

	High	Middle	Low
Thesis (25%)	The writer clearly states the thesis early in the paper. The thesis is a statement about which reasonable persons can disagree and not simply a fact or opinion.	The writer states the thesis but it is unclear or does not appear until late in the paper. The thesis is a statement about which reasonable persons can disagree. The thesis may contain fact or opinion.	There is no discernable thesis. If there is a thesis it is based entirely on a fact or opinion.
Focus or Unity (25%)	The paper is unified and focused on a significant and interesting central idea, raising expectations and fulfilling them.	The paper is mostly on one subject, which the writer presents as the central idea, but may not always remain completely focused on that subject.	The writer has no idea, implied or stated, on which to focus, or may present the reader with far too many unrelated general ideas.
Organization (20%)	The main idea is developed logically in coherent, unified paragraphs. The transitions from paragraph to paragraph are smooth and effective.	The logic or direction of the paper follows a mostly logical sequence, but may sometimes present insufficiently developed or unrelated paragraphs or sentences.	The paper has no discernable focus or direction and ideas are fragmented.
Support or Evidence (15%)	Generalizations are supported with extensive concrete detail. Evidence repeatedly supports the thesis.	Most generalizations are supported with examples. Most of the evidence supports the thesis.	There are either too many unrelated generalizations or too many details that are inappropriate or irrelevant. Evidence does not support the thesis or is completely missing.
Style or Tone (Clarity) (10%)	The writer succeeds in creating a voice that expresses his or her feelings and point of view. In other words, there is a deliberate use of tone and a sense of audience. The writer is aware of the connotations of the words used and is imaginative in the choice of language.	The style may in some places be monotonous or ambiguous with a sometimes shifting sense of purpose or audience, but over all the paper adheres to a central tone or voice. Word choice may be weak or inconsistent in places and the writer may employ some clichés or jargon.	The writer has little or no sense of audience and is often unsure of his or her own attitude toward the subject he or she is discussing. The tone or point of view constantly shifts and word choice is limited or vague.
Grammar & Mechanics (Format) (5%)	The paper is virtually void of misspellings or punctuation errors.	There may be some mechanical problems, but not enough to distract the reader or impede comprehension.	Mechanical problems, such as grammar errors and misspellings, abound enough to impede comprehension.