

Targets	Comprehends the Prompt, Deconstructs the Key Components, and Focuses Essay on Topic	Introduction Strategies to Focus Audience on Claim	Precise Claim/Thesis in the Right Place in the Introduction and Conclusion
0	Does not comprehend the prompt	No introduction strategies	Claim is misworded and/or not an argument; claims in the wrong place must receive a low score
0.25	Demonstrates some problems understanding the prompt and takes a very simple stance, which misses major components of the issue	Introduction strategies are below grade level and minimal	Claim is clear but in the wrong place

Relevant Evidence for Support from Accurate, Reliable Sources	Each Point Supports Claim and is Placed into a Clear Structure	Transition Language Creates Cohesion: Connects Points and Helps Readers Follow Thinking
No evidence and/or ineffective support	Points do not support the claim and/or are disorganized	Transitions are rough and/or missing entirely
Support is vague and does not actually provide specific evidence	At least one point supports the claim; may or may not have structural problems	Transitions between main points with obvious transition language, but no attempts at transitioning between ideas within a paragraph

Establish Formal Style and Maintain Style Throughout Essay	Conclusion Strategies that Follow from and Complete the Essay	Grade Level Mechanics/Grammar/Spelling
A failure to establish formal style	No conclusion strategies	An accumulation of errors, which affect the quality of the paper and may even hinder the audience's comprehension
Attempts to establish formal style, but excessive breaks in style affect the clarity as well as the aesthetic of the essay	Attempts to conclude the essay, perhaps with summary only, but fails to do so with clarity and intent	Significant errors, especially errors targeted in class for mastery

Innovative Thinking/Ideas Worth Reading on the Topic, which Display a Complex Understanding	
Little or no evidence of innovation and/or a failure to take a position on the topic	
A limited position on the topic and no surprising support, which deepens the complexity of thinking	

0.5	Understands the prompt and takes a clear but obvious stance	Introduction strategies are clear and adequately begin the essay	Claim is clear and in the right place, but is not worded effectively
0.75	Understands the prompt and takes a logical stance but not a complex one	Introduction strategies are mature and appropriate	Claim is clear, precise, and well-written; claim is a logical choice based on the prompt but not surprising
1	Understands the prompt and takes a complex stance on the issue	Introduction strategies are impressive and interesting	Claim is mature and surprising as well as being precise

<p>No more than one specific piece of evidence to support reasoning</p>	<p>At least two points, which support the claim; may or may not have structural problems</p>	<p>Transitions between main points with well-chosen transition language; attempts to transition between ideas within paragraphs are missing or ineffective</p>
<p>Two or more specific pieces of evidence, but some points are not supported with evidence</p>	<p>A well-structured argument with at least two points to support the claim</p>	<p>Transitions between main points, and at times, between ideas within paragraphs; draws conclusions within body paragraphs to support audience's understanding</p>
<p>Ample evidence, which supports the entire argument</p>	<p>An argument structured with intention to support the claim in the best order of ideas; impressive thinking on each point as well as upon their organization</p>	<p>Mature transitions, which move every idea to the next, supporting the audience's understanding throughout the essay; may not be perfect, but is impressive</p>

<p>Establishes a clear style, which approaches formal, and/or has an accumulation of style errors, which affect the ethos of the writer</p>	<p>Concludes the essay clearly with summary of ideas; no other other strategies attempted</p>	<p>Too many errors, which affect the aesthetic of the text, and compromise the ethos of the author</p>
<p>Establishes formal style with few but noticable breaks in style, which affect areas of the paper</p>	<p>Emerging strategies with a solid summary of ideas conclude the essay; attempts may be mistaken or childish in nature</p>	<p>A solid paper with mistakes, but none which affect the quality of the paper, and none, which demonstrate failed proficiency on targeted skills</p>
<p>Effectively establishes and maintains formal style throughout the essay with little or no errors</p>	<p>Solid conclusion strategies, which successfully complete the essay, flowing out of the ideas used to defend the claim throughout the text</p>	<p>An impressive, precise paper, which adheres to the rules of mechanics and grammar; few or no errors in writing</p>

<p>A clear stance on the topic, which is not "obvious" in nature and/or at least one truly surprising topic for support.</p>	
<p>A surprising stance, which may have limits in complexity, and/or show mistakes in thinking/reasoning or omissions in thinking/reasoning</p>	
<p>A solid, well-thought position, which is truly surprising, interesting, and a pleasure to read; all thinking supports a complex, mature claim worth reading</p>	