

1. Identifies, summarizes, and appropriately formulates the **issue** (e.g. a question to be answered, hypothesis to be tested, or a problem to be solved).

4 - Mastering	3 - Developing	2 - Growing	1 - Emerging
Clearly identifies and summarizes issue including nuances and details, revealing subsidiary, embedded, or implicit issues.	Identifies and summarizes issue, though some aspects are incorrect or confused. Some nuances or key details missing or glossed over.	Identifies and summarizes issue in a confused or incorrect way. Nuances and key details missing.	Fails to or does not attempt to identify and summarize issue.

2. (merged with 3) Identifies and considers existing **context**, background, theory, or previous work in the field.

4 - Mastering	3 - Developing	2 - Growing	1 - Emerging
Approaches issue with clear sense of scope and context. May consider multiple relevant contexts.	Presents and explores relevant contexts in relation to issue, but with some limitations.	Presents context superficially or connects to issue in a limited way.	Does not connect issue to context, or attempts but fails to do so.

5. Presents, interprets, analyses, and/or assesses appropriate **supporting evidence** (e.g. observations, data, etc.).

4 - Mastering	3 - Developing	2 - Growing	1 - Emerging
Appropriate and salient evidence is thoroughly developed and clearly supports conclusions.	Evidence is appropriate—gaps may exist in relation to conclusions.	Some evidence may be inappropriate or related only loosely to conclusions.	Evidence is lacking, simplistic, inappropriate, or unrelated to the topic.

6. Identifies and assesses **conclusions** (e.g. hypotheses, answers, solutions, interpretations) and further **implications or consequences** (e.g. practical applications, policy implications, relevance to other issues, or future research).

4 - Mastering	3 - Developing	2 - Growing	1 - Emerging
Conclusions are tailored to fit the best available evidence. Grounds conclusions with strong support; qualifies conclusions with acknowledgement of limitations or ambiguities.	Presents conclusions as following from the evidence. Grounds conclusions with clear and appropriate support; may have occasional inconsistencies.	Presents conclusions as relative or only loosely related to evidence. Presents conclusions with weak support.	Fails to present conclusions; or conclusion is simplistic or unrelated to stated evidence. Presents assertions without support.

7. **Communicates** effectively (e.g. clarity and precision, organization, ease with use of voice, disciplinary conventions, stylistic and mechanical conventions).

4 - Mastering	3 - Developing	2 - Growing	1 - Emerging
Language clearly and effectively communicates ideas. Organization is clear and cogent; transitions between ideas enrich presentation. Errors of grammar, syntax, voice, etc. are minimal, even when using complex structures. Style is consistent, sophisticated, and appropriate. Consistent use of appropriate format.	In general, language does not interfere with communication. Basic organization is clear; transitions connect most ideas, although some may be rote. Errors are not overly distracting or frequent, or attempts at complex structures lead to occasional errors. Style is generally consistent and appropriate; may be occasional lapses. Format is appropriate although at times inconsistent.	Language occasionally interferes with communication. Basic organization is apparent; some transitions connect ideas, but some gaps or confusions. Some errors are repeated or distracting; some copy-editing errors should be caught by proofreading. Some attempt at appropriate style, but with major lapses or inconsistencies. Format is flawed or occasionally distracting.	In many places, language (word choice) obscures meaning. Work is unfocused and poorly organized; lacks logical connection of ideas. Grammar, syntax, voice or other errors are repeated, frequent, and distracting, or show lack of proofreading. Style is simplistic, inconsistent, or inappropriate. Format is absent, incorrect, or distracting.