**Expository Essay: Grades 9-10**

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| **CATEGORY** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** | **0** |
| **Introduction**  **(Lead)**  W.9-10.4  **10 points** | The introduction creatively invites (ie: anecdote/analogy) and grabs the reader’s attention, states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper. Lead bridges thesis. | The introduction grabs the reader’s attention, states the main topic, previews the structure of the paper, and uses bridge (transition) to thesis. | The introduction struggles to gain reader’s attention and does not adequately preview the structure of the paper. Weak bridge to thesis. | Introduction does not adequately grab the reader’s attention, preview the structure. Weak or no bridge thesis. | There is no clear introduction of the main topic or structure of the paper. No bridge. |
| **Thesis Statement**  W.9-10.4  **10 points** | Original thesis clearly states the main idea and identifies what is being compared and also uses sophisticated diction and sentence structure. | Thesis clearly states the main idea and identifies what is being compared (uses template as guide) | Thesis is under- developed or doesn’t address comparison. (uses template ineffectively) | Thesis is unclear and comparison topics are vague or not listed. | No thesis given. |
| **Body Paragraphs**  (Topic Sentences)  **5 points** | A strong topic sentence frames each body paragraph with varied syntax and follows the sequence of the thesis statement. | A topic sentence effectively frames each paragraph and follows the sequence of the thesis statement. | Some topic sentences do not frame the paragraphs well or may be out of sequence with the thesis statement. | Topic sentences are weak and/or are missing from some paragraphs and are out of order from thesis. | No topic sentences are given for the body paragraphs. |
| **Body Paragraphs** (Textual evidence)  W.9-10.2.b  **20 points** | Relevant, impressive, nuanced textual evidence gives the reader important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable that leads to strong analysis. | Relevant, specific textual evidence gives the reader important information and are sufficient in quantity to fully support the thesis that leads to analysis. | Supporting textual evidence mostly develops the thesis. Some paragraphs need stronger textual evidence to develop the thesis and move to analysis | Supporting textual evidence is weak or irrelevant and scattered throughout the piece. | No relevant textual evidence is given. |
| **Body Paragraphs** (Commentary)  W.9-10.2.b  **20 points** | Insightful commentary analyzes how textual evidence supports topic sentence/thesis. Shows effective comparison | Adequate commentary explains how textual evidence supports topic sentence/ thesis. Shows effective comparison. | Commentary is underdeveloped for some textual evidence. Comparison is unclear or inadequate. | Commentary is missing in sections, underdeveloped, and/or irrelevant. | No commentary is given. |
| **Coherence**  (Transitions)  W.9-10.2.c  **5 points** | Student skillfully incorporates a variety of transitions within paragraphs, establishing clear relationships among ideas. Student also uses signal phrases to introduce evidence. The student’s writing is fluid, coherent, and sequential as a result of his/her use of transitions. | Student incorporates a variety of transitions within paragraphs and ideas as well as signal phrases to introduce evidence; as a result, the student’s writing is sequential and generally flows well. | Student incorporates transitions within paragraphs and ideas, but the transitions lack variety. In addition, signal phrases are not used consistently or aptly; as a result, the student’s writing is not as fluid as it could be. | Student struggles to incorporate transitions throughout paragraphs and to use signal phrases to introduce evidence. | Student shows little to no understanding the learning goal. |
| **Conclusion**  W.9-10.2.f  **10 points** | The conclusion is impressive:   * Reimagines the thesis, * summarizes the body of essay and * leaves the reader with a synthesized statement. | The conclusion is adequate :   * restates the thesis, * summarizes the body of essay and * ties up all loose ends. | The conclusion is missing some elements of essay but still ties up almost all the loose ends. | The conclusion is underdeveloped & missing 2 or more key components. It does not tie up several loose ends. | There is no clear conclusion, the paper just ends. |
| **MLA Citation**  W.9-10.8  L.9-10.3.a  **10 points** | The writer uses appropriate MLA format for in-text citations and Works Cited page with no errors noted. Sources are relevant and enhance the subject under investigation. | The writer uses appropriate MLA format for in-text citations and Works Cited page, but essay contains one or two minor errors. Sources are relevant and enhance the subject under investigation. | The writer attempts to use appropriate MLA format for in-text citations and Works Cited page, but essay contains several errors. Sources do not enhance the subject under investigation. | The writer uses MLA format sparingly. Errors occur in one or more of the following areas:   * documentation missing for some citations. * documentation format is incorrect. * works missing from Works Cited page. * formatting errors on Works Cited page.   Sources do not further the subject under investigation. | The writer shows no understanding of MLA format for documentation. |
| **Grammar and Usage**  L.9-10.1  **5 points** |  |  | The essay contains no errors in grammar or usage that distract the reader from the content. | The essay contains 1-3 minor errors in grammar and/or usage that distract the reader from the content. | Multiple errors in grammar and/or usage distract the reader from the content. |
| **Sentence Structure**  L.9-10.1  **5 points** |  |  | All sentences are skillfully constructed, and every paragraph uses an impressive variety of sentences. | Most sentences are well-constructed, but the essay contains 1-3 fragments and/or run-on sentences that distract the reader from the content. Some paragraphs have sentences that vary in length, type, & structure. | Multiple errors in sentence construction distract the reader from the content. |
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