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| **Criteria** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** | **Score** |
| Formatting & Formal Writing | The paper follows the MLA format: double spaced, Times New Roman font, 12-pt. font, and the correct heading. Length: 3-5 pages. Formal writing: there are no contractions, personal pronouns, or slang words. | There are 1-2 errors in formatting and formality. | There are 3-4 errors in formatting and formality. | There are 5+ errors in formatting and formality. |  |
| Grammar, Spelling, & Punctuation | It contains few surface errors, none of which seriously undermines the overall effectiveness of the paper for educated readers. | Few sentence-level errors (comma splices, fragments, or fused sentences) appear. | The essay may contain errors in spelling, usage, and punctuation inconsistent with the conventions of standardized English. | Numerous and consistent errors of spelling, usage and punctuation occur in the paper and hinder communication. |  |
| Concise Writing | The prose is clear and memorable. There are no unneeded words or phrases. Everything supports the points. | The prose is clear and readable. There are some unneeded words or phrases. | The prose is unclear and in some points. There are unneeded words or phrases. | The prose is often unclear. There are many unneeded words or phrases. |  |
| Organized Writing | The organization is appropriate for the purpose and subject of the essay. The paragraphs following the introduction are controlled by explicit or implicit topic sentences; they are well developed; and they progress logically from what precedes them. | The order of information is logical and the reader can follow it because of well-chosen transitions and explicit or implicit topic sentences. Paragraph divisions are logical, and the paragraphs use enough specific detail to satisfy the reader. | The organization is fairly clear. The reader could outline the presentation, despite the occasional lack of topic sentences. Paragraphs have adequate development and are divided appropriately. Transitions may be mechanical, but they foster coherence. | Organization is deficient: introductions or conclusions are not functional; paragraphs are neither coherently developed nor arranged; topic sentences are consistently missing, murky or inappropriate; transitions are missing or flawed. |  |
| Introduction | The introduction establishes a context and includes a focused specific thesis statement. | The introduction establishes a context and contains a clear thesis | The context and thesis statement are somewhat unclear. | The context and thesis statement are unclear. |  |
| **Criteria** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** | **Score** |
| Content | The topic is clearly defined, focused and supported. The paper supports the thesis with specific (an appropriate) evidence, examples, and details. Effectively shows an understanding of the literal. Provides valid reasoning for the meaning and purpose of the text. | The topic is defined and supported with examples. Shows an understanding of the literal. The reasoning and support for the meaning and purpose are thorough and more than adequate. | The topic is defined and supported only generally; the thesis statement is also general. Shows some understanding of the text. The analysis of the meaning and purpose are not supported. | The paper is insufficiently developed and does not go beyond the obvious. |  |
| Conclusion:  Significance | The conclusion moves beyond a mere statement of the introduction, offering implications for or the significance of the topic. | The conclusion is effective in showing some of the significance. | The conclusion shows some of the significance, but it is not fully supported. | The significance is unclear and/or unsupported. |  |
| Comments: | | | | |  |
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