

June, 2010 Creative/Narrative Nonfiction Rubric

Learning Objectives	Scoring Scale 4 highest	Scoring Scale 3 middle high	Scoring Scale 2 middle low	Scoring Scale 1 lowest
Title and Introduction	Awakens and focuses interest on the writer’s agenda. Compelling.	Clear and focused. Establishes its subject. May be compelling, but may miss opportunities.	Problems with clarity or focus.	Does not attempt to generate interest. Serious problems with clarity or focus.
Audience Awareness	The writer is fully aware of an audience and accommodates readers’ needs throughout.	The writer is aware of an audience and sometimes accommodates readers’ needs.	The writer is aware of, but not clear about, audience. The essay is occasionally confusing.	The writer is not aware of audience needs. The essay is frequently confusing
Thesis or Research Question	The writer formulates an elegant, ambitious argument or question which governs the evidence and analysis throughout.	The thesis / question is clear and arguable, even interesting, and governs the evidence throughout.	The thesis/question is not entirely clear or is not arguable or does not govern the evidence throughout	The thesis/question is difficult or impossible to identify, and the purpose of the essay is unclear.
Use of Key Terms	The writer establishes, and defines where necessary, the key terms of the argument. Key terms are used with confidence and sophistication.	Key terms are established and defined. Use of key terms lacks either confidence or sophistication	Key terms are established but not consistently used or not clearly defined.	Key terms are not established, or they are unclear or inappropriate.

Information and Evidence	The writer selects persuasive, interesting, and insightful information to contextualize and inform the argument. Sources are cited appropriately. When necessary, evidence counter to the argument is effectively addressed	Sufficient and appropriate persuasive information informs and contextualizes the argument. Sources are appropriately cited. Ineffective counter argument.	Information informing and contextualizing the argument is sometimes insufficient or unpersuasive for the argument. Sources are sometimes inappropriately cited. No counter argument	Information informing and contextualizing the argument is rarely sufficient or persuasive for the argument. Sources are generally inappropriately cited or not cited.
Structure	Elegantly organized with respect to both the whole essay and the continuity of paragraphs. Accommodates the complexity of the argument imaginatively.	Well organized throughout but without either elegance or complexity. It accommodates the argument satisfactorily.	Well organized on the whole but occasionally needing work on individual paragraphs or continuity. It accommodates the argument.	Organization is haphazard and the argument is difficult to follow. Paragraphs and continuity need work.
Analysis and Interpretation	The writer always analyzes the evidence in support of the argument. Interpretation is insightful and persuasive, and displays extraordinary depth of thought.. May pose original ideas.	The writer usually analyzes the evidence in support of the argument. Interpretation is persuasive and occasionally insightful.	The writer sometimes analyzes the evidence in support of the argument. Interpretation is sometimes persuasive but rarely insightful.	The writer rarely analyzes the evidence in support of the argument. Interpretation may be implausible.

Mechanics	The writer demonstrates a wide range of vocabulary and sentence structures. Few or no errors.	The writer demonstrates some range of vocabulary and sentence structures. Some errors.	The writer demonstrates a limited range of vocabulary and sentence structures. Frequent errors when attempting complexity.	Persistent errors with simple vocabulary and sentence structures.
Voice and Style	The writer sustains an appropriate and interesting voice. The essay is complex and handled with sophistication throughout.	The writer sustains an appropriate voice and is occasionally interesting. The essay is handled with clarity and purpose, and occasional sophistication.	The writer's voice is occasionally inappropriate or lacking confidence. The essay is handled without sophistication.	The writer is unable to sustain an appropriate voice. The essay may be potentially interesting but is handled without clarity or purpose.
Conclusion	The conclusion answers all questions with insight. It continues to stimulate the reader's thinking and may suggest questions for further research.	The conclusion answers all questions satisfactorily and may suggest questions for further research.	The conclusion answers most questions, but may be unclear or incomplete.	The essay ends without concluding.
Narrative Structure	Has a consistent and compelling narrative arc that is well-shaped, distinct, and captivating.	Contains an engaging narrative thread throughout the essay, but shape could still use some crafting or development.	Shows some narrative elements, but may lack transitions or need re-shaping.	Little or no narrative structure.

Language of Senses	Draws the reader deeply into the scene through a wide variety of senses: sight, sound, smell, feel, taste. Writes with nouns and active verbs.	Draws the reader into the scene through descriptive language of senses, but still may miss some opportunities for description, or have inappropriate word choice.	Descriptions include occasional descriptive appeals to the senses. May over-use adverbs and adjectives.	Rarely appeals to any sense except rudimentary visual description and/or sensory language use is awkward.
Integration of Ideas into Narrative	Seamlessly integrates an exploration of important ideas with the personal narrative. Ideas are interesting and well-developed.	Makes an effort to integrate important ideas with personal narrative—weaves both a mindscape and a landscape. Ideas might be further developed or more nuanced.	Some awareness of both a personal element and of some topic or ideas that transcend the personal, but not well-developed or with little or no integration in the narrative	Lacks significant ideas beyond the story.
Awareness of a Narrative Tradition	Interesting and compelling references to and knowledge of past works in a body of literature in the same tradition.	Shows awareness of a tradition and situates the current piece in that tradition.	Some dialogue with previous works in the same tradition, but not seamlessly integrated into the narrative.	Writer unaware that anybody else has ever written creative or narrative non-fiction on these topics.

Student # _____ Paper Date/ Assignment _____
Date Reviewed _____ Reviewed by _____