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|  | A | B | C | D |
| **INTRODUCTION:**  \*Opens with a statements that clearly establishes the **topic and context** of the essay.  \***Transitional sentences** lead to the announcement of the claim  \***Claim**: The final sentence makes a clear claim. | Professional and complete; smooth transitions from one idea to the next; claim is specific and reveals complexity of thought. | Movement from general to specific (the claim) is evident; weaker in complexity (transitions, ideas); claim could be more precise | Underdeveloped, in comparison to A and B introductions; transitions are weak or not evident; claim is too general. | The introduction lacks development; the claim is unclear or nonexistent. |
| **BODY:**  \*Opening and closing sentences introduce topics, transition from previous topics, and/or connect topics to the claim.  \*Specific pieces of **evidence** support the claim. | Complete and thorough paragraphs; evidence is introduced and discussed in a mature, sophisticated manner that supports the claim convincingly. | Evidence is clear but the presentation or analysis of the evidence is not as complete as A essays OR weak transitions and organization. | Rudimentary paragraph development; textual evidence is evident but little meaningful analysis of the evidence is demonstrated. | One supporting paragraph; weak idea development; minimal or no textual evidence. |
| **CONCLUSION:**  \***Restate** (reword) the main idea of the claim.  \***Summarize** the main points.  \*End with more **universal statements** that broadens the scope of the discussion. | Mature connection to universal ideas and issues; the last paragraph ends the essay in a convincing fashion. | The conclusion broadens the scope of the discussion but in a less sophisticated fashion than A conclusions; summarized points are too short or too long. | Extension of the ideas leads to statements of the obvious; universal statements are too general; or, the conclusion lacks any necessary element. | The conclusion lacks two of the three necessary elements. |
| **GRAMMAR AND MECHANICS** | Clean and clear – very few errors, if any. | Small errors that do not distract from the flow of the essay. | Significant number or errors OR errors involving subjects that we have reviewed in class. | Little or no attempt made to edit the essay |
| **TONE, STYLE, AND DICTION** | Graceful prose is characterized by mature sentence variety and complexity; tone and style reflects and awareness of the purpose and audience of the specific assignment. | Prose is clear but occasional wordiness or awkward phrasing is noted; tone and style generally reflect and awareness of purpose and audience. | Prose is marked by simple sentence structure; wordiness and awkwardness interferes with the communication of the writer’s ideas; sense of purpose and audience is off. | Prose is unintelligible at times; incorrect sense of purpose and audience. |
| **IDEAS** | Essay demonstrates deep, careful, creative, and original reflection on the topic(s) at hand. | Essay demonstrates careful reflection on the topic(s) at hand. | Analysis is superficial and / or obvious. | Little or no attempt is made to explore the topic. |
| **ADHERENCE TO ASSIGNMENT** | Essay meets all the requirements of the assignment | Essay generally meets the requirements of the assignment, with small omissions. | Essay is missing a major element of the assignment | Essay veers significantly from the assignment |