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| **Element** | **Advanced (A)** | **Proficient (B)** | **Basic (C)** | **Below Basic (D)** |
| **THESIS & PURPOSE** | Clearly identifiable and focused throughout paper | Thesis and/or purpose may wander a little but are focused throughout the majority of the paper | Thesis and/or purpose are identifiable but may not be focused throughout entire paper | Not identifiable and/or focused |
| **SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT** | Provides specific evidence; all evidence is completely relevant to thesis/purpose | Evidence is relevant and mostly specific; evidence is mostly explained and connected to thesis and purpose | Includes evidence, but evidence may not be completely relevant or explained fully | Lack of evidence and/or support for thesis and purpose |
| **ORGANIZATION** | Original and effective introduction and conclusion; structure enhances thesis and purpose; key transitional words and phrases used effectively | Introduction and conclusion are sufficient; logical progression of ideas; transitions are used appropriately | Introduction and conclusion are simplistic; essay is somewhat disorganized and difficult to follow; transitions are used ineffectively or incorrectly | Introduction and/or conclusion are severely lacking; no recognized organizational pattern used; transitions are non-existent |
| **LANGUAGE** | Chooses a tone and level of formality appropriate for audience, purpose, and situation; uses content-specific vocabulary effectively; utilizes a wide variety of sentence structures | Chooses a tone and level of formality acceptable for audience, purpose, and situation; mostly uses content-specific vocabulary; uses a variety of correct sentence structures | Shifts in tone and/or level of formality; minimal use of content-specific vocabulary; uses a minimal variety of sentence structures | Inappropriate tone and/or level of formality; misuses or misinterprets vocabulary; no variation in sentence structure |
| **MECHANICS** | Few GPS errors that do not distract reader; no errors in citations or formatting | Some GPS errors that may distract reader but do not hinder understanding; minor errors in citations or formatting | Some GPS errors that distract the reader and may hinder understanding; major errors in citations or formatting | Numerous errors that distract the reader and/or hinder understanding; does not follow formal citations or formatting |