

Argumentative Essay Rubric				
Categories & Criteria - each worth eleven points	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Thesis	Written with a clear and outstanding thesis.	Written with a clear thesis.	Written with a confusing or misleading thesis.	Missing a thesis.
Transitions	The writer uses effective words throughout the article to make transitions between ideas.	Some of the transitions are weaker, detracting from the writing and organization.	Some sections are too isolated – not linked by transitions.	Writing lacks transitions, leading to a disjointed and confusing reading.
Use and Evaluation of Sources	Utilizes three sources (at least one print source). Sources are reputable.	Utilizes three sources (all are online). Sources aren't quite reputable and/or aren't quite fitting for the topic.	Utilizes two sources. Sources are basically irrelevant and aren't acceptable.	Doesn't use sources.
Audience, Tone, and Rhetorical Appeals	All the reasons are written to convince the appropriate audience. Purpose has been achieved. Tone is consistent and convincing.	Some of the writing would concern or appeal to the intended audience. At times, the focus wanders from the intended audience. Tone is inconsistent at times.	Very little of the article contains reasons that would concern or appeal to the intended audience.	None of the article contains arguments and/or reasons that address the intended audience.
Organization	Arguments are organized logically and coherently.	At times, the argument is not logically organized and/or the evidence doesn't support the claims.	Very little of the essay is well organized. Claims are not supported by evidence.	Arguments are illogically organized and incoherent.
Claims, Warrants, and Support	Writing addresses assumptions, makes at least three smaller claims re: the major argument, and provides support for every claim.	One or more claim is lacking support and the writer doesn't clearly address assumptions.	Writing doesn't address assumptions, makes only two or fewer claims re: the major argument and/or doesn't provide support.	Writing only makes one major claim and doesn't address any assumptions.
Paraphrase, Direct Quotation, and Summary	Writing contains a balanced and successful mix of paraphrase, direct quote, and summary.	Writing only contains two of the three and/or paraphrase and/or summary are done incorrectly.	Writing only contains one of the three or they are done incorrectly.	Writing lacks all three.
In-text Citations and Works Cited Page	Using MLA format, correctly cites all sources used on the works cited page. Incorporates quotes correctly in the essay.	Using MLA format, correctly cites all sources on the works cited page with only a few minor errors. Incorporates quotes correctly in the essay with only a few minor errors.	Incorrectly cites sources on the works cited page and doesn't correctly incorporate quotes in the body of the essay.	Doesn't cite sources used or doesn't use sources.
Mechanics	Uses all correct grammar and spelling throughout. Sentence variety and word choices are outstanding. Doesn't use "I" or first person POV, except in sections of personal narrative.	Uses mostly correct grammar and spelling. Some attempt at variety in words choice/sentence variety. Doesn't use "I" or first person POV, except in sections of personal narrative.	Several grammar and spelling mistakes. Words choices are simple; sentences lack variety. Uses "I" or first person POV sparingly.	Many grammar and spelling mistakes. Word choices are weak and sentence variety is nonexistent. Is written from first person POV.
Style and Syntax	Uses varied sentence length and structure, and has a mature, college-level style.	Attempts to use varied sentence length and structure, and is almost at a mature, college-level style.	Overuses short or long sentences, has similar sentence structure throughout, and has high-school level style.	Lacks appropriate syntax and any attempt at style.