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|  | Excellent | Adequate | Inadequate | Little Success | No Success |
| Thesis | Clearly stated, appropriate and sophisticated focus | Clearly stated, but could benefit from a sharper focus | Thesis is overly simplistic or unclear | Thesis is unrelated to content of the paper OR fails to take an argumentative position on the issue | Thesis does not exist |
| Supporting research | Thorough and relevant sources (5 minimum) with quotations that are fluidly incorporated within student writing. These sources are all scholarly in nature. | Substantial and relevant sources (5 minimum) that are not as fluidly incorporated, but that are not “dropped” within student writing. These sources are all scholarly in nature. | Relevant sources used (5 minimum) which are “dropped” into student writing and not incorporated. Most sources are scholarly in nature. | Mostly relevant sources used; fewer than 5 sources used which are “dropped” into student writing and not incorporated. Few sources are scholarly in nature | Completely irrelevant sources used; lacking any evidence of actual research; all or part of the essay is plagiarized |
| Argument in Favor of Thesis | Supports primary claim with thorough and concise evidence and reasoning | Supports primary claim with clear and accurate evidence and reasoning | Supports primary claim with sometimes unclear or inaccurate evidence and reasoning, but there are moments of argumentative clarity | Supports primary claim with unsubstantiated evidence; line of reasoning is unclear and/or confusing | Does not support primary claim with sufficient evidence; line of reasoning does not exist |
| Counterclaim | Student addresses and/or refutes arguments against the position thoroughly, concisely, and appropriately | Student addresses and/or refutes arguments against the position clearly and accurately | Student attempts to address and/or refute arguments against the position but with little effectiveness | Student attempts to address and/or refute arguments against the position with no effectiveness | Student makes no attempt to acknowledge the opposing arguments |
| Appropriate application and selection of argument structure | Argument structure choice is particularly appropriate and well-executed for the student’s position and research | Argument structure choice is acceptable for the student’s position and research | Argument structure choice is ineffective for the student’s position and research | Argument structure has significant lapses, holes, or components missing | Argument structure is non-existent. Student may rely on mere expressions of opinion or summary of sources |
| Style/usage/ mechanics | Writer’s voice is strong; tone is appropriate for audience; writing is fluid and is virtually error-free. | Writer’s voice is evident; tone is appropriate; writing has few errors that do not impede readability | Writer’s voice and tone are inconsistent; writing has numerous errors that sometimes impede readability | Writer’s voice and tone are nonexistent; writing has numerous errors that greatly impede readability | The essay is unreadable. The work student has submitted is unintelligible garbage. |
| MLA Formatting | Times New Roman, size 12 Font, 1 inch margins, appropriate MLA heading, error-free in-text citations, error-free works cited page | Student has made 1-2 formatting errors | Student has made 3-4 formatting errors | Student has made 5-6 formatting errors | Student has made 7+ formatting errors |

**Total Rubric Score: \_\_\_\_/28 Final Grade: \_\_\_\_\_/100 Comments:**