

Example Categories in a Writing Rubric

CATEGORY	LETTER GRADES	or	NUMBERED SCALE	or	POINTS	SCORE
Thesis	Writing assignment clearly attempts to prove the thesis.	Writing assignment generally attempts to prove the thesis.	Writing assignment strays from but generally attempts to prove the thesis.	Writing assignment relates to but does not attempt to prove the thesis.	Writing assignment does not relate to the thesis, or no thesis statement exists.	
Hypothesis	Writing assignment clearly tests the hypothesis.	Writing assignment generally attempts to test the hypothesis.	Writing assignment strays from but generally attempts to test the hypothesis.	Writing assignment relates to but does not attempt to test the hypothesis.	Writing assignment does not relate to the hypothesis, or no hypothesis exists.	
Experimental Question	Writing assignment clearly attempts to answer the experimental question.	Writing assignment generally attempts to answer the experimental question.	Writing assignment strays from but generally attempts to answer the experimental question.	Writing assignment relates to but does not attempt to answer the experimental question.	Writing assignment does not attempt to answer the experimental question, or no experimental question exists.	
Counterargument	Writing assignment thoroughly develops at least one intelligent, rational counterargument with evidence or illustrations.	Writing assignment develops at least one intelligent, rational counterargument with evidence or illustrations.	Writing assignment acknowledges at least one intelligent, rational counterargument.	Writing assignment develops or acknowledges at least one counterargument, but it is not intelligent, or it is not rational.	Writing assignment does not acknowledge counterarguments.	
Response to Counterargument	Writing assignment thoroughly responds to all counterarguments with evidence or illustrations.	Writing assignment adequately responds to all counterarguments with evidence or illustrations.	Writing assignment generally responds to all counterarguments.	Writing assignment inadequately or unclearly responds to counterarguments.	Writing assignment does not respond to counterarguments.	

Paragraph Development	All paragraphs clearly support specific topic sentences.	Most paragraphs clearly support specific topic sentences.	Most paragraphs generally support topic sentences.	Less than half of the paragraphs support topic sentences.	Few if any paragraphs support their topic sentences, or no topic sentences exist.	
Evidence or Illustrations	Writing assignment vividly illustrates or provides thorough evidence for all of its topics or claims.	Writing assignment illustrates or provides evidence for all of its topics or claims.	Writing assignment illustrates or provides evidence for most of its topics or claims.	Writing assignment illustrates or provides evidence for some of its topics or claims.	Writing assignment provides little or no illustrations or evidence for its topics or claims.	
Sequence of Information	Writing assignment clearly and appropriately organizes all of its information into chronological, spatial, logical, causal, or other sequential patterns.	Writing assignment organizes all of its information into chronological, spatial, logical, causal, or other sequential patterns, but some of those patterns may not be clear or appropriate.	Writing assignment organizes most of its information into chronological, spatial, logical, causal, or other sequential patterns, but some of those patterns may not be clear or appropriate.	Writing assignment organizes some of its information into chronological, spatial, logical, causal, or other sequential patterns, but many or all of those patterns may not be clear or appropriate.	Writing assignment does not organize its information into chronological, spatial, logical, causal, or other sequential patterns.	
Sentence Clarity	All sentences clearly articulate their ideas with no errors in diction, grammar, or punctuation.	All sentences clearly articulate their ideas with few errors in diction, grammar, or punctuation.	The vast majority of sentences clearly articulate their ideas.	The essay contains many errors in diction, grammar, or punctuation.	The errors in diction, grammar, or punctuation obfuscate the argument.	
Quotations and Paraphrases	Writing assignment thoroughly contextualizes all of its quotations and paraphrases.	Writing assignment adequately contextualizes all of its quotations and paraphrases.	Writing assignment adequately contextualizes the majority of its quotations and paraphrases.	Writing assignment inadequately contextualizes the majority of its quotations and paraphrases.	Writing assignment does not contextualize its quotations or paraphrases.	
Style	Writing assignment is formatted	Writing assignment is formatted with	Writing assignment is formatted with	Writing assignment is formatted with	Writing assignment is not formatted	

	without errors according to the style guide for this course.	only a few errors according to the style guide for this course.	some errors according to the style guide for this course.	many errors according to the style guide for this course.	according to the style guide for this course.	
In-Text Citations	Writing assignment includes appropriately formatted in-text citations for all of its quotations and paraphrases.	Writing assignment includes in-text citations for all of its quotations and paraphrases, but a few are not formatted appropriately.	Writing assignment includes in-text citations for all of its quotations and paraphrases, but many are not formatted appropriately.	Writing assignment includes in-text citations for only some of its quotations or paraphrases, or none of the in-text citations are formatted appropriately.	Writing assignment includes no in-text citations for its quotations or paraphrases.	
Bibliography	Writing assignment includes appropriately formatted bibliographic entries for all of its sources.	Writing assignment includes bibliographic entries for all of its sources, but a few are not formatted appropriately.	Writing assignment includes bibliographic entries for all of its sources, but many are not formatted appropriately.	Writing assignment includes bibliographic entries for only some of its sources, or none of the entries are formatted appropriately.	Writing assignment includes no bibliography.	