

Project Topeka: Argumentative Writing Rubric

Domain	Advanced 4	Proficient 3	Developing 2	Emerging 1
Claim/Focus	The essay introduces a clear, arguable, and specific claim, based on the topic or text(s). The essay maintains strong focus on the purpose and task, using the whole essay to support and develop the claim while thoroughly addressing the demands of the prompt.	The essay introduces a clear claim, based on the topic or text(s). The essay mostly maintains a focus on the purpose and task, but may not develop the claim evenly throughout the essay while addressing the demands of the prompt.	The essay introduces a claim, based on the topic or text(s), but it may be somewhat unclear or not maintained throughout the essay. The essay may not fully address the demands of the prompt or stay focused on the purpose and task. The writing may stray significantly off topic at times and introduce the writer's bias occasionally, making it difficult to follow the central claim at times.	The essay does not clearly make a claim, or the claim is overly simplistic or vague. The essay does not maintain focus on purpose and task or remain objective.
Support and Evidence	The essay cites the most relevant, appropriate, and valid evidence to support its claim and fully explains how the evidence cited and reasons support the claim. The essay demonstrates reasoning and full understanding of the topic or text(s). Counter claims are acknowledged and/or distinguished from essay's central claim.	The essay uses clear, relevant evidence and explains how the evidence support the claim. The essay demonstrates logical reasoning and understanding of the topic or text(s). Counter claims are acknowledged but may not be adequately explained and/or distinguished from the essay's central claim.	The essay uses some evidence but may not precisely explain how it supports the claim. The essay includes some reasoning and demonstrates a superficial understanding of the topic or text(s). The support of the claim may rely on summary of the source and may not acknowledge counter claims.	The essay does not use clear or relevant evidence or reasoning to support the claim or to demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text(s) or uses very little evidence from the source. Counter claims are not acknowledged or addressed.

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<p>Organization</p>	<p>The essay incorporates an organizational structure with clear transitional words and phrases that clarify the relationships between and among ideas in a way that strengthens the argument. The essay includes a logical progression of ideas from beginning to end, including an effective introduction and concluding statement or section.</p>	<p>The essay incorporates an organizational strategy with clear transitional words and phrases that show the relationship between and among ideas. The essay includes a progression of ideas from beginning to end, including an introduction and concluding statement or section.</p>	<p>The essay uses a basic organization structure but relationships between and among ideas are not consistently clear. The essay moves from beginning to end; however, an introduction and/or conclusion may not be clearly evident.</p>	<p>The essay does not have an organizational structure and may simply offer a series of ideas without any clear transitions or connections. An introduction and conclusion are not evident.</p>
<p>Language and Style</p>	<p>The essay demonstrates a definitive perspective and voice, as well as a clear command of conventions. The essay incorporates language that attends to the reader's interests and effectively maintains a formal style. The essay consistently employs vivid word choice and varied sentence structure.</p>	<p>The essay demonstrates a perspective and voice, as well as a general command of conventions. The essay incorporates language that shows an awareness of the reader's interests and generally maintains a formal style with a few possible exceptions. The essay employs interesting word choice and some variety in sentence structure.</p>	<p>The essay demonstrates an uneven and/or inconsistent perspective and/or voice; it may also contain errors in conventions. The essay incorporates language that may not show an awareness of the reader's interests and does not maintain a formal style consistently. Some attempts at strong word choices are made, and sentence structure may not vary often.</p>	<p>The essay does not demonstrate a clear voice and/or perspective and may contain pervasive errors in conventions. The essay employs language that is inappropriate for the reader's interests and is not formal in style. Word choice is uninteresting or poor, and sentence structures are simplistic and unvaried.</p>