RHETORICAL ANALYSIS RUBRIC

WRITING 150

ANALYSIS

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| ***OOPS!*** | ***developing toward expectations*** | ***meeting expectations*** | ***exceeding expectations*** |
| * A text is selected and the writer writes about it, but clearly the essay is more summary than analysis.
* Rhetorical appeals or strategies might be identified, but the writer provides insufficient or no evidence from the text with little or no analysis.
* The writer may have misunderstood the argument or purpose of the text being analyzed, or the writer may argue with the text’s topic rather than analyze the text’s effectiveness.
* The analysis merely summarizes the article
 | * Makes a claim about the rhetorical strategies and appeals of a text; the claim may be obvious and uninteresting or is not clearly stated or fully developed
* Provides insufficient examples from the text; examples are incorporated ineffectively or incorrectly
* Analysis is at times vague, imprecise, obvious, or insufficient, or the writer might waver between objectively analyzing the text and subjectively arguing with it
* Writer does not make the case that the article and analysis are important, timely, or consequential; we don’t see how the analysis matters outside a school exercise
 | * Makes a clear claim about what makes the article persuasive, identifying and evaluating various kinds of rhetorical strategies and appeals for how they work on the audience, though the rhetorical strategies and appeals may be a bit imprecise
* Provides sufficient examples from the text and analysis of those examples, though there may not be enough examples for a convincing analysis
* Paper largely focuses on analyzing the chosen text but occasionally sucumbs to summarizing the article or arguing with it; analysis is effective but may be cursory
* Conclusion summarizes the argument, but the writer may not address fully the implications of the argument or its analysis
 | * Makes a clear, insightful claim about what makes the article persuasive (or not), identifying, and evaluating various kinds of rhetorical strategies and appeals for how they work on an audience; rhetorical vocabulary is used precisely and effectively
* provides incisive textual evidence (quotes embedded effectively and seamlessly) for each specific strategy analyzed
* avoids summary and focuses on how (and why?) the author creates specific rhetorical effects (like the appeals—*ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*); includes thorough analysis that goes beyond obvious readings
* Concludes with clear closure, reinforcing the claims and suggesting further implications
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ORGANIZATION

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| ***OOPS!*** | ***developing toward expectations*** | ***meeting expectations*** | ***exceeding expectations*** |
| * rudimentary title without a focus; introduction is boring and/or fails to announce the focus of the editorial; conclusion is unsatisfactory
* lacks focus and development
* transitions and topic sentences are rough, unclear, or missing and leave the audience confused about the focus of the paper
* consistent errors in MLA formatting considerably impede the reader’s understanding
 | * title and introduction may be uninteresting, unclear, or too broad, although the focus becomes apparent as the editorial unfolds; conclusion is merely a reiteration of the argument
* is not fully focused; may occasionally introduce information unrelated to the main idea; some paragraphs don’t seem to support or develop the thesis
* transitions and topic sentences may be weak, unclear, or do not meet the purposes of the paragraph
* errors in MLA formatting appear with some frequency.
 | * title lacks verve, but it works well; the introduction works well but may not capture our attention, and the conclusion summarizes the argument well but may not suggest implications that answer the question, “so what”?
* has a single focus, with some straying; the paragraphs may not be arranged purposefully, but each one supports and develops a thesis, more or less
* topic sentences are used to forecast the main point of the paragraph, but may not clearly contribute to an understanding of the overall argument; transitions establish relationships between paragraphs and sentences
* few errors in MLA formatting conventions
 | * the title cleverly indicates subject of the paper, and the introduction effectively introduces the topic and catches reader’s attention; the conclusion provides a satisfying sense of closure with a clear “so what” for the reader
* has a single focus, and each paragraph supports and develops a thesis; paragraphs are arranged purposefully and effectively
* topic sentences and transitions are clear and flow smoothly from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph, or idea to idea, effectively linking and shaping the audience’s understanding of the argument
* Meets highest standards of MLA formatting conventions
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STYLE

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| ***OOPS!*** | ***developing toward expectations*** | ***meeting expectations*** | ***exceeding expectations*** |
| * has enough errors to mar the writer’s *ethos* regardless of the strength of the argument; there are multiple glaring errors per page; subjects are hidden, and verbs are turned into nouns; wordy phrases and clauses take over like kudzu: It’s time to break open the handbook and make a plan to improve!
 | * readable, but the obvious errors in grammar, punctuation, mechanics, or design begin to create *static* in the reading experience so that the *ethos* of the writer is compromised; some clear error patterns emerge; moving forward, the writer should proofread a little more carefully and/or show the writing to a trusted reviewer.
* clear enough, but sometimes a syntactic strangeness creeps in—subjects hide and verbs become nouns; the writer sometimes loses track of how phrases and clauses should go together, but generally the writer’s intentions are clear enough; there’s little variation here, and the writer taxes the reader with more words than are necessary.
* not necessarily compelling: This paper reads like an *adequate* academic paper that gets a job done without connecting to the reader; there’s an opportunity here to move to the next level by working on specific stylistic strategies with the instructor.
 | * mostly correct: for the most part, easy to read and free from errors, though a few crop up here and there, but they don’t really impede the reading experience too much; the writer needs to proofread a little more carefully to take the paper to the next level.
* clear: sentences are generally active, with clear enough subjects and verbs; sometimes it takes too long for a sentence to get to its verb; word choice is pragmatic, with the occasional misplaced word or phrase; sentences could be more concise, but the writer avoids distracting wordiness.
* somewhat compelling: there’s some attempt at the sentence level to make this paper stand out stylistically; the sentences get the job done, with the occasional rhetorical move to engage the writer; phrases and clauses come together without the kind of variation and skill you see in the exceptional paper; the voice here is the voice of someone writing a *good* academic paper without necessarily connecting with the reader.
 | * correct: easy to read and free from errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, mechanics, and MLA formatting;
* clear: sentence actors (subjects) and actions (verbs) are clear and close together—the sentences are *active*, unless the writer makes a better rhetorical choice; words have rhetorically-appropriate connotations; sentences are concise;
* compelling: reading this paper is a pleasure because the writer is writing for *readers*—the sentence lengths vary by bringing together phrases and clauses in a variety of ways to create *ethos*; there may be (rhetorically-appropriate) allusions, irony, tropes, or schemes that show the writer is trying to create an engaging reading experience.
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Instructor Comments:

Score: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_