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| **Criteria:** | **(4)Exceeds Expectations: 25-20 pts.** | **(3) Meets Expectations:** **19-14 pts.** | **(2) Needs Improvement:** **13-8 pts.** | **(1) Below minimum expectations: 7-0 pts.** |
| **Structure:**  **25 pts.**  Organization  Flow  Transitions  Format | Paper is logically organized and easily followed  Effective, smooth, logical, transitions  Professional format for paper’s purpose  Uses sophisticated writing techniques such as a hook and a strong finish | Paper has a clear organizational structure with some digressions, ambiguities, or irrelevancies  Easily followed  Basic transitions  Structured Format  Uses either a hook or a strong finish but not both | There is some level of organization, though digressions, ambiguities, or irrelevancies are too many  Difficult to follow at times  Ineffective transitions  Rambling format  No advanced writing techniques are present | There is no apparent organization to the paper  Difficult to follow  No or poor transitions  No format |
| **Grammar/Mechanics: 25 pts.**  Sentence structure  Punctuation  Mechanics | Uses sentence that vary in length and structure  Manipulates complex sentences for effect/impact  No punctuation or mechanical errors | Uses compound and complex sentences  Few punctuation or mechanical errors | Only uses simple and compound sentences  Too many punctuation/mechanical errors for grade level  Mastery | Only uses simple sentences  Punctuation errors interfere with the overall message of the paper |
| **Language: 25 pts.**  Word Choice  Tone  Audience | Word Choice is sophisticated and reflects advanced vocabulary usage  Writer’s tone is clearly established throughout the paper  Vivid images emerge through word choice  Tone is consistent and appropriate for the intended audience | Word Choice is varied, specific and appropriate  Writer’s tone emerges and is generally appropriate to the audience | Word choice is unsophisticated and used properly though sentences may be simple  Word choice exhibits some level of audience sensitivity but does not adequately establish a tone for the paper  A vague reference to the audience is present | Word choice is simple and not always used appropriately in very simple sentences  A tone is not established through specific word choice  The intended audience is unclear |
| **Content: 25 pts.**  Clarity of Purpose  Critical and original thought  Use of examples | Controlling idea is well developed and clarity of purpose is exhibited throughout the paper  Abundance of evidence  Evidence is vivid and specific  Careful thought and insight is consistently demonstrated | Controlling idea is well developed and clarity of purpose is generally evident throughout the paper  Evidence of critical thinking is present but not consistent  Relevant supporting examples | Controlling idea is expressed but too broad or vague  Some evidence of careful thinking and analysis but needs further development  There are some examples and evidence presented though general | Controlling idea and clarity of purpose are absent or incompletely expressed  Little or no evidence  There are too few/no examples and evidence  Irrelevant evidence |