# Indicators of Writing Quality

These are the areas that contribute to the paper’s overall grade. Combine your scores here with your paper’s written feedback to see your path to grow as a writer.

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| 5 | Advanced ability in skill area, beyond expectations; begin experimenting and taking chances in this skill area to challenge yourself further |
| 4 | Capable ability in skill area, making good progress; paper feedback indicates progress from capable writing to excellent writing |
| 3 | Adequate progress in skill area, but practice and revision recommended; feedback indicates where revision will strengthen this skill |
| 2 | Writing shows developing, but not yet mature ability in skill area; see feedback guidance for revision; revision strongly recommended |
| 1 | Insufficient evidence of ability in skill area, necessitating mandatory revision; see paper feedback for guidance, and writing conference / further practice strongly recommended |
| 0 | Missing; No evidence to assess, necessitating mandatory revision; see paper feedback for guidance, and writing conference / further practice strongly recommended |

### Thesis and Main Idea

The paper’s main idea draws from the text to indicate concisely your own engaged thinking on the topic. This thinking identifies something important, useful, or interesting, and clearly states what that is.

### Idea Development

The paper explores ideas in a thoughtful but methodical way. If it encounters a difficult question, the paper tries to resolve it; if it encounter confusion, the paper tries to discover the origin of the confusion and possible ways out of it. The questions don’t have to be answered and the confusion doesn’t have to be resolved – just thoughtfully explored and tied to the thesis. A good paper takes chances and sees where it goes; writing generates ideas, and good ideas are not abandoned in the writer’s work. This exploratory writing is then revised for the reader to clearly follow the writer’s thinking.

### Use of Evidence

The paper keeps the relevant (or required) texts present in its conversation. Ideas do not take their own runaway trains of thought, but always have a clear connection to the paper’s topic and thesis. Quotes are never inserted arbitrarily, but instead the writer uses them when necessary to illustrate a point. Direct quotations should only be used when the reader just has to hear something in the writer’s own words. The paper never introduces quotations with something as simple as “the author here says,” or follows with “This means that…” The flow of the writer’s ideas should make the quote appropriate without any specific indicator or justification for it.

### Effective diction

Language is concise and effective: every word serves a purpose. The writing avoids weak verbs (is, was, passive voice) in favor of active, transitive verbs. It also avoids use of superlative adverbs, especially “very” or “extremely”. Analyzes and explains topic without using praise or censure of the writer’s texts.

### Reflective Conclusion

A skillful conclusion reflects on the writing that came before it, returning attention to the thesis without repeating anything from the introduction. It never, ever begins with “In conclusion….” The writing extends the thinking in a new or interesting way; it is authentic and thoughtful. Writing a concluding paragraph that simply restates the thesis and introduction is, for the purposes of this rubric, worse than including no rubric at all and will receive a score of “-1”.

Name: Grade:

*The above scores inform the objective grade. See the paper itself for feedback to guide you in revision and your growth as a writer. Writing conferences too are always welcome – please feel free to schedule an appointment.*