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| Evaluative Essay Rubric |
| Score | Criteria | Category |
| A | Title fully grabs reader’s attention.Thesis statement clearly states a clear and compelling evaluation of the topic. Each body paragraph’s topic sentence sets a clear, powerful path in developing the thesis.Each paragraph is clearly centered on the topic sentence and fully develops the central idea.Evaluative criteria are clearly established and integrated into the essay.Reasoning shows depth of thought and presents unique, interesting insight.Ethics of evaluation are seamlessly integrated into the analysis.Powerful vocabulary without inappropriate repetition of key words or phrases; always fresh and interesting.Excellent sentence flow and variety of sentence structures.Skillful use of transitions to help create a unified, cohesive piece of writing.MLA citations are correctly formatted and skillfully embedded, so the resource information is seamless. Works Cited page is virtually error free.A lively, interesting, authoritative writer’s voice comes through to the audience. | Exceeds Expectations |
| B | Title is appropriate to the topic, but lacks inspiration.Thesis statement states a reasonable evaluation. Each body paragraph’s topic sentence logically supports the thesis, but doesn’t add more power.Each paragraph centers on a topic and fully develops the central idea; the topic sentence is present.Evaluative criteria are established.Reasoning is generally good, but a bit obvious at times; writer may not dig deeply enough.Ethics of evaluation are considered as part of the analysis.Strong vocabulary that clearly, but not always powerfully, expresses ideas; words or phrases are not repetitive.Smooth sentence flow and occasionally effective sentence variety.Correct and adequate use of transitions for unity and cohesiveness.MLA citations are correctly formatted and embedded. Works Cited page has few errors.The writer’s voice comes through to the audience, but falls flat at times. May be somewhat tentative. | Meets Expectations |
| C | Title is flat or predictable.Thesis statement indicates the evaluation, but the claim is tired, clichéd, or safe/bland.Each body paragraph’s topic sentence supports the thesis, but construction is mechanical.Paragraphs are each centered on a single topic, but a topic sentence may be missing.Evaluative criteria are used, perhaps implicitly and inconsistently.Reasoning is too obvious, superficial, simplistic, or repetitive; ideas are not taken very far.Ethics of evaluation are inconsistently applied.Average, simple vocabulary or overly flowery language blocks meaning at times.Sentence flow is choppy at times; limited sentence variety.Limited use of transitions; at times, an inappropriate transition is used or is missing altogetherMLA citations are correctly formatted for the most part, but embedding is clunky/not always handled well. Works Cited page contains consistent errors.Writer’s voice is off key for the assignment, either too formal and rigid, too informal, or uncertain. | Approaching Expectations |
| D | Title is a restatement of the title of the work being discussed or simple label.Thesis does not make clear the evaluation. Body paragraphs topic sentence doesn’t clearly connect to the thesis and/or includes too much summary.Paragraphs are not clearly centered on a single topic; there is missing info or the details are digressions.Evaluative criteria are used but not well definedReasoning is weak, veers off-topic, or relies too heavily on reporting information.Ethics of evaluation are haphazardly accounted for..Flat, below grade-level vocabulary and/or inappropriate diction.Writing is choppy and erratic with little or no sentence variety.Writing uses few, if any, transitions.MLA citations are not correctly formatted or embedded. Works Cited page contains numerous errors or is missing.Writer’s voice is lifeless, robotic, or indecisive. | Does Not Meet Expectations |
| F | Essays earning an F merely repeat the prompt or are off topic. Assignment is incomplete, incoherent, undeveloped, or does not meet the requirements of the assignment | Off Topic/ Missing Components |