**NROC Developmental English**

**Unit 10: Using Sources in Critical Reading and Writing**

**Writing Assignment and Rubric**

**Writing Assignment**

Select a topic from the list provided and write a multi-page essay describing the argument, followed by a personal statement that is persuasive and supported by evidence from the provided sources. Personal or testimonial evidence may also be used as a defense for the argument, but should be secondary in nature.

**Student Topics:**

* Should performance-enhancing drugs (such as steroids) be accepted in sports?
* Does online dating create longer lasting relationships than dating people you meet in typical face-to-face situations?
* Should the United States require mandatory national service in the form of a draft or required civil service?

The essay should **briefly**describe the main issue, or problem, for your chosen topic (Why is this a topic of discussion? What is going on?), and then offer a personal statement on the topic.

Your personal statement should include an arguable, interesting thesis, a counterargument, and several main points that are supported by evidence. Since you are incorporating sources in this essay, your final draft must include correct MLA or APA citation (check with your instructor), as well as a Works Cited (MLA) or References (APA) page. The sources are provided for you, but it’s up to you to decide which ones are a better fit for your essay and incorporate them effectively.

In all, you will have five to six paragraphs. You should have an introductory paragraph that is attention-grabbing and reveals your argument (your thesis goes here); three-to-four body paragraphs, one of which will focus on the counterargument and each of the remaining paragraphs will present a different point about the topic; and a concluding paragraph that offers some memorable final thoughts on your chosen topic.

Each paragraph should have a unique link between it and the one that comes after it. The organization within the paragraphs should be purposeful and present an exploration of the topic, complete with your opinion. Remember that you need to write sound arguments and support them effectively with the provided sources, plus anecdotal evidence if it seems appropriate. If you need a refresher on these concepts, review the Foundation lessons in the Resources.

The grading rubric below will help you develop your paper.

**Rubric**

Your essay will be graded using five separate categories: Purpose, Thesis Statement, Supporting Ideas, Paragraph Development, and Grammar & Punctuation. Each of these five categories will be rated as Proficient, Developing, or Needs Improvement.

Proficient means that you have met the standards of an effective analysis essay. Developing means you have partially met the standards of an analysis essay, but it needs some revision. Needs Improvement means you did not meet the standards of an analysis essay.

**Multi-Paragraph Persuasion Essay**

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|  | **Proficient** | **Developing** | **Needs Improvement** |
| **Purpose**(persuasive writing with source inclusion) | Clearly presents an understanding of the chosen topic with an engaging, insightful, and source-supported personal opinion. | Shows understanding about the topic (including a personal opinion), but doesn’t fully develop a claim, is not entirely convincing, and/or presents an unoriginal topic. | Does not include persuasive elements or is not fully developed. |
| **Thesis Statement** | Presents a clear argumentative thesis statement in an interesting way and shows how the essay will progress. | Vaguely identifies a functional but uninteresting thesis statement. The overall essay direction is present but inconsistent. | Does not include a thesis statement and the essay’s direction is unclear. |
| **Supporting Ideas**(use of major and minor details plus effective source inclusion) | Uses solid evidence to support the thesis statement and prove important points; includes several effective and appropriately used sources. | Partially uses evidence as proof; lacks support for some important points; does not fully or effectively include sources. | Does not develop or provide evidence to illustrate the claim; does not include sources. |
| **Paragraph Development**(strength of introduction, conclusion and coherency) | Smoothly connects ideas between and within paragraphs in a purposeful manner; introduction and conclusion make interesting, effective statements about the topic. | Ideas between and within paragraphs are partially connected or moderately purposeful; introduction and conclusion are present but not effective. | Missing connection between ideas; purpose of content is unclear; incomplete introduction and conclusion. |
| **Grammar & Punctuation** | Response contains appropriate use of: college essay formatting, capitalized words, punctuated titles, and quotation marks while avoiding plagiarism. | Paragraph needs further editing and/or contains some problems with college essay formatting, capitalized words, punctuated titles, quotation marks, and plagiarism. | Displays little attention to editing or correct usage of college essay formatting, capitalized words, punctuated titles, quotation marks, and source inclusion (to avoid plagiarism). |

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