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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| **Overall** | The writer not only staked a position that could be supported by a variety of trustworthy sources, but also built an argument and led to a conclusion in each part of his/her text. | The writer made a claim or thesis on a topic or text, supported it with reasons, and provided a variety of evidence for each reason. | The writer made a claim about a topic or a text and tried to support his reasons. | The writer told readers his/her opinion and ideas on a text or a topic and helped them understand her reasons. |
| **Lead** | The writer wrote an introduction that helped readers to understand and care about the topic or text, named the reasons she would develop later, and told readers how the text would unfold. | The writer wrote an introduction that led to a claim or thesis. The writer gave readers information about what was significant about the topic and let readers know the reasons he would develop later. | The writer wrote a few sentences to hook readers. The writer stated her claim. | The writer wrote a beginning which not only set readers up to expect that this would be a piece of opinion writing, but also tried to hook them into caring about his/her opinion. |
| **Transitions** | The writer used transitional phrases to help readers understand how the different parts of his piece fit together to support his argument. | The writer used transition words and phrases to connect evidence back to her reasons using phrases such as this shows that…, another reason, consequently, because of, specifically and in particular. | The writer used words and phrases to glue parts of his piece together such as for example, another example, one time, for instance, in addition to, also, and another. | The writer connected her ideas and reasons with her examples using words such as for example and because, also and another. |
| **Ending** | The writer wrote a conclusion in which he/she restated the main points of her essay, perhaps offering a lingering thought or new insight for readers to consider and strengthened the overall argument. | The writer worked on a conclusion which connected back to and highlighted what the text was mainly about, not just the preceding paragraph. | The writer wrote an ending which she restated and reflected on her claim, perhaps suggesting an action or response based on what was written. | The writer worked on an ending, perhaps a thought or comment related to his opinion. |
| **Organization** | The writer arranged paragraphs, reasons, and evidence purposefully, leading readers from one claim or reason to another and wrote more than one paragraph to develop a claim or reason. | The writer grouped information and related ideas into paragraphs. She put the parts of her writing in the order that most suited her purpose and helped her prove her reasons and claim. | The writer separated sections of information using paragraphs. | The writer wrote several reasons or examples of why readers should agree with his/her opinion and wrote at least several sentences about each reason. The writer organized information so that each part was mostly about one thing. |
| **Elaboration** | The writer included and arranged a variety of evidence to support reasons, used trusted sources and information from authorities on the topic, and explained how evidence strengthened his/her argument. The writer acknowledged different sides to the argument. | The writer gave reasons to support his opinion that were parallel and did not overlap, put them in an order in a convincing way, and included evidence such as facts, examples, quotations, micro-stories, and information to support his claim.  | The writer gave reasons to support her opinion, chose reasons to convince her readers. The writer included examples and information to support reasons, from a text or prior knowledge. | The writer not only named reasons to support his/her opinion, but also wrote more about each one. |
| **Craft** | The writer chose words deliberately to be clear and to have an effect on readers. The writer used precise phrases, metaphors, analogies, or images to help convey ideas and strengthen the argument. The writer chose how to present evidence and explained why and how the evidence supported his claim. The writer used shifts in tone to help readers follow the argument. | The writer made deliberate word choices to have an effect on her readers. The writer used precise phrases, metaphors, or images to help convey his/her ideas. The writer made choices about how to angle his/her evidence to support her points. The writer tried to use a scholarly voice and varied sentences to create the pace and tone of the different sections of the piece. | The writer made deliberate word choices to convince readers by emphasizing or repeating words that would make his readers feel emotions. The writer chose precise details and facts to help make points and used figurative language to draw the readers in. The writer made choices about which evidence was best to include or not include to support his points. The writer used a convincing tone. | The writer not only told readers to believe her, but also wrote in ways that got them thinking or feeling in certain ways. |
| **Spelling** | The writer used resources to be sure the words in her writing were spelled correctly, including returning to sources to check spelling. | The writer used what he knew about word patterns to spell correctly and used references to help spell words when needed, making sure to correctly spell words that were important to his topic. | The writer used what she knew about word families and spelling rules to help her spell and edit. She used the word wall and dictionaries to help her when needed | The writer used what he knew about word families and spelling rules to help him spell and edit. The writer got help from others to check his spelling and punctuation before he wrote his final draft. |
| **Punctuation** | The writer used punctuation such as dashes, colons, parentheses, and semicolons to help include or connect extra information in some of his sentences. | The writer used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences, for example, The writer used a variety of punctuation to fix any run-on sentences. The writer used punctuation to cite sources. | When writing long, complex sentences, the writer used commas to make them clear and correct. The writer used periods to fix run-on sentences. | The writer punctuated dialogue correctly with commas and quotation marks. While writing, the writer put punctuation at the end of every sentence.  |