

Scripps Writing Program
Textual Analysis Essay Rubric

	1: Unacceptable	2: Borderline	3: Fair	4: Competent	5: Exemplary
Argument: Thesis and Development	No central thesis; or thesis is incoherent or a generalization; or thesis is inappropriate to assignment. Response may be off topic, or show no comprehension of text.	Thesis is weak and/or unclearly stated, but present; thesis may be needlessly contentious or inappropriate to assignment. Claims may be obvious or entirely dependent on text, or misunderstand text. Argument doesn't develop but is maintained to some extent; it lacks significance and motive. Argument may fail to anticipate and address a significant objection.	Thesis claims don't entirely hold up (due to scope, fuzzy logic, contradictions, assumptions) but are clearly stated and maintained (although perhaps not right away). Thesis is contextualized and qualified, perhaps insufficiently. Claims engage with text. Argument's significance and connections may be weak. Objections to the argument are not addressed, although argument could have survived them.	Contextualized and qualified thesis, although may go too far into generalization or may be weak or vaguely connected in a few places. Clear frame of reference and significance. Claim engages fully with or challenges text. Argument anticipates and addresses at least one major objection.	Contextualized and qualified thesis; original, nuanced and sophisticated argument that develops clearly and reasonably; frame of reference and significance are convincingly stated. Argument anticipates and addresses both major and subtle objections.
Textual Support: Evidence, Analysis, Citations	Evidence is unconvincing, general/vague, inappropriate, missing, or unclearly used. Evidence is not analyzed. Evidence from texts is not cited.	Evidence is present but may be asserted rather than analyzed (and if analyzed, misguided), or may be misunderstood; support is often inappropriate to the argument. Evidence may be used out of context or otherwise unfairly much of the time.	Evidence is present and pertinent to argument for the most part, but may be misunderstood or weakly analyzed or seem insubstantial; evidence may be occasionally used out of context or otherwise unfairly. Relationship between ideas and support is unclear or weak.	Evidence is pertinent to argument, but may not be deeply engaged; evidence may be used to illustrate, not to drive argument. Relationship between ideas and support is clear, although may lack detail. Evidence is correctly cited.	Evidence is pertinent to argument and deeply engaged; evidence drives argument. Relationship between ideas and support is explained in a nuanced fashion.

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<p>Organization: Essay Structure and Paragraphs</p> <p>Deficiencies in this area can lower overall score, but effectiveness in this area cannot compensate for poor argument and evidence.</p>	<p>Essay structure is unclear or illogical. Unclear paragraph organization and other structural inconsistencies will be apparent. Paper will provide little-to-no guidance to reader in terms of signposting or transitions. Individual paragraphs will lack focus, and essay overall will lack development. Paper may seem to stop arbitrarily rather than arrive at a conclusion.</p>	<p>Essay structure is ineffective. Paper may have too few paragraphs for its subpoints or too many short, undeveloped paragraphs. Paragraph organization will be somewhat unclear or simplistic. Logic of paragraph order and order of ideas within sentences may be somewhat unclear, but paragraphs will show some level of focus. Guidance to readers will be scanty, but apparent. Conclusion may repeat intro paragraph.</p>	<p>Essay structure is clear but does not advance the argument. Paragraphs make clear points, although some may lack topic sentences or transitions, and one or more paragraphs may be structurally unclear. Conclusion may merely reiterate the thesis. Essay “looks like an essay.”</p>	<p>Essay structure enables logical progression of argument. Paragraph logic is apparent if not explicit. With minor lapses, paragraphs begin with a topic sentence and are unified around an idea distinct from the general thesis and in support of it. Details within the paragraph are logically sequenced, although explicit transitions between ideas are occasionally absent. A distinct conclusion paragraph revisits the thesis in an interesting way.</p>	<p>Essay structure reflects logical and organic progression of argument. Paragraph logic is expressed through transitions and signposting, and furthers development of argument. Paragraphs are well-organized and sentences flow. Conclusion synthesizes the argument’s greater implications.</p>
<p>MUGS (Mechanics, Usage, Grammar, Spelling)</p> <p>Deficiencies in this area can lower overall score, but effectiveness in this area cannot compensate for poor argument and evidence.</p>	<p>Errors and awkwardness are so pervasive that ideas are lost; even if grammatically correct, sentences don’t convey clear ideas, and word choice is vague.</p>	<p>Errors and awkwardness often inhibit clarity of ideas; sentences and wording may be unclear if correct. Paper may show patterns of minor errors.</p>	<p>Essay may not demonstrate sophisticated sentence variation and language choices, but ideas are clear. A few errors appear, and/or a lack of control and clarity in places, but not to the point of distraction.</p>	<p>Sentences are varied; style creates flow, and ideas are mostly well articulated, with occasional minor lapses. Wording may be a bit unsophisticated, but still clear.</p>	<p>Stylistically sophisticated and graceful; virtually no errors; terms are defined, and wording is clear and compelling.</p>

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 Researched Argument Essay Rubric 2015

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Academic conversation: Worksheet and Essay	Topic of paper does not present a problem or question in a particular field. Academic conversation is not present. Ideas that are present clearly come from secondary sources.	Topic presents a problem or question, but vaguely. Essay does not fully represent or participates in the academic conversation; counter-arguments are absent. Claim is not distinct from ideas in secondary sources.	Topic presents a somewhat significant problem or question in a particular field, but perhaps too generally or vaguely. Essay represents but may not participate in the academic conversation; counter-arguments may not receive critical attention. Claim may not be entirely distinct from ideas in secondary sources.	Claim attempts to engage with a specific, significant problem or question in a particular field. Essay tries to represent and participate in the academic conversation about this problem and critically discuss counter-arguments. Claim may depend a bit too much on secondary sources.	Claim addresses a specific, significant problem or question in a particular field. Essay represents and participates in the academic conversation about this problem and critically discusses counter-arguments. Claim is original in that it is distinct from ideas in secondary sources.

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<p>Textual Support</p>	<p>Evidence is unconvincing, general/vague, inappropriate, missing, or unclearly used. Evidence is not analyzed. If used, primary source text is not appropriate, reliable, or worthy of study.</p>	<p>Evidence is sporadic or may be present but misunderstood; support is often inappropriate to the argument. Evidence may be used out of context or otherwise unfairly much of the time. If used, primary source text is of questionable worth and value and/or is not used appropriately.</p>	<p>Evidence is present and usually supports claims, but may be weakly analyzed, insubstantial; evidence may be occasionally used out of context or otherwise unfairly. Relationship between ideas and support is unclear or weak. If used, primary source text is not analyzed well or appropriately for topic.</p>	<p>Evidence is integrated and synthesized proficiently to support claims, but may not be deeply engaged; evidence may be used to illustrate, rather than to propel claims. Relationship between ideas and support is clear, although may lack detail. If used, primary source text is interpreted proficiently and competently integrated with other material & sources.</p>	<p>Evidence is integrated and synthesized expertly to support and propel claims. Relationship between ideas and support is explained in a nuanced fashion. If used, primary source text is interpreted insightfully and connected expertly to the material & sources discussed in other sources.</p>
<p>Quality and use of references</p>	<p>There are virtually no sources that are professionally reliable. The reader seriously doubts the value of the material and stops reading.</p>	<p>Most of the references are from sources that are not peer-reviewed and have uncertain reliability. The reader doubts the accuracy of some of the material presented.</p>	<p>Although most of the references are professionally legitimate, a few are questionable in their authority on the topic at hand. The reader is uncertain of the reliability of some of the sources. Sources aren't clearly differentiated from student ideas.</p>	<p>References are primarily peer-reviewed professional journals or other approved sources. The reader is confident that the information and ideas can be trusted. Sources are clearly differentiated from student ideas.</p>	<p>A variety of compelling evidence from relevant professionally legit sources is used at every necessary point to support and develop claims. Source's authority is clearly established and contextualized, and sources are critiqued.</p>