

Department of Writing

Programs in academic, creative, and professional writing



[Home Page](#)
[Faculty](#)
[Writing Major](#)
[Writing Minor](#)
[Course Descriptions](#)
[Poetry Night!](#)
[Writing Related Programs](#)
[First-Year Writing](#)

Dan Royer, Chair
Lake Ontario Hall 326
331-3488

Department of Writing
Lake Ontario Hall
Grand Valley State University
Campus Drive
Allendale, MI 49401-9403
616-331-3411

GRADING ABSTRACTS

Characteristics of A papers

Content

- The material challenges the intelligence and sophistication of a college-level audience.
- A single focus is emphasized through the entire paper.
- The writer appeals effectively to the intended audience.
- The focus is consistently developed with significant and interesting details, examples, and discussion.
- Relevant outside sources are clearly introduced and integrated into the surrounding discussion.

Organization

- The focus of the paper is clearly emphasized.
- The overall pattern is artfully conceived.
- The focus is developed through a sequence of related paragraphs.
- Paragraphs are purposefully organized and substantially developed with supporting evidence or detailed examples.
- The opening is inviting, challenging, and appropriate.
- Transitions between and within paragraphs are explicit, clear, and purposeful.

Style

- Sentence structure varies according to the content, purpose and audience.
- The sentences are clear, logical, and enjoyable to read.
- Word choice is precise, interesting, and appropriate to the writing task.
- The language is mature and idiomatic.

[A Paper](#)[B Paper](#)[C Paper](#)[D Paper](#)

- The writer's tone complements the paper's purpose and suits the audience.

Mechanics

- Format is appropriate.
- References to outside sources are cited and documented according to the appropriate style sheet.
- Problems in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or usage do not interfere with communication.

Characteristics of B Papers

Content

- The material is thoughtful and engaging.
- A single focus runs through the entire paper.
- The writer clearly acknowledges the expectations of the audience.
- The focus is developed with appropriate details, examples, and discussions.
- Outside sources are used clearly and purposefully.

Organization

The focus is clearly identifiable.

The overall pattern is clear and sensible.

The focus is developed through a sequence of related paragraphs.

Paragraphs are clearly organized, but some may lack richness of detail or evidence.

The opening is appropriate to the focus.

Transitions between and within paragraphs advance the writer's ideas.

Style

Sentences are varied in structure, only occasionally choppy or repetitive.

Sentences are generally clear, logical, and readable.

Writer demonstrates general control over vocabulary appropriate to the writing task.

The language is idiomatic.

The tone is consistent and appropriate to the writer's purpose and audience.

Mechanics

Format is appropriate.

References to outside sources are generally cited and documented according to the appropriate style sheet.

Problems in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or usage rarely interfere with communication.

Characteristics of C Papers

Content

The material is reasonable, but may not fully engage the abilities of the audience.

A single focus runs through the paper, although parts may wander from the central idea.

The writer appears to present ideas and descriptions with an audience in mind.

The focus is generally developed with details, examples, and discussions.

Outside sources are generally relevant, although not always clearly introduced or integrated into the discussion.

Organization

The paper has an identifiable focus.

The writer establishes an overall pattern for the paper to follow.

The focus is generally developed throughout the paper, although some paragraphs may appear out of sequence or slightly off-track.

Paragraphs tend to lack richness of evidence or detailed examples.

The opening generally matches the topic and focus.

Transitions are evident, but may be abrupt or mechanical.

Style

Sentences tend to be basic, choppy, or structurally repetitive.

Sentences are generally readable, but ideas may be hard to follow from one part of the paper to the next.

Although most words appear to be well-chosen, some may not be as precise or apt as they could be.

Occasional lapses from standard idiom occur.

The tone, though generally consistent, at times appears inappropriate to the writer's purpose and audience.

Mechanics

Format is generally appropriate.

References to outside sources are generally cited and documented, but not always in the appropriate style.

Problems in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or usage occasionally interfere with communication and damage the writer's credibility.

[A Papers] [B Papers] [C Papers] [D Papers]

Characteristics of D Papers

Content

The material does not fully engage the abilities of the audience.

No single focus runs through the entire paper.

The writer doesn't appear to have the needs of an audience in mind.

Ideas are stated, but not developed with details, examples, and discussions.

Outside sources, if used at all, are not clearly introduced or integrated.

Organization

The paper's focus is overly general, missing, or unclear.

The writer hasn't established a clear pattern for the paper to follow.

Attempt at development is evident but unsuccessful; paragraphs frequently seem unrelated or repetitive.

Paragraphs are poorly constructed and contain little supporting detail.

The opening is overly general, missing, or misleading.

Transitions are weak, ineffective, or missing.

Style

Sentences are frequently basic, choppy, or repetitive.

Sentence problems impede effective communication.

The reader must reread many sentences in order to comprehend them.

The writer displays inadequate control of diction; word-choice problems are frequent.

There are many problems with standard idiom.

The tone frequently appears inappropriate to the writer's purpose and audience.

Mechanics

Format is not always appropriate.

References to outside sources are not clearly cited; documentation style is generally inappropriate.

Many errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and usage impede communication and undercut the writer's credibility.

Copyright © 1995 - 2006 Grand Valley State University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution