

## Middlebury, 2011 Writing Rubric

<b>Learning Objectives</b>	<b>Scoring Scale 4 highest</b>	<b>Scoring Scale 3 middle high</b>	<b>Scoring Scale 2 middle low</b>	<b>Scoring Scale 1 lowest</b>
<b>Title and Introduction</b>	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.
<b>Audience Awareness</b>	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
<b>Thesis or Research Question</b>	The writer formulates an interesting, possibly ambitious, thesis, hypothesis, or research question which governs the evidence and analysis throughout.	The thesis / question is clear and arguable 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.
<b>Use of Key Terms</b>	The writer establishes, and defines where necessary, the key terms of the argument. Key terms are used with confidence and possibly sophistication.	Key terms are established and defined. Use of key terms lacks confidence and sophistication	Key terms are established but not consistently used or not clearly defined.	Key terms are not established, or they are unclear or inappropriate.

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<b>Information and Evidence</b>	The writer selects persuasive, interesting, perhaps 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 may sometimes be 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.
<b>Structure</b>	Sophisticated organization with respect to both the whole essay and the coherence and continuity of paragraphs. Accommodates the complexity of the argument well.	Well organized throughout but without either sophistication or complexity. It accommodates the argument satisfactorily.	Well organized on the whole but occasionally needing work on individual paragraph coherence or continuity. It accommodates the argument.	Organization is haphazard and the argument is difficult to follow. Paragraph coherence and continuity need work.
<b>Analysis and Interpretation</b>	The writer always analyzes the evidence in support of the argument. Interpretation is insightful and persuasive, and displays 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.

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<b>Mechanics</b>	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.
<b>Voice and Style</b>	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.
<b>Conclusion</b>	The conclusion answers all questions with insight. It continues to stimulate the reader's thinking and may suggest areas for further research.	The conclusion answers all questions satisfactorily.	The conclusion answers most questions, but may be unclear or incomplete.	The essay ends without concluding.

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<b>Disciplinary Conventions: Use of Disciplinary Language</b>	The language of the discipline is used correctly and fluently throughout.	The language of the discipline is used correctly and where it should be, but without fluency.	The language of the discipline is attempted but is used incorrectly or not used where it should be.	Disciplinary language is not attempted.
<b>Disciplinary Conventions: Entering Disciplinary Conversations</b>	The writer has analyzed and interpreted the scholarly literature accurately and insightfully throughout the paper. Prior work is synthesized for the reader (as opposed to being presented as a string of summaries) and is appropriate for the questions being asked.	The writer has analyzed and interpreted the scholarly literature but may miss some opportunities, or understanding of the literature may occasionally be vague or flawed.	The writer has demonstrated only a rudimentary understanding of the literature or may be clearly mistaken in places. Weak synthesis.	The author has reviewed the scholarly literature superficially or not at all.