

Evaluating Your Paper

Most of us feel entitled to pass judgment on a piece of writing, but can we justify our assessments? The grid below helps you isolate and weigh the different elements in academic writing so that you make more objective, consistent judgments. You can use it to evaluate your own writing as well as that of your peers. Use the questions in each box to help you decide how successful the writing is in each of five areas: Development, Organization, Voice, Mechanics, and Responsiveness. The scoring scale is 1-5, with 5 being the highest score. Use the Comments box to note why you gave the score you did. Ideally, you should use this grid as a way to think through the qualities of the paper and not as a means to grade the paper. It is more important to learn to see the strengths and weaknesses in a paper than it is to categorize it with a number or grade.

	Scores					Comments
	5	4	3	2	1	
I. Development (Ideas) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there a thesis statement? ▪ Is there compelling evidence or support? ▪ Are the arguments logical? ▪ Is the information accurate? 						
II. Organization (Order) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the organization obvious? ▪ Is the focus consistent? ▪ Are the ideas linked to one another? ▪ Is the paragraphing justifiable? 						
III. Voice (Language) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the tone appropriate? ▪ Is the writer's word choice precise? ▪ Are the sentences fluent? 						
IV. Mechanics (Conventions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are there many and different errors in grammar? ▪ Is the punctuation usually correct? ▪ Is the spelling usually correct? 						
V. Responsiveness (Relevance) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the paper address the assignment? ▪ Did the student follow directions? 						