

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY WRITING RUBRIC

TRAITS	Beginning	Developing	Competent	Advanced
<p>Usage & Mechanics:</p> <p><i>Generally includes issues dealing with writing conventions. Features considered may include: clarity, sentence structure, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.</i></p>	<p>Contains pervasive errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or sentence structure. Problems interfere with meaning or distract the reader.</p>	<p>Contains some errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or sentence structure. Problems may, on occasion, compromise meaning or distract the reader.</p>	<p>Is generally free of errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or sentence structure. Reads smoothly. Problems do not compromise meaning.</p>	<p>Demonstrates mastery of spelling, punctuation, usage, and mechanics. May use language and punctuation to enhance meaning.</p>
<p>Purpose:</p> <p><i>Generally refers to conveying a message appropriate to its audience. Features may include: a thesis or central idea, topic selection, relevance, clarity, and focus.</i></p>	<p>Inappropriate for the audience, or intended audience unclear. Lacks a central idea, thesis, or goal, or these elements are unfocused, random, or confusing.</p>	<p>Occasionally appropriate for the audience or intended audience somewhat clear. Central idea, thesis, or goal emerges but may lack focus or consistency.</p>	<p>Mostly appropriate for a defined audience. Exhibits a generally clear and consistent central idea, thesis, or goal.</p>	<p>Clearly appropriate for a well-defined audience. Consistently exhibits a focused central idea, thesis or goal.</p>
<p>Organization:</p> <p><i>Generally refers to the coherence of the writing. Features may include: appropriate format, balance and ordering of ideas, flow, and transitions.</i></p>	<p>Lacks a sense of overall structure; no sense of beginning, middle, or end. No paragraphs or division into paragraphs lacks logic. Lacks transitional words, phrases, and sentences between or within paragraphs.</p>	<p>Contains an overall sense of beginning, middle and end, but paragraph sequence may be confusing. The order or balance of ideas within paragraphs is inconsistent. Little or inappropriate use of transitions.</p>	<p>Effective structure and arrangement of ideas. Order of paragraphs may, occasionally, appear mechanical or awkward. Order or balance of ideas within paragraphs is generally consistent and cohesive. Transitions present but may be cumbersome or repetitive.</p>	<p>Rational, sensible, and deliberate structure that enhances and clarifies meaning. Transitions show relationships among ideas.</p>

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<p>Style:</p> <p><i>Generally refers to the choices the writer makes for specific audiences. This may include features like tone, sentence length and structure, phrasing, and word choice</i></p>	<p>Writing has an inappropriate tone.</p> <p>The sentences and phrases are simplistic, unvaried, or wordy. Writing is stiff, awkward, and difficult to follow.</p> <p>Unclear or incorrect use of terminology or vocabulary.</p>	<p>Writing has an inconsistent or occasionally inappropriate tone.</p> <p>Some sentences and phrases are repetitive, bland, or awkward. Writing is occasionally difficult to follow.</p> <p>Some misused terminology or vocabulary. Word choice may be ineffective.</p>	<p>Writing has a consistent and appropriate tone.</p> <p>Sentences and phrases are typically concise and effective but may be somewhat mechanical. Writing is easy to follow.</p> <p>Terminology or vocabulary is appropriate and sensible but may be predictable.</p>	<p>Tone contributes to reader comprehension.</p> <p>Uses varied sentence structure and phrases to convey meaning and to create interest and engagement.</p> <p>Vocabulary is sophisticated, precise, and varied.</p>
<p>Complexity:</p> <p><i>Generally refers to depth or sophistication of thoughts and ideas. Features may include: research, reasoning, evidence, detail, development, creativity, originality, integration, and perspective.</i></p>	<p>Reasoning is uncritical, illogical, superficial, or simplistic.</p> <p>No evidence or inaccurate and/or inappropriate evidence. Fails to cite or utilize sources. Fails to consider alternative viewpoints.</p> <p>Perspective is one-dimensional, offering only generalizations and stereotypical points.</p>	<p>Reasoning may be faulty or inconsistent.</p> <p>Evidence may be overly general, misinterpreted or misapplied. Insufficient use of sources. Limited consideration of alternative viewpoints.</p> <p>Tends to borrow or simply summarize the perspectives or arguments of others without integration.</p>	<p>Reasoning is logical and consistent.</p> <p>Evidence is appropriate, and, for the most part, effective. Moderate support from acceptable sources. Some consideration of alternative viewpoints.</p> <p>Clearly understands and integrates perspective or arguments of others.</p>	<p>Reasoning demonstrates depth and sophistication of thought.</p> <p>Point of view or argument well-reasoned, balanced, and supported with specific details, facts, and evidence synthesized from well-chosen sources.</p> <p>Perspective or analysis is fresh, original, or insightful.</p>