

Sophomore Research Project Notes

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Students were anonymous polled last year about what made them feel successful on the Sophomore Project. Here is what they had to say:

#1 Do not procrastinate.

- Put the effort in early on so the paper will be easier to write.
- The note cards seemed ridiculous at first, but then I realized I had a lot of evidence to choose from and I didn't have to go back research more once I was in the writing mode.
- I really liked the calendar and the checklist. It made it easy to not fall behind.
- Work days are great – but only if you use the time wisely.
- I would have researched a topic more so that I was invested.
- Analysis is super important – but not possible if the evidence doesn't connect.
- Research!
- I wish I had made a conference with one of my teachers to make sure I didn't lose points on silly mistakes.
- I wish I had focused on making sure the so what of my thesis was strong – because the rest of the paper was weak because of it.
- I wish I had actually read my paper out loud like Ms. Havlin told me to.
- Put the effort into the outline because it gets harder to edit once it's in the draft.
- Get as many peer edits as possible. Even if there are only a few in class. It helps find the little mistakes which add up to big points lost in the end.
- The project was frustrating because I thought I did better than I did in the end, which just shows that I need to get more feedback from my peers and teachers.
- I needed to take the imitative to talk to my teachers and get more advice.
- Take teacher's comments seriously.
- Struggled with analysis. Don't skim the surface.
- Organize my facts before writing.
- The biggest thing to my success was starting early, keeping on top of the work, and not rushing at the end.
- Waiting the day before something is due is really painful.
- Organization is super important – you can have great ideas but if they aren't organized the argument won't work.
- The trick I can think of to writing a strong so what is imagining your paper is a children's book – what is the moral of the story? It's the part of the paper that connects to the real world and the reader.

Source Cards and Note Cards

Purpose: To record your research findings, and later to organize your research into a coherent outline in preparation for writing your paper.

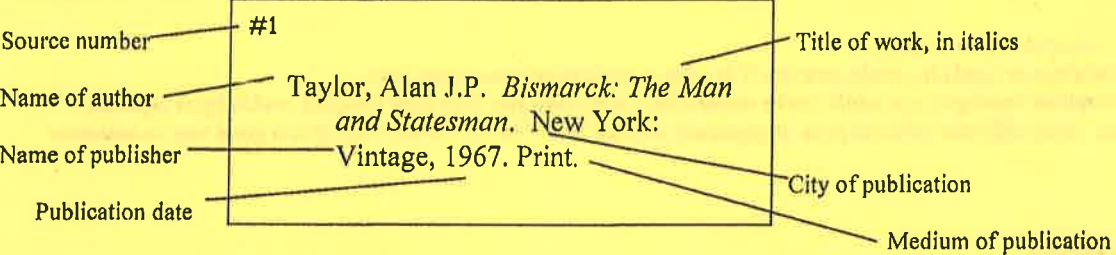
- Requirements:**
- Use 3 x 5 lined index cards
 - At least 6 source cards (with at least two print sources and two primary sources)
 - At least 50 note cards
 - You will choose to do these notecards by hand (#1 and #2 below) or online (#3 on next page)

For each source you use, you will create a source card (hand-written) or a Bibliography entry (online, via EasyBib). This will contain all the information you will later need for your Works Cited page.

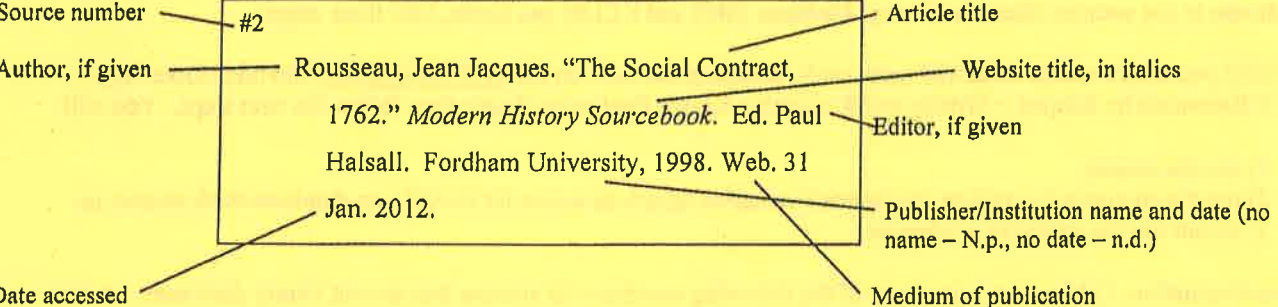
Helpful websites for citations: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>
http://bes.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/RES5e_ch04_o.html

1) **HAND-WRITTEN SOURCE CARDS** Use only 1 card per source. Number each source in the upper left corner (this number will correspond to the note card that contains notes from this source)

Example for a book:



and an internet source:



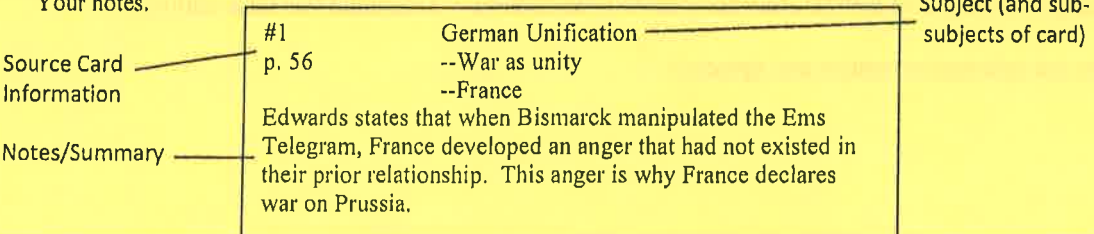
2) **HAND-WRITTEN NOTECARDS:** it's like taking notes, but more structured

Eventually, you will be able to organize your notecards by topic and fact like pieces to a puzzle, in order to construct your outline for your paper. Taking effective notes requires accuracy, attention to detail, and simplicity.

Each note card should contain a **single, distinct fact** with perhaps some brief analysis. You should **paraphrase** or **summarize**. Only use direct quotations if a) you can't possibly say it any differently, or b) the author's use of language is incredibly brilliant and you can't resist.

Format:

- Upper left corner: Source card number. This will help you keep track of where your information is from.
Page number (if source has a page #). This will be critical when you use citations in your paper.
- Center top: Key term/ main idea. These will help you organize your ideas later and help stay focused on topic.
- Body of card: Your notes.



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3) ONLINE SOURCE AND NOTE CARDS

You may complete Source Cards (which are entered in the "Bibliography" tab in EasyBib) and note cards (these will be notes in the "Notebook" tab of EasyBib) online. Instructions will be provided online by your teacher and can also be [found here](#) (Skyline Home Page > Library > Resources by Subject > Writing and Research > EasyBib Online Note/Source Card Instructions)

Some helpful tips on taking notes from the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL):

1. *Be succinct in whatever you write, but don't rely too heavily on mental notes because you're afraid of writing too much down. Even if it's just background data, boil it down to a short phrase on paper. Remember, notes are like drafts: you will not end up using everything you write down. **It's better to have too much than not enough.***
2. *It's fine to copy down duplicating facts. For major issues, having more than one person who agrees with you strengthens your point. Just make sure to record who said what each time.*
3. *It's also okay to copy down contradictory information. Analytical papers often include opposing views and even for argumentative papers, acknowledging an opposing viewpoint that is easily disproved by its counterpoint is always a good rhetorical tool.*

Specific tips to facilitate comprehension later on

1. *Don't overuse abbreviations or symbols—make sure you'll be able to understand your notes later.*
2. *If you find ideas or reactions coming to you while you're researching, make sure you keep your thoughts and insights separate from your other notes. Using different coloured pens or physically shifting from "me" to "others" cards is a great way to maintain the distinction.*

4) SOURCE EVALUATION

If you choose to use sources other than library databases (SHS and KCLS) and books, take these steps:

A. BEFORE you create source cards and notes cards, complete the form on the [SHS library page](#) (Skyline Home Page > Library > Resources by Subject > Writing and Research > Source Evaluation Tool); then follow the next steps. You will either:

- 1) use the source,
- 2) use the source and complete the Source Evaluation questions below for EACH non-database/book source, or
- 3) do not use the source as a reference

B. Source Evaluation. 1) You must answer all of the following questions for sources that are not library databases, books, or sources deemed usable according to the Source Evaluation Tool (see above). 2) This is a separate part of the assignment, not part of your paper or works cited page, use a separate sheet of paper (you may include multiple source evaluations on the same sheet of paper). 3) Your answers must be typed.

1. List the full citation for source.
2. Type and origin of source: print, digital, or internet source? Primary or secondary?
3. Author? Author's qualifications? Author's purpose? Intended audience?
4. Point of view? What conclusions can you draw about the point of view of this source? A particular point of view does not make a source unusable, but it is important to recognize and ANALYZE the point of view. (ex: a primary source from the Catholic church regarding Martin Luther is very useful, but recognize that the church has a particular POV)
5. Credibility of information? Is there an editor (meaning, has someone/some organization checked the information before it was published on the web)? How do other sources confirm or contradict this information?
6. When was the information written and updated?

Research/Sources

Works Cited/In-Text Citations

Thesis

Organization

Outlining

Evidence

Analysis

BTS/Concluding Sentence

Intro/Conclusion Paragraphs

Word Choice/Grammar/Editing

You analyze in both kinds of writing, but the way you present your analysis differs.

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Purpose and Resources

Literary Analysis	Research Paper
Requires you to critically read a written work, then analyze its components to examine its effect or message. Resources required: the text and your brain (and sometimes external sources, if you're comparing historically relevant issues or another text).	Require you to familiarize yourself with the works of "experts" on a subject, then compare their thoughts on the topic with your own. Resources required: many texts on the same subject, your background knowledge, your willingness to change your thesis if you find information that contradicts what you originally thought.
In other words:	Others' ideas about the subject <i>integrated with</i> your ideas/insights about the subject
100% your ideas about the subject	Notes: No professor will be marking <i>what</i> the published experts have to say, only how well <i>you use</i> what the experts have to say to advance your paper's purpose.

Use of Quotes

Literary Analysis	Research Paper
You need quotes from your subject text to back up (or support) your claim about what the author is saying. (i.e. quotes are mostly facts that show proof of your analysis). You need contextual lead-ins to your quote.	You need quotes both as facts and sometimes as analysis (what the experts say). You do not need a lead-in <i>if</i> the quote flows naturally from the last sentence. Make sure to read out loud to check.

Citations

Literary Analysis	Research Paper
You need to cite all quotes, but not every paraphrase.	You need to cite every idea that isn't your own, whether it's in quotes or paraphrased.
<i>Works Cited needed?</i>	<i>Works Cited needed?</i>
Only if you get information from a source cited in class (i.e. from a handout of a speech, or something similar) or if you get information on your own from another source. Basic facts discussed in class (the poet was British, the rose is a metaphor, etc.) do not need citations.	Yes. You need a list of every source you reference in your paper.

As the staff at the [SUNY Empire State College Writer's Complex](#) so aptly explains it: "To analyze means to break a topic or concept down into its parts in order to inspect and understand it, and to restructure those parts in a way that makes sense to you. In an analytical research paper, you do research to become an expert on a topic so that you can restructure and present the parts of the topic from your own perspective."

#1

Name: _____

Outline Peer Editing

- Do the sections seem to have the appropriate information? Is the outline formatted correctly?
- Is the research question appropriate for the topic? Does the main thesis directly answer the research question?
- Does each body thesis connect-link to the main thesis?
- Does the evidence back up the body thesis and main thesis?
- Is the evidence actually facts and expert opinion? Does the outline have a mixture of evidence?
- Are there facts that appear to be missing?
- Are the citations in correct MLA format?
- Are there claims (parts of the MT or BT) that are not supported by facts/CDs?
- Can you follow the logic (Is the paper in a logical sequence)?

Finally: What are two things that worked well in this essay? What are two things the writer might want to take a second look at? Be specific.

Worked well:

1. _____
2. _____

You might want to take a second look at:

1. _____
2. _____

Editor's Name: _____

Writer's Name: _____

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#2

Name: _____

Outline Peer Editing

- Do the sections seem to have the appropriate information? Is the outline formatted correctly?
 - Is the research question appropriate for the topic? Does the main thesis directly answer the research question?
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Worked well:

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Draft #1: Peer Edit Essay Rubric

Please use this rubric to ensure that you have included all of the components of a well-thought out argument.

Component Checklist	At Standard 8-10	Approaching Standard 5-7	Needs Work 0-4
<p>Introduction</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hook</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> General Background</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Thesis</p>	<p>Opens with a creative hook that draws the reader in and clearly connects with the topic.</p> <p>Introduces relevant general background information that sets the stage for the thesis (<i>not</i> your supporting evidence, yet).</p> <p>Introduces a specific thesis statement that is inviting, provocative, and debatable. (<i>Who? What? Why/How?</i>)</p>	<p>Opens with a hook, but the hook does not clearly connect to the subject.</p> <p>Introduces Background information that is not relevant, scanty, too specific or unclear.</p> <p>Thesis statement is too vague, incomplete.</p>	<p>Opens with a creative hook that draws the reader in and clearly connects with the topic.</p> <p>Little or no relevant background information.</p> <p>Lacks a clear thesis statement.</p>
<p>Body Paragraph 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Body Thesis</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evidence X2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Explanation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Connection to Thesis Statement</p>	<p>Contains a topic sentence that introduces the subject of the paragraph.</p> <p>The second sentence, the evidence, is a relevant and interesting quote (with a proper citation).</p> <p>Explains the meaning of the evidence. <i>What does it mean? How does it work? How does it help one group or harm another?</i></p> <p>Clearly links the Image to the Main Thesis.</p> <p>Concludes the paragraph by explaining how the evidence supports the Thesis Statement.</p>	<p>The topic of the paragraph is unclear.</p> <p>The quote is irrelevant, the source is not cited.</p> <p>The evidence is not explained. What does it mean? How does it work? How does it help one group or harm another?</p> <p>Fails to explain how the evidence supports the main thesis.</p>	<p>Lacks a clear topic sentence that introduces the subject of the paragraph.</p> <p>It is unclear what the evidence is. There is no citation.</p> <p>Fails to Explain the meaning of the evidence.</p> <p>Fails to connect the evidence (quote) to the Main Thesis.</p>
<p>Body Paragraph 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Body Thesis</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evidence X2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Explanation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Connection to Thesis Statement</p>	<p>Contains a topic sentence that introduces the subject of the paragraph.</p> <p>The second sentence, the evidence, is a relevant and interesting quote (with a proper citation).</p> <p>Explains the meaning of the evidence. <i>What does it mean? How does it work? How does it help one group or harm another?</i></p> <p>Clearly links the Image to the Main Thesis.</p> <p>Concludes the paragraph by explaining how the evidence supports the Thesis Statement.</p>	<p>The topic of the paragraph is unclear.</p> <p>The quote is irrelevant, the source is not cited.</p> <p>The evidence is not explained. What does it mean? How does it work? How does it help one group or harm another?</p> <p>Fails to explain how the evidence supports the main thesis.</p>	<p>Lacks a clear topic sentence that introduces the subject of the paragraph.</p> <p>It is unclear what the evidence is. There is no citation.</p> <p>Fails to Explain the meaning of the evidence.</p> <p>Fails to connect the evidence (quote) to the Main Thesis.</p>
<p>Body Paragraph 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Body Thesis</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evidence X2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Explanation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Connection to Thesis Statement</p>	<p>Contains a topic sentence that introduces the subject of the paragraph.</p> <p>The second sentence, the evidence, is a relevant and interesting quote (with a proper citation).</p> <p>Explains the meaning of the evidence. <i>What does it mean? How does it work? How does it help one group or harm another?</i></p> <p>Clearly links the image to the Main Thesis.</p> <p>Concludes the paragraph by explaining how the evidence supports the Thesis Statement.</p>	<p>The topic of the paragraph is unclear.</p> <p>The quote is irrelevant, the source is not cited.</p> <p>The evidence is not explained. What does it mean? How does it work? How does it help one group or harm another?</p> <p>Fails to explain how the evidence supports the main thesis.</p>	<p>Lacks a clear topic sentence that introduces the subject of the paragraph.</p> <p>It is unclear what the evidence is. There is no citation.</p> <p>Fails to Explain the meaning of the evidence.</p> <p>Fails to connect the evidence (quote) to the Main Thesis.</p>
<p>Conclusion</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Restate Thesis</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Summarize Evidence</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Concluding Statement</p>	<p>Restates the thesis, echoes the introduction.</p> <p>Summarizes the evidence.</p> <p>Provides a resolution; answers the "so what?" question. Connect to larger themes: <i>How do you become powerful? Who gets power? What is power? Etc.</i></p>	<p>Does not restate the thesis in a <i>new way.</i></p> <p>Does not summarize all of the evidence.</p> <p>Does not end with a conclusion that wraps up the argument.</p>	<p>Does not restate the argument at all.</p> <p>No summary of the evidence.</p> <p>No concluding statement.</p>

Draft #1: Peer Edit Essay Rubric

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<p>Body Paragraph 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Body Thesis</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence X2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Explanation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Connection to Thesis Statement</p>	<p>Contains a topic sentence that introduces the subject of the paragraph.</p> <p>The second sentence, the evidence, is a relevant and interesting quote (with a proper citation).</p> <p>Explains the meaning of the evidence. <i>What does it mean? How does it work? How does it help one group or harm another?</i></p> <p>Clearly links the image to the Main Thesis.</p> <p>Concludes the paragraph by explaining how the evidence supports the Thesis Statement.</p>	<p>The topic of the paragraph is unclear.</p> <p>The quote is irrelevant, the source is not cited.</p> <p>The evidence is not explained. What does it mean? How does it work? How does it help one group or harm another?</p> <p>Fails to explain how the evidence supports the main thesis.</p>	<p>Lacks a clear topic sentence that introduces the subject of the paragraph.</p> <p>It is unclear what the evidence is. There is no citation.</p> <p>Fails to Explain the meaning of the evidence.</p> <p>Fails to connect the evidence (quote) to the Main Thesis.</p>
<p>Body Paragraph 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Body Thesis</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence X2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Explanation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Connection to Thesis Statement</p>	<p>Contains a topic sentence that introduces the subject of the paragraph.</p> <p>The second sentence, the evidence, is a relevant and interesting quote (with a proper citation).</p> <p>Explains the meaning of the evidence. <i>What does it mean? How does it work? How does it help one group or harm another?</i></p> <p>Clearly links the image to the Main Thesis.</p> <p>Concludes the paragraph by explaining how the evidence supports the Thesis Statement.</p>	<p>The topic of the paragraph is unclear.</p> <p>The quote is irrelevant, the source is not cited.</p> <p>The evidence is not explained. What does it mean? How does it work? How does it help one group or harm another?</p> <p>Fails to explain how the evidence supports the main thesis.</p>	<p>Lacks a clear topic sentence that introduces the subject of the paragraph.</p> <p>It is unclear what the evidence is. There is no citation.</p> <p>Fails to Explain the meaning of the evidence.</p> <p>Fails to connect the evidence (quote) to the Main Thesis.</p>
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<p>Conclusion</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Restate Thesis</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Summarize Evidence</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Concluding Statement</p>	<p>Restates the thesis, echoes the introduction.</p> <p>Summarizes the evidence.</p> <p>Provides a resolution; answers the "so what?" question. Connect to larger themes: <i>How do you become powerful? Who gets power? What is power? Etc.</i></p>	<p>Does not restate the thesis in a new way.</p> <p>Does not summarize all of the evidence.</p> <p>Does not end with a conclusion that wraps up the argument.</p>	<p>Does not restate the argument at all.</p> <p>No summary of the evidence.</p> <p>No concluding statement.</p>

Draft #2

Name _____

Editor _____

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	Exceeds standard 10	Meets standard 8.5	Almost meets standard 7.5	Approaches standard 6	Still developing 5	Not present 0
Thesis	Unique, highly individual and a clear, provable argument	Clear, provable argument.	Attempts to make an argument	Barely attempts to make an argument	Not an arguable point.	No thesis
	Coherent and written in an exemplary fashion & placed appropriately in the paper	Coherent and well written and placed appropriately in the paper	Clear and placed appropriately in the paper	Poorly written and/or unclear and placed appropriately in the paper	Poorly written and unclear or placed inappropriately in the paper.	
Evidence	Strongly supports thesis	Supports thesis	Mostly supports thesis	Only supports part of the thesis	Does not support thesis	No evidence
	Clear, relevant, specific evidence from a variety of sources	Clear, relevant, specific evidence from some varied sources	Somewhat clear and relevant; & somewhat from different sources	Somewhat clear and relevant; or somewhat from different sources	Unclear, random, misinterpreted and from 1 or 2 sources	
	Supporting facts and evidence well-chosen and seamlessly integrated	Supporting facts and evidence well-chosen and mostly well-integrated	Supporting facts and evidence somewhat well-chosen/integrated	Supporting facts and evidence minimal and/or not integrated	Very few to no appropriate supporting facts and evidence	
	Whole paper comes from well-chosen, appropriate sources and shows real depth of research	Whole paper comes from appropriate sources and shows depth of research	Paper mostly comes from appropriate sources and shows some of research	Some sources may be inappropriate/non-academic and depth of research is lacking	Uses inappropriate sources and shows no depth of research	
Analysis	Significance of impact is clear and well developed	Impact is clearly developed	Attempts to prove impact, but impact focus inconsistent	Lacks focus on impact	No impact addressed	No analysis
	Creative, complex, clear, and original understanding of the text/content.	Clear, complex, and original understanding of the text/content	Clear, lacks some originality and/or creativity in understanding the text/content	Somewhat unclear; lacks creativity and originality in understanding of the text/content	Unclear and unoriginal; does not understand the text/content	No analysis
	Supports & connects clearly to evidence/thesis and is creative and relevant	Supports & connects to evidence/thesis; could be more creative and/or developed/relevance	Supports but does not clearly connect to evidence/thesis; or needs more development and/or relevance to go beyond surface	Attempts to support but does not clearly relate to evidence; or needs much more development to go beyond surface	Lacks support and any relation to evidence	
	Argument accurate and very well presented	Argument accurate and well presented	Argument accurate & acceptably presented; needs development	Argument somewhat inaccurate, poorly presented & lost	Argument inaccurate and poorly presented	
Organization	Superb organization, easily readable and understandable; Logical and coherent sequence/timeline	Clear, readable form; Logical and mostly coherent sequence/timeline	Clear and mostly readable with a somewhat logical & coherent sequence/timeline.	Somewhat clear, problems with readability; lacking in transitions or unfocused.	Unclear and unreadable Unfocused, incoherent, not logical	No attempt to organize
	Inviting, creative, complete intro and clear, complete, satisfying conclusion	Inviting intro and satisfying conclusion	Basic introduction and basic conclusion	Intro lacks connection to paper and/or weak conclusion, lacks connection.	Little to no intro and little to no conclusion	
Style	Advanced and vivid persuasive use of language	Adequate and vivid persuasive use of language	Mostly adequate use of language, some problems	Problems with word choice, grammar, and/or construction.	Major, distracting problems with word choice, grammar, and construction	No coherent style
	Advanced, creative use of mechanics	Correct use of mechanics	Mostly correct use of mechanics	Problems with mechanics	Major, distracting problems with mechanics	
	Strong, unique voice	Clear voice	Some voice	Developing voice	Bland voice	
Penalties	-10	-5				
Length	Does not meet the required length for the assignment	Paper is within one half page of assigned length				
Formatting	Major errors in formatting and citation	Minor errors in formatting and citation				

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Draft #2 Name _____

Editor _____

	Exceeds standard 10	Meets standard 8.5	Almost meets standard 7.5	Approaches standard 6	Still developing 5	Not present 0
Thesis	Unique, highly individual and a clear, provable argument	Clear, provable argument.	Attempts to make an argument	Barely attempts to make an argument	Not an arguable point.	No thesis
	Coherent and written in an exemplary fashion & placed appropriately in the paper	Coherent and well written and placed appropriately in the paper	Clear and placed appropriately in the paper	Poorly written and/or unclear and placed appropriately in the paper	Poorly written and unclear or placed inappropriately in the paper.	
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Organization	Superb organization, easily readable and understandable; Logical and coherent sequence/timeline	Clear, readable form; Logical and mostly coherent sequence/timeline	Clear and mostly readable with a somewhat logical & coherent sequence/timeline.	Somewhat clear, problems with readability; lacking in transitions or unfocused.	Unclear and unreadable Unfocused, incoherent, not logical	No attempt to organize
	Inviting, creative, complete intro and clear, complete, satisfying conclusion	Inviting intro and satisfying conclusion	Basic introduction and basic conclusion	Intro lacks connection to paper and/or weak conclusion, lacks connection.	Little to no intro and little to no conclusion	
Style	Advanced and vivid persuasive use of language	Adequate and vivid persuasive use of language	Mostly adequate use of language, some problems	Problems with word choice, grammar, and/or construction.	Major, distracting problems with word-choice, grammar, and construction	No coherent style
	Advanced, creative use of mechanics	Correct use of mechanics	Mostly correct use of mechanics	Problems with mechanics	Major, distracting problems with mechanics	
	Strong, unique voice	Clear voice	Some voice	Developing voice	Bland voice	

Penalties	-10	-5
Length	Does not meet the required length for the assignment	Paper is within one half page of assigned length
Formatting	Major errors in formatting and citation	Minor errors in formatting and citation