). Some audience needs & attitudes are addressed, others ignored. The writer’s persona is marginally acceptable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purposes are consistent, appropriate, & interesting. The writing anticipates & meets most audience needs & attitudes and is appropriate to the context and situation. The writer’s persona is appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purposes are compelling & carried out in intriguing ways. The writing is sensitive to the context and situation and to the needs & attitudes of the audience, guiding their understanding very well. The writer’s persona is effective.
Organization Rating _____	<i>Is there a strong focus? A clear train of thought? i.e. a clear, strong thesis which is consistently developed? Or a narrative that is easily followed? Is there an appropriate introduction and ending?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The thesis is not stated or difficult to find. The train of thought is difficult to follow. Transitions between paragraphs are missing. Introduction &/or ending are missing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The thesis is weak. The train of thought is mechanical or fails to emphasize important ideas. Transitions are weak or mechanical. Introduction &/or ending are weak, ineffective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The thesis is clear. The train of thought is easily followed. Most transitions are smooth. Intro & ending are appropriate & useful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The thesis is clear & strong, commanding reader attention. The train of thought is intriguing. Transitions are insightful. The introduction is inviting & the ending satisfying.
Development of Content & Reasoning Rating _____	<i>Are relevant contexts considered and explored? (Contexts may be historical, theoretical/conceptual, philosophical, situational, etc.) Are claims supported with adequate evidence and reasoning? Has adequate research been done to support the purpose?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No contexts for the purpose and subject are established. Very little support is given for claims. Reasoning is missing, weak, or confused. There is little interesting detail or imagery. Relevant sources are not used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very little context is established or explored. Weak support supplied for claims. Reasoning is undeveloped. The descriptive texture is thin: few details or images. Sources are not well introduced or integrated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant contexts are established for both subject & purposes. Solid support is given for claims. Clear reasoning. Detail & imagery are adequate. Sources are used to give meaningful support... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer establishes a rich set of contexts. Supporting evidence is well chosen and abundant. Reasoning is compelling. Detail and imagery are rich and engaging. The writer has excellent command of relevant sources and integrates them effectively.

Criteria	Description	Naive	Weak	Proficient	Sophisticated
Prose Style Rating _____	<i>Prose refers to the techniques and patterns the writer uses to cast her ideas and purposes into language. Effective prose is concise, clear, coherent, emphatic, and—above all—interesting to read.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure is awkward & wordy—even painful to read. • Vocabulary is poorly chosen. • Coherence gaps are frequent. • The style is inappropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structures are bland; clichés abound. • Vocabulary is awkward in places. • Coherence gaps occur. • The style is inconsistent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure is clear and concise. • Vocabulary is precise. • The writing is coherent. • The style is appropriate to the genre & purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure and vocabulary are lively and interesting. • The style is completely suited to the genre & purpose.
Conventions & Format Rating _____	<i>This category refers both to the correctness of the grammar, spelling, and punctuation and to the quality of the format: its consistency and appropriateness to the genre and the rhetorical situation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors in conventions &/or format make reading difficult. • Punctuation is often missing or incorrect. • Spelling errors are frequent. • Citations &/or documentation are incorrect, incomplete, or missing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control over conventions & format is inconsistent and/or distracting. • Spelling problems are recurring. • Some punctuation is wrong or awkward. • Errors occur in citation &/or documentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate genre conventions & format are used. • Spelling & typographical errors are quite minimal. • Punctuation is clear & conventional. • Citations & documentation are mostly conventional & complete. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventions and format are used for interesting effects. • Punctuation is clear & effective. • All elements of format and mechanics are handled well. • Citations & documentation are conventional & complete.

Overall Rating _____ (Rated on a scale of 5, with 5 the highest: this is a holistic score—**not** an averaging of individual criterion ratings)

Comments:
