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| **Argumentative Essay Rubric for High School Students** |
| Score | Statement of Purpose/Focus | Organization | Elaboration of Evidence | Language and Vocabulary | Conventions |
| 4 | The response is fully sustained and consistently and purposefully focused:--claim is clearly stated, focused and strongly maintained --alternate or opposing claims are clearly addressed--claim is introduced and communicated clearly within the context | The response has a clear and effective organizational structure creating unity and completeness:--effective, consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies--logical progression of ideas from beginning to end--effective intro and conclusion for audience and purpose--strong connections among ideas, with some syntactic variety | The response provides thorough and convincing support/evidence for the writer’s claim that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details. The response achieves substantial depth that is specific and relevant: --Use of evidence from sources is smoothly integrated, comprehensive, relevant, and concrete--effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques | The response clearly and effectively expresses ideas, using precise language:--use of academic and domain-specific vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose | The response demonstrates a strong command of conventions:--few, if any, errors are present in usage and sentence formation--effective and consistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling |
| 3 | The response is adequately sustained and generally focused:--claim is clear and for the most part maintained, though some loosely related material may be present--context provided for the claim is adequate | The response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected:--adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety--adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end--adequate introduction and conclusion--adequate, if slightly inconsistent, connection among ideas | The response provides adequate support/evidence for writer’s claim that includes the use of sources, facts, and details. The response achieves some depth and specificity but is predominantly general:--some evidence from sources is integrated, though citations may be general or imprecise--adequate use of some elaborative techniques | The response adequately expresses ideas, employing a mix of precise with more general language--use of domain-specific vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose | The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:--some errors in usage and sentence formation may be present, but no systematic pattern of errors is displayed--adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling |
| 2 | The response is somewhat sustained and may have a minor drift in focus:--may be clearly focused on the claim but is insufficiently sustained--claim on the issue may be somewhat unclear and unfocused | The response has an inconsistent organizational structure, and flaws are evident:--inconsistent use of basic transitional strategies with little variety --uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end--conclusion and introduction, if present, are weak--weak connection among ideas | The response provides uneven, cursory support/evidence for the writer’s claim that includes partial or uneven use of sources, facts, and little depth:--evidence form sources is weakly integrated , and citations , if present, are uneven--weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques | The response expresses ideas unevenly, using simplistic language: --Use of domain-specific vocabulary may at times be inappropriate for the audience and purpose | The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:--frequent errors in usage may obscure meaning--inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling |
| 1 | The response may be related to the purpose but may offer little relevant detail:--may brief--may have a major drift--claim may be confusing or ambiguous | The response has little or no discernible organizational structure--few or no transitions--frequent extraneous ideas | The response provides minimal support/evidence for the writer’s claim that includes little or no use of sources, facts, and details: | The response expression of ideas is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing | The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions |
| 0 | 0===No evidence of the ability to meet objectives | 0===No evidence of the ability to meet objectives | 0===No evidence of the ability to meet objectives | 0===No evidence of the ability to meet objectives | 0===No evidence of the ability to meet objectives |