

	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
<b>Explanation of problem</b>	Demonstrates the ability to construct a clear and insightful problem statement; problem is stated clearly and described comprehensively; defines terms and explores ambiguities, delivering all relevant information necessary for development of argument	Demonstrates the ability to construct a problem statement; presents most of the relevant information; defines most terms and identifies some ambiguities	Begins to demonstrate the ability to construct a problem statement, but problem statement is superficial and may not present all relevant information; defines some terms and identifies some ambiguities	Demonstrates a limited ability to construct a problem statement; issue/ problem to be considered is stated without clarification or description; few terms are defined; ambiguities are largely ignored
<b>Critical evaluation of information</b>	Methodically analyzes assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts and bias when presenting a position; analysis is nuanced	Identifies and questions assumptions; identifies relevant contexts and biases when presenting a position; presents complexities with nuance, though sometimes oversimplifies	Identifies assumptions; identifies several relevant contexts and biases when presenting a position; presents some complexities, though often oversimplifies	Begins to identify assumptions; may begin to identify some contexts and biases when presenting a position
<b>Analysis and argument</b>	Provides a strong argument for thesis, carefully and clearly laying out each step in the argument; each step builds naturally on the prior step	Provides an argument for thesis; often clear how each step in the argument fits together	Provides an argument for thesis; sometimes clear how each step in the argument fits together	Provides some reasons for thesis, though the paper does not make the relationship between the reasons clear
<b>Student's position (thesis or conclusion)</b>	Thesis is supported by an argument with well-developed reasons, and analysis and the relationship between the argument and the thesis is clear and reasoned	Thesis is supported by an argument with well-developed reasons, although the relationship between the reasons and the thesis is not always clear	Thesis is supported by an argument, although the relationship between the reasons and the thesis is not always clear	Thesis is not always clearly tied to the reasons given, and the relationship between the reasons and the thesis is not reasoned and clear
<b>Disciplinary Conventions</b>	Shows fluency in disciplinary conventions; prose style is clear	Accords with most disciplinary conventions; prose style is generally clear though occasional errors distract	Shows some familiarity with disciplinary conventions; prose style is generally clear, though frequent errors distract	Shows unfamiliarity with disciplinary conventions; stylistic errors often get in the way of communication