| **Traits** | **6**  **(A+)** | **5**  **(A-/B+)** | **4**  **(B)** | **3**  **(C)** | **2**  **(D)** | **1**  **(F)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ideas | Clearly stated insightful claim outlining argument with well chosen quotes from reputable sources.  Demonstrates a thorough critical understanding of the issue. Explores the topic thoughtfully, acknowledges opposing points of view, and makes excellent use of the rhetorical strategies discussed in class. | Clear argument statement and necessary supporting quotations that are cited correctly.  Demonstrates critical understanding of the issue. Explores issues well, acknowledges opposing points of view and makes strong use of rhetorical strategies discussed in class. | Clear claim statement but it may lack depth. May not always include best quotations or may use obvious quotations. Demonstrates clear understanding of the issue. Explores the issues of this topic, may have implicit acknowledgment of opposing points of view, and successfully uses rhetorical strategies discussed in class. | Claim statement is too broad. Quotations are minimal or poorly chosen. Demonstrates some understanding of the issue. Explores some issues, implicit or missing acknowledgment of opposing points of view, and makes some use of the rhetorical strategies discussed in class. | Claim statement is unclear or simple &/ more quotations are needed. Understanding of issue is shallow or not clearly demonstrated. Implicit or missing acknowledgment of opposing points of view Makes very little use of rhetorical strategies discussed in class. | The essay needs a claim statement and details. Understanding of the issue/articles is extremely limited or nonexistent. No use of rhetorical strategies discusses in class. |
| Organization | Response is coherent, well focused and logical. The response contains logical structure that guides the reader and a conclusion which insightfully summarizes argument presented. Includes distinct and plausible recommendations for action and change. Order of information presented is compelling to read. | Response is focused and logical. The response contains topic sentences which guide the reader and a conclusion which summarizes the argument presented. Includes plausible recommendations for action and change. The order in which the information is presented is successful.. | Response is focused on argument. The response contains topic sentences that guide the reader and a conclusion which loosely summarizes the argument. Includes recommendations for action and change but may not be as specific or plausible. The order in which the information is presented is appropriate | Response is somewhat focused on the argument. The response contains topic sentences and a short or inadequate conclusion. Missing or underdeveloped recommendations for action and change. The order in which the information is presented may confuse the reader. | Response is poorly focused on the argument, if at all. Topic sentences that are present are poorly written and if conclusion is present it is weak. Missing or underdeveloped recommendations for action and change The order in which the information is presented is confusing. | Response lacks logical organization. Topic sentences are nonexistent/ a conclusion may be missing. Missing recommendations for action and change. |
| Voice | Voice expresses interest & complete understanding of topic. Engages reader with a reason to care through unique personal perspective evident through use of compelling ideas, engaging language, and relevant details. Appropriate for purpose & audience. | The voice expresses interest in and understanding of the topic. Shows personal connection to topic and audience. Uses some compelling engaging language to meet the purpose of the assignment. | The voice expresses interest but needs to show more understanding. While the voice does engage the reader, it lacks a consistent personal connection. Has some engaging language but could use more | The voice needs to be more interesting and express more understanding. Reader questions the personal connection of the author. Language is not vivid or engaging | The voice does not show and interest in or understanding of the topic. There is little, to no, personal connection to the author in the voice or writing. | The writer needs to understand how to create a voice. |
| Word Choice | Reflects careful thinking about subject. Words are rich, colorful, & precise. Uses specific details to show ideas instead of tell. Words energize writing. Language moves & enlightens the reader. Vocabulary striking, varied. Strong active verbs dominate. Verb tense shifts are correct. | The word choice creates a clear message. Broad range of words that are carefully chosen. Word choices energize writing. Vocabulary varied. Active verbs throughout the essay. Verb tense shifts are correct. | The word choice is appropriate and functional. The words work but might not energize the writing. Attempts at colorful language may be overdone. May include some passive verbs. Verb tense mostly correct. | The word choice is too general and uses many familiar words and phrases. Expression is mundane. Words work but do not capture interest. Passive verbs and linking verbs may dominate. May include many verb tense errors. | Words are colorless, flat, imprecise.  Monotonous repetition. Images are fuzzy or absent. Many passive verbs and linking verbs. Many verb tense errors. | Limited vocabulary. Words that do not fit text. Words imprecise, wrong. Vague language hides  meaning of message |
| Sentence Fluency | Sentences are skillfully written. Writer consistently uses a variety of sentences. The writing is natural and flows smoothly. Sentences begin with a variety of words. Relatable, accessible language. | The sentences are skillfully written. Writer consistently uses a variety of sentences, fewer than a 6. The writing is natural and flows smoothly. Sentences begin with a variety of words. | The writer uses some variety in sentences. Paper has some rough spots. Not all sentences begin the same. No sentence problems exist. More sentence variety needed. | Writer uses simple sentences. Some sentences are choppy or awkward, but most are smooth and clear. Sentences tend to begin the same. A few sentence problems need to be corrected. | Writer doesn't use much variety in sentences. Little to no use of linking words to connect sentences. Uses short, repetitive sentence patterns. Has many sentence problems. | The writer needs to learn how to construct sentences. |
| Conventions | Grammar & punctuation correct, & copy is free of all errors. Writing is complex enough to show skill in using a wide-range of conventions. All citation are correct and present. Meets word count of 400-800 words. | The essay has one or two errors that do not interfere with the reader’s understanding. . All citation are correct and present. Meets word count of 400-800 words. | The essay has a few careless errors in punctuation and grammar. Most citations are correct and present. May not meet word count of 400-800 words. | The errors in the essay confuse the reader. Most citations are correct and present. May not meet word count of 400-800 words. | The number of errors makes the essay hard to read. Many errors with citations. May not meet word count of 400-800 words. | Help is needed to make corrections. Little to no citations present. May not meet word count of 400-800 words. |