

Informational/Expository Essay Rubric

The Exceptional Essay

- Thesis clearly focuses on a compelling topic that informs the reader with ideas, concepts, and information that creates a unified whole
- Thoroughly develops complex thesis with relevant body paragraphs, building on preceding information
- Provides substantial and pertinent evidence to develop thesis and shows insightful understanding of topic
- Effectively integrates and cites credible sources
- Provides a meaningful, reflective conclusion that articulates the significance of the topic
- Competently uses figurative language
- Uses purposeful and varied sentence structure; creates cohesion through skillful use of transitional words and phrases
- Contains minimal to no errors in conventions (grammar, punctuation, spelling, usage, capitalization)
- Strategically uses academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose.

The Skilled Essay

- Thesis focuses on an interesting topic that informs the reader with ideas, concepts, and information that creates a unified whole
- Develops complex thesis with relevant body paragraphs, building on preceding information
- Provides sufficient and relevant evidence to develop thesis and shows competent understanding of topic
- Competently integrates and cites credible sources
- Provides a conclusion that articulates the significance of the topic
- Effectively uses figurative language
- Uses correct and varied sentence structure; creates cohesion through transitional words and phrases
- Contains few, minor errors in conventions (grammar, punctuation, spelling, usage, capitalization)
- Competently uses academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose.

The Proficient (Basic) Essay

- Thesis informs the reader with ideas, concepts, and information that creates a unified whole
- Superficially develops topic with relevant body paragraphs, building on preceding information
- Provides limited and/or superficial evidence to develop thesis and shows superficial understanding of topic
- Ineffectively integrates and cites credible sources
- Provides a conclusion that merely repeats the thesis and articulates superficial significance of the topic
- Minimally uses figurative language
- Uses mostly correct and some varied sentence structure; creates some cohesion through basic use of transitional words and phrases
- Contains some errors in conventions (grammar, punctuation, spelling, usage, capitalization) which may cause confusion
- Superficially uses academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose

The Developing (Below Basic) Essay

- Thesis is unclear with some ideas, concepts, and information
- Inadequately develops complex thesis with minimal body paragraphs, building on some preceding information
- Provides minimal and/or irrelevant evidence to develop thesis and shows limited or flawed understanding of topic
- Incorrectly integrates and cites credible sources
- Provides a sense of closure but may weakly articulate significance of topic
- Inadequately uses figurative language
- Uses limited and/or repetitive sentence structure; uses limited and/or inappropriate transitional words or phrases
- Contains numerous errors in conventions (grammar, punctuation, spelling, usage, capitalization) which cause some confusion
- Inadequately uses academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose

The Inadequate (Far Below Basic) Essay

- Thesis is unidentifiable with minimal ideas, concepts, and information
- Fails to develop thesis with body paragraphs
- Provides inaccurate, little, or no evidence to develop thesis and shows no and/or inaccurate understanding of topic
- Does not use or cite sources
- Provides an inadequate conclusion or may omit conclusion
- Fails to use figurative language
- Lacks sentence mastery (e.g. fragments, run-ons); uses few or no transitional words and phrases
- Contains serious and pervasive errors in conventions (grammar, punctuation, spelling, usage, capitalization)
- Fails to use academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose

Comments: