

Researched Argument Rubric

Main Task: Take an explicit position in relation to a topic (or question) that you have been continuously researching/learning about through primary and secondary source work, and build a case for understanding or action.

	Fails to meet this skill/requirement, needs significant improvement or effort	Minimal or weak work with this skill/requirement, needs improvement or effort	Basic/Fair achievement of skill/requirement, may have some inconsistencies, room for improvement	Good demonstration of skill/requirement, some room for improvement	Excellent/ Superior display of this skill/requirement
FOCUS	<p>Does the writer identify and contextualize the issue, giving brief history and background information? Does the writer assert why the issue matters at this particular historical moment?</p> <p>Does the writer define key terms and concepts, and explicitly introduce stakeholders/sources?</p>				
QUALITY OF ARGUMENT	<p>Does the essay argue a particular perspective in the thesis, going beyond a simple pro/con stance to provide a more complicated and nuanced argument?</p> <p>Is it clear how the thesis fits into the ongoing debate/conversation, or, what the argument is responding to?</p> <p>Does the writer persuade readers by creating a logical progression of claims throughout the draft?</p> <p>Does the writer demonstrate rhetorical awareness by using appropriate rhetorical appeals, anticipating counter-arguments, and identifying the rhetorical situations of sources?</p>				
ORGANIZATION	<p>Does the writer synthesize, interpret, and analyze sources throughout the argument?</p> <p>Does the writer signal shifts in ideas or topics? Is the essay easy to follow?</p>				
USE OF SOURCES/ EVIDENCE	<p>Are any images or media cited, woven into the essay, contextualized and interpreted?</p> <p>Does the writer work effectively and accurately with sources by summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting properly?</p> <p>Does the writer give brief but comprehensive summaries of each text the first time it is introduced?</p> <p>Does the writer interpret all quotes and use evidence effectively?</p>				
CONCLUSION	<p>Does the essay conclude with final thoughts on why the thesis is important, valid, and worth considering?</p> <p>Does the conclusion address or resolve any questions remaining, explain what's at stake for our society or the global community, and explain clearly what the writer wants the audience to understand, think or do?</p>				
CONVENTIONS	<p>Are the conventions of edited standard written English (ESWE) consistent throughout the paper? (Good spelling, grammar, mechanics, punctuation, etc.)</p>				
MLA	<p>Does the paper follow MLA conventions with regard to the WC page, citations, and formatting?</p>				

Overall, this is a:

Superior Paper (A/A-) The paper is above average, has a crystal clear focus, is sophisticated in its analysis, style, or ideas. It's extremely well organized, excellent support is provided, and ideas are seamlessly connected. It is otherwise perfect.

Good Paper (B+/B) The paper is promising, has potential, has insight. Clear and appropriate focus, with some unclear or awkward moments. Solid and logical analysis & ideas, good support. May need more development. Well organized. Meets assignment requirements.

Borderline Paper (B-/C+) The paper is basic, but has moments that work. Focus may be present but vague, unclear. Lacks connections and transitions between ideas. Organization problems. Needs development. Meets minimum assignment requirements.

Needs Help Paper (C/C-) The paper is weak, unclear, or confusing. Lacks focus, connections, transitions, or organization. Needs significant explanation and development of ideas. May have misunderstood the assignment, or really struggled with it.

Failing Paper (D/F) The paper is significantly weak in most or all areas of the assignment. Papers failing to meet the length requirement, or impacted by serious grammar, mechanics, or punctuation problems, may fall in this category.

I recommend a writing tutor (see me)

Please make an appointment to meet with me