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| **Criteria** | **Below Standard** | **Approaching Standard** | **Meeting Standard** | **Exceeding Standard** |
| **Focus & Structure** | Essay does not maintain a clear and logical organization. | Essay maintains a mostly clear and logical organization. | Essay maintains a clear, relevant, and logical organization. | Essay maintains a clear, relevant, and logical organization. Evidence works together to build upon and form an argument. |
| **Introduction** | Introductory section contains some context and an unclear thesis statement. | Introductory section provides an opening, context and a thesis statement. | Introductory section provides a strong opening, adequate context and a clear thesis statement. | Introductory section provides a strong opening, context and a thesis statement. The thesis includes details that preview the rest of the essay. |
| **Evidence** | Student supports their thesisstatement with fewclear and relevant examples and no quotes. Does not provide adequate counterclaim. | Student supports their thesis statement with some clear and relevant examples from credible sources using quotes. Evidence attempts toacknowledge and refute alternate or opposing points of view but does so unclearly. | Student supports theirthesis statement with multiple clear and relevant examples from credible sources using quotes. Evidence acknowledges andRefutes alternate or opposing points of view. | Student supports their thesis statement with multiple clear and relevant examples from credible sources using quotes. Evidence acknowledgesand refutes alternate or opposing points of view using quotes. |
| **Conclusion** | Essay provides mostly a summary and offers noexplanation of main ideas. | Essay provides mostly summary but offers some explanation of main ideas. | Essay provides a concluding statement that summarizes the major points, and explains their significance in a somewhat logical manner. | Essay provides a concluding statement that summarizes the major points, and explains their significance in a logical manner. |
| **Language Choice & Conventions** | Rarely uses strongwords, transitional phrases and complex sentences.Grammatical conventions arerarely followed | Sometimes usesstrong words, transitional phrases and complex sentences. Grammaticalconventions are sometimesfollowed. | Frequently uses strongwords, transitional phrases and complex sentences. Grammatical conventions areusually followed.  | Uses strong words,transitional phrases and complex sentences throughout. Grammaticalconventions are followedsuccessfully. |