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|  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Ideas & Content | The writing is clear, focused and interesting. The subject is described with relevant, carefully selected details that inform the reader about the university; author provides a thorough exploration of the to, making thoughtful connections and insights. | The writing is clear. The subject is described with relevant details about the university; author makes some insights or connections. | The writing is not consistently clear. The subject is rarely described with relevant details; author makes weak insights or connections. | The writing is frequently unclear. The subject is not described with relevant details; author does not make insights or connections. |
| Descriptive Organization | Compelling intro communicates a clear Descriptive thesis. Body paragraphs are arranged in such a way as to enhance the impact of the essay. Effective transitions are used.  Conclusion is strong. | Intro communicates a Descriptive thesis. Transitions are used. Body paragraphs are arranged in logical order.  Transitions are used. Conclusion is clear. | Intro does not clearly communicate a Descriptive thesis. Body paragraphs are not all arranged logically. Transitions are lacking. Conclusion is weak. | Thesis is not present or inconsistent with assignment. Structure of essay is unclear. Transitions are not used. Conclusion is missing or conflicts with essay. |
| Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Spelling | There are few or no errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling. Comprehensive MLA Works Cited Page. | There are some errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling. Complete MLA Works Cited Page. | Errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling interfere with the audience’s understanding of the process. Works Cited. | Serious and numerous errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling make understand the essay very difficult. No works Cited. |
| Style (Voice/Word Choice) | The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer demonstrates deep commitment to the topic. The writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. Word choice is consistently precise and impactful. | A voice is present. The writer seems committed to the topic, and there may be a sense of “writing to be read.” In places, the writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. | The writer’s commitment to the topic seems inconsistent. A sense of the writer may emerge at times; however, the voice is at time either inappropriate or ineffective. Many words are imprecise, redundant, or confusing. | The writing provides little sense of involvement or commitment. There is no evidence that the writer has chosen a suitable voice. Word choices are mostly imprecise, redundant, or confusing. |
| Sentence Fluency | The writing has an effective flow and rhythm. Sentences show a high degree of craftsmanship, with consistently strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. | The writing flows; however, connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid. Sentence patterns are somewhat varied, contributing to ease in oral reading. | The writing tends to be mechanical rather than fluid. Occasional awkward constructions may force the reader to slow down or reread. | The writing tends to be either choppy or rambling. Awkward constructions often force the reader to slow down or reread. |