

Schamber and Mahoney developed the following prompts designed to foster deep reflection and serve as the starting point for instructors to develop their own prompts for an assignment.

Prompts for General Education Written Communication Outcomes

1. *Demonstrate an understanding of writing and editing as a process, from beginning thoughts, through drafts, to finished product.*

For drafts. What are the strengths of your first draft? As a result of your first draft, what changes do you anticipate are needed for your next draft? What is most challenging about the writing and editing process in this first draft of your paper? What steps are needed for you to overcome these challenges for your next draft? In what ways did your outline help you develop your first draft?

For finished products. What are you most proud of in the final copy of your paper, and how did you accomplish that? Describe the writing and editing process that you used from your early drafts to your final paper. What is most challenging for you about the writing and editing process? What have you learned about the writing and editing process as a result of this paper? How has this assignment changed your understanding of the writing and editing process?

2. *Demonstrate writing that is clear, organized, developed, and thoughtful and that matches style to occasion and audience.*

For a public audience. Who is your audience? What are their interests, values, and motivations concerning your topic? What knowledge do they possess about your topic? How did your understanding of your audience influence your approach to your topic?

What ideas in your paper are expressed clearly? What ideas in your paper were difficult for you to communicate or explain in writing? What is the overarching conclusion that you want your audience to draw from your paper?

What is the organizing structure of your paper? Why did you do it this way? List the main points or arguments made in your paper. Why did you sequence them the way that you did? Is there another way that you might sequence your ideas to clarify the audience's understanding of your argument?

What idea in your paper is most strongly developed? How did you come to the conclusion that this idea is well developed? What principles of writing underlie the development of this idea? How might you use these principles to improve your weaker ideas?

What idea in your paper needs more development? In what ways could you improve this idea? What ideas presented in your paper are not essential for your argument?

3. *Demonstrate the use of a range of resources to research and articulate a position in an academic paper.*

Range. Does your research include a sufficient variety of types of information for your assignment, such as magazines versus journals, academic books, and/or websites? Is there too much emphasis on a single type of source? What primary sources did you use in your paper? Secondary sources?

Depth. Given your assignment, is the depth of your research sufficient to adequately cover your topic from both an historical and/or contemporary point of view? Are the publication dates of your information sources appropriate to the assignment?

Credibility. Is your information drawn from credible sources? How did you test the credibility of your sources? Are the authors of your information prominent in the field? How did you verify their credibility as a source? Collectively, do the authors of your information present a range of viewpoints?

Relevance. Explain why the resources (information or empirical data) you used for your research are relevant for your research assignment. Find one resource used in your paper that could be eliminated without effecting your conclusions.

