

Documented Essay – Grading Rubric
Expository Writing

Name _____

		Excellent (3)	Satisfactory (2)	Needs Improvement (1)
C O N T E N T	Thesis	The writer creates a strong thesis that clearly addresses the topic.	The writer demonstrates some insight into the topic. The thesis is predictable.	The paper displays confusion, neglects important aspects, lacks focus, or displays simplistic thinking.
	Supporting Detail	Uses significant detail to support thesis; essay contains significant main ideas that support the thesis	Uses some details or examples, but could be extended to show more understanding and/or support	Lacks concrete, relevant details or quotes that support thesis; provides simplistic generalizations; unclear
A N D	Commentary/Analysis	Original commentary analyzes and interprets details, quotes, and examples, showing how they relate to the thesis	Explains significance of details, but analysis could be expanded to show stronger connection to the thesis	Commentary is lacking, summarizing instead; shows no clear connection of details to thesis
	Use of Quotes	Uses 4 quotes that support the thesis; introduces quotes correctly; explains significance of quotes	Uses 4 quotes; commentary on quotes is adequate but could be more in depth	Uses fewer than 4 quotes OR quotes do not support topic; fails to introduce quotes or formats incorrectly
I Z	Works Cited/MLA format	Works Cited and formatting adhere to MLA guide	There may be a few errors in formatting	Paper and/or works cited page is not formatted according to MLA guide
	Organization	Has clear organization; body paragraphs relate back to thesis; parts flow seamlessly	Has adequate organization; paragraphs have all the key parts	Weak organization makes paper hard to follow; body paragraphs need clearer relation to thesis
O N	Introduction/Conclusion	Has an introduction that grabs reader's attention; has a conclusion that provokes further thought	Has introduction, but does not draw the reader in; has a conclusion, but it may not tie up loose ends	Introduction and/or conclusion is simplistic; could be clearer or more engaging OR lacks an introduction and/or conclusion
	Language	Language is natural and captures the writer's "voice"	Language is adequate, but does not reflect voice	Language is formulaic; may contain passive voice and/or 2 nd person "you"
Y L E	Word Choice	Striking, vivid words; strong use of action verbs	Some use of action verbs and strong words; lapses into "to be" verbs	Includes wordy expressions, repetition of the verbs "is" and "has"
	Sentence Variety	Shows mastery over a variety of sentence openers and structures and uses them appropriately	Contains some varied sentence structure; most sentences follow subject-verb pattern	Does not contain much sentence variety
	Grammar	Has no Big 5 errors or other grammar errors; uses present tense to discuss literature; proofreading is apparent	Grammar errors do not disrupt the flow of the paper; some proofreading is apparent	1 or more Big 5 errors; fails to use present tense to discuss literature; grammar errors interfere with meaning