



### Level 10

If a student desires to get an “A,” we feel he should know just how to do so! Feel more than free to share the grading rubric with your student as a self-proofing guide.

There are various point-to-grade schemes. Here’s the one that we recommend:  
A+ 100-98 pts.  
A 97-94 pts.  
A- 93-90 pts.  
B+ 89-88 pts.  
B 87-84 pts.  
B- 83-80 pts.  
C+ 79-78 pts.  
C 77-74 pts.  
C- 73-70 pts.  
D+ 69-68 pts.  
D 67-64 pts.  
D- 63-60 pts.  
F below 60 pts.

If you alter the number of bullets checked in any row, the lost point system will not work correctly, but you may still reach a grade based on the descriptions under “Grading the Essay.”

# Grading Essays of Argumentation

A student should do a self-evaluation before submitting his work. Prior to handing in his draft, have him complete a proofing sheet (just a checklist of those skills to which you think he can be held accountable). He can use the rubric in this document as his proofing sheet, or you can give him a bulleted list that includes more detail for sentence and paragraph proofing, if you so desire.

In addition to persuasive essay requirements, we suggest the following criteria for argumentative essays:

- \* There is a clear thesis, and the thesis paragraph indicates the general positions on each side of the argument.
- \* The essay defines its terms and has a clear structure. Remember that the body paragraphs of an argumentative essay may be organized in one of two ways: 1) in two paragraphs, one for each side of the argument, or 2) in three paragraphs, with one subordinate category per paragraph.
- \* The author addresses both sides of the argument, stating in his conclusion why he holds his position.

## Grading the Essay

- \* “A” papers will have all of the above features almost completely correct.
- \* “B” papers are graded down because of issues with one or two significant aspects. In a grading rubric, a “B” paper would have the majority of checks fall into the “Good” column.
- \* “C” papers indicate some real issues, and these can be with any of the rows of the rubric where at least half of the check marks fall into the “Fair” column.
- \* “D” work is seriously flawed for any number of reasons. There are usually at least two of three main elements missing structurally, or two of three body paragraphs are seriously flawed, or perhaps there simply is no introductory or concluding paragraph at all. Usually, paragraphing issues alone will not cause a paper to be graded this low. The paper will also have problems with neatness, lateness, grammar and punctuation, or content. In terms of the rubric, usually most of your check marks wind up in the “Fair” to “Poor” columns.
- \* “F” work is failing. As with “D’s,” “F’s” are not usually given for failure in just one area, like paragraphing. Rather, it’s the result of a combination of failures that give the student an overall failing grade. In the rubric, almost all check marks would fall into the “Poor” column.

## Numerical Grades

To reach a grade, work down the chart, checking off elements as they appear on your student’s draft.

- \* You will subtract points for every check mark that does not fall in the “Excellent” column. Below is a chart that shows you how many points to subtract for each checked bullet point in a particular box. We are calling these “lost points.”

|               | Poor          | Fair          | Good          | Excellent     |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Structure     | -5 per bullet | -4 per bullet | -3 per bullet | -0 per bullet |
| Content       | -5 per bullet | -4 per bullet | -2 per bullet | -0 per bullet |
| Writing Style | -3 per bullet | -2 per bullet | -1 per bullet | -0 per bullet |
| Mechanics     | -3 per bullet | -2 per bullet | -1 per bullet | -0 per bullet |

- \* Add the total number of lost points and write the sum in the space at the bottom of the page. To obtain the final grade for the paper, subtract the total lost points from 200 and divide by 2.
- \* Remember that grading is somewhat subjective. This rubric is meant merely to be a tool to help you evaluate your student’s work, so please adjust it if you need to.



# Essay of Argumentation

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

|   | Poor  | Fair   | Good  | Excellent   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Structure</b><br>(Only check 4 total bullets in this row.)<br><b>Comments:</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> No clear thesis.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Arguments and topics unclear and mixed; no apparent organization.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Facts not arranged logically in paragraphs.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Did not follow assignment properly.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Thesis not well defined.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Paragraphs only loosely structured by argument or topics; organization is unclear.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Some facts are not arranged logically in paragraphs.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Didn't follow assignment well.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Thesis could be better defined or presented earlier.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Paragraphs mostly structured by argument or topics, but organization lacks clarity.<br><input type="checkbox"/> A few key facts are not logically placed.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Some variance from assignment instructions.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear thesis.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Paragraphs clearly structured by each side of the argument or by 3 subordinate topics.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Facts arranged clearly and logically under strong topic sentences.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Executed assignment exactly as directed.   |
| <b>Content</b><br>(Only check 6 total bullets in this row.)<br><b>Comments:</b>       | <input type="checkbox"/> Thesis is insupportable or wrong.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Terms not defined.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Very few facts or arguments presented.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Poor representation of required research.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Too much "setting" and/or opinions unsupported by facts.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Fails to represent both sides accurately or at all; no argument made for own position.            | <input type="checkbox"/> Thesis is not supported by facts.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Terms not well defined.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Weak on facts & arguments; some are present, but not enough to prove the thesis.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient research.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Too opinionative w/o fact backup.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Misrepresents parts of either side of argument; little explanation made for own position. | <input type="checkbox"/> Good thesis, but not the best choice of supportive categories or facts.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Terms could be defined better or earlier.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Many good facts & arguments, but some key ones left out.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Adequate research, but not outstanding.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Too opinionative at times; insufficient facts.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Adequately presents both sides of argument; argues for own position. | <input type="checkbox"/> Strong thesis, amply supported by three strong categories.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Terms clearly defined.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Many strong, specific facts & arguments support the paragraphs.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Excellent research is evident throughout.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Paper rests on facts, not opinions alone.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Clearly & accurately gives both sides; shows why student's position is stronger. |
| <b>Writing Style</b><br>(Only check 6 total bullets in this row.)<br><b>Comments:</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor writing.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Tone ungracious; manipulative language.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Sentences are structurally inadequate. See marked paper.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Lacks flow of style; wooden and/or awkward statements.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Tense often changes inappropriately, subjects & verbs disagree, missing antecedents.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Much informal language, wrongly used. | <input type="checkbox"/> Overall writing is disappointing.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Tone ungracious & persuasive language used irresponsibly at times.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Some good sentences; some need work.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Poor transitions; can't follow argument.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Style errors: wrong tense changes, missing antecedents.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Some informal language, wrongly used.              | <input type="checkbox"/> Good, basic writing.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Good overall tone & persuasive language.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Sentences lack excellent syntax. See paper.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Lacks excellent flow—transition words, ordering of phrases, and subordinate clauses.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Style causes some confusion: tense changes, missing antecedents.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Instances of inappropriately informal language.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent writing.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Gracious tone & excellent persuasive language.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Great sentence structure throughout.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Excellent transitions and flow of paper.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Good tense use, subject/verb agreement, and clear antecedents throughout.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Formal language appropriate to the essay is used throughout.                                 |
| <b>Mechanics</b><br>(Only check 5 total bullets in this row.)<br><b>Comments:</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> Messy paper: inattention to neatness or improper formatting.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Punctuation/capitalization well below ability.<br><input type="checkbox"/> No citations.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Spelling well below ability.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Spent inadequate time on assignment.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Not as neat as the student is capable of.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Punctuation/capitalization below ability.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Many citation errors.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Spelling below ability.<br><input type="checkbox"/> General aspect of paper is "a rush job"; not well done.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Neat, but some formatting improvement is called for.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Several errors in punctuation/capitalization.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Footnote/citation errors.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Spelling errors.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Generally hurried; not as good as could be.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Very neat, clean copy, properly formatted.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Almost perfect punctuation/capitalization.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Almost all citations are proper.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Spelling is done well.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Careful work, excellently done.  |

\_\_\_\_\_ Total lost points

To obtain final grade, subtract total lost points from 200 and divide by 2.