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	<b>6</b> EXCEPTIONAL	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>5</b> STRONG	<b>4</b> NEEDS REFINING	<b>MIDDLE</b>	<b>3</b> A START	<b>2</b> NOT YET	<b>LOW</b>	<b>1</b> INEFFECTIVE
<b>IDEAS</b>	<p><b>FOCUSING THE TOPIC:</b> The writer narrows the topic to create a piece that is clear, tight, and manageable.</p> <p><b>DEVELOPING THE TOPIC:</b> The writer persuades the reader by using reasons and details and answering the reader's possible objections.</p> <p><b>USING DETAILS:</b> The writer includes details (examples, anecdotes, statistics, expert opinions) that provide elaborated support for his/her reasons. Details make clear <b>WHO</b> should help solve the problem, <b>WHAT</b> they should do to solve the problem, <b>WHEN</b> they should begin, <b>WHY</b> they should help out, <b>HOW</b> they should get involved.</p>			<p><b>FOCUSING THE TOPIC:</b> The writer stays on the topic for the most part but tries to cover too much or wanders off topic. He or she includes elements that should have been eliminated.</p> <p><b>DEVELOPING THE TOPIC:</b> The writer does not probe deeply, but instead gives the reader only a glimpse at aspects of the topic. The audience's possible objections are not addressed</p> <p><b>USING DETAILS:</b> The writer includes some details but elaborates more on some reasons than on others; he/she lists more than elaborates. One or more of the following is unclear: <b>WHO</b> should help solve the problem, <b>WHAT</b> they should do to solve the problem, <b>WHEN</b> they should begin, <b>WHY</b> they should help out, <b>HOW</b> they should get involved.</p>			<p><b>FOCUSING THE TOPIC:</b> The writer has not narrowed the topic in a meaningful way and offers a series of unfocused, repetitious, or random thoughts.</p> <p><b>DEVELOPING THE TOPIC:</b> The writer has created a piece that is so short, the reader cannot understand or appreciate what he or she wants to say. He or she may have simply responded to the prompt without devoting much thought or effort to it.</p> <p><b>USING DETAILS:</b> The writer has clearly devoted little attention to details. He or she has not effectively elaborated on his/her reasons. The details the writer selected are not likely to appeal to the audience. The <b>WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHY, or HOW</b> is not clear.</p>		
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<p><b>CREATING THE LEAD:</b> The writer grabs the reader's attention from the start. He or she sums up the problem, makes a shocking statement, begins with "if," describes a dramatic scene, asks a question, gives background information, or quotes someone. The writer's strategy is appropriate for the audience.</p> <p><b>USING SEQUENCE AND TRANSITION WORDS:</b> The writer includes a variety of carefully selected sequence words (such as <i>later, then, and meanwhile</i>) and transition words (such as <i>however, also, and clearly</i>), which are placed wisely to guide the reader through the piece by showing how ideas progress, relate, and/or diverge.</p> <p><b>STRUCTURING THE BODY:</b> The writer creates a piece that is easy to follow by fitting details together logically.</p> <p><b>ENDING WITH A SENSE OF RESOLUTION:</b> The writer ends with a "Call to Action" that is specific, realistic, and stated as a polite command.</p>			<p><b>CREATING THE LEAD:</b> The writer presents an introduction, but it is not thought provoking; it does not hook the intended audience. It is a simple statement of the topic and, therefore, does not begin to convince the reader that the issue is important and that he/she should become involved.</p> <p><b>USING SEQUENCE AND TRANSITION WORDS:</b> The writer uses sequence words to show the logical order of details, but they feel obvious or "canned" (such as "First, "Second") The use of transition words is spotty and/or inconsistent.</p> <p><b>STRUCTURING THE BODY:</b> The writer sequences the important points logically for the most part. However, moving a few things around would have made the argument more forceful and convincing.</p> <p><b>ENDING WITH A SENSE OF RESOLUTION:</b> The writer ends the piece with a clichéd closing ("Now you know all about ..."). All loose ends are not tied up. The "Call to Action" needs to be more specific.</p>			<p><b>CREATING THE LEAD:</b> Introduction shows no awareness of the audience. The writer does not give the reader any clue about what is to come. The opening points seems as if it was chosen randomly.</p> <p><b>USING SEQUENCE AND TRANSITION WORDS:</b> The writer does not provide sequence or transition words, or provides words that are so confusing the reader is unable to sort one section from another.</p> <p><b>STRUCTURING THE BODY:</b> The writer does not show clearly what comes first, next, and last, making it difficult to figure how the sections fit together</p> <p><b>ENDING WITH A SENSE OF RESOLUTION:</b> The writer ends without a "Call to Action." The piece just ends without reviewing major points made.</p>		

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<b>WORD CHOICE</b>	<p><b>APPLYING STRONG VERBS:</b> The writer uses many “action words,” giving the piece punch. He or she stretched to find lively verbs that add energy to the piece.</p> <p><b>USING SPECIFIC AND ACCURATE WORDS:</b> The writer uses words with precision. He or she selects words the reader needs to fully understand the message. The writer chooses words that create clarity and bring the topic to life.</p> <p><b>CHOOSING WORDS THAT DEEPEN MEANING:</b> The writer uses words to enhance the piece’s meaning. There is a deliberate attempt to choose the best word over the first word that comes to mind.</p>			<p><b>APPLYING STRONG VERBS:</b> The writer uses passive voice quite a bit and/or includes few “action words” to give the piece energy.</p> <p><b>USING SPECIFIC AND ACCURATE WORDS:</b> The writer avoids inflammatory words, but some words may be too formal or too casual for the audience. The writer referred to the audience as “you” when it was not appropriate to do so.</p> <p><b>CHOOSING WORDS THAT DEEPEN MEANING:</b> The words communicate the basic idea, but they are ordinary. Because the writer provides little evidence that he or she has stretched for the best words or phrases, the audience questions his/her commitment to solving the problem.</p>			<p><b>APPLYING STRONG VERBS:</b> The writer makes no attempt at selecting verbs with energy. Passive voice dominates the piece.</p> <p><b>SELECTING STRIKING WORDS AND PHRASES:</b> The writer uses words that are repetitive, and/or vague.</p> <p><b>USING SPECIFIC AND ACCURATE WORDS:</b> The writer misuses words, making it difficult to understand what he or she is conveying. He or she uses many words that are too formal, too casual, or too inflammatory. The writer referred to the audience as “you” when it was not appropriate to do so.</p> <p><b>CHOOSING WORDS THAT DEEPEN MEANING:</b> The writer uses many words and phrases that simply do not work. Little meaning comes through because the language is so imprecise and distracting.</p>		
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	<p><b>CHECKING SPELLING:</b> The piece is free of spelling errors.</p> <p><b>PUNCTUATING EFFECTIVELY:</b> The piece is free of punctuation errors.</p> <p><b>PARAGRAPHING ACCURATELY:</b> Paragraphs are fully developed with adequate specifics to support the topic sentence.</p> <p><b>CAPITALIZING CORRECTLY:</b> The writer uses capital letters consistently and accurately. A deep understanding of how to capitalize dialogue, abbreviations, proper names, and titles is evident.</p> <p><b>APPLYING GRAMMAR AND USAGE:</b> The writer forms grammatically correct sentences. The writer may break the rules of standard English for stylistic reasons, but otherwise follows them.</p>			<p><b>CHECKING SPELLING:</b> The writer incorrectly spells a few words.</p> <p><b>PUNCTUATING EFFECTIVELY:</b> The writer makes a few punctuation errors, but they do not interfere with the reader’s understanding.</p> <p><b>PARAGRAPHING ACCURATELY:</b> Some paragraphs need to be divided into two or more paragraphs. Some paragraphs are underdeveloped.</p> <p><b>CAPITALIZING CORRECTLY:</b> The writer capitalizes the first words of sentences and proper names. He or she makes mistakes with more complex capitalization within dialogue, abbreviations, etc.</p> <p><b>APPLYING GRAMMAR AND USAGE:</b> The writer has grammar and usage errors, but they do not interfere with the reader’s ability to understand the message. Most mistakes are easily corrected.</p>			<p><b>CHECKING SPELLING:</b> The writer misspells many words, even common ones, causing the reader to focus more on the errors than the meaning.</p> <p><b>PUNCTUATING EFFECTIVELY:</b> The writer has neglected to use punctuation and/or used punctuation incorrectly, making it difficult for the reader to find meaning.</p> <p><b>PARAGRAPHING ACCURATELY:</b> The lack of paragraphing makes it difficult for the reader to find meaning.</p> <p><b>CAPITALIZING CORRECTLY:</b> The writer uses capital letters inconsistently even in common places such as the first word of a sentence. He or she uses capitals correctly in places, but has no consistent control over them.</p> <p><b>APPLYING GRAMMAR AND USAGE:</b> The writer makes frequent mistakes in grammar and usage, making it difficult to read and understand the piece.</p>		