The principal characteristic of the "5" writing is its rich content. The information is presented in such a way that the reader feels significantly taught by the author. The writer sustains a thoughtful, analytic argument, looking at ideas from more than one point of view, asking difficult questions and following them up with analysis. Sometimes a paper achieves a “5” because a student develops a thoughtful and well-defined interpretive approach and an awareness of his or her own position in relation to the positions in the assigned readings.

It is also marked by stylistic finesse: the title and opening paragraph are engaging; the transitions are substantive rather than superficial; the phrasing is tight, fresh, and highly specific; the sentence structure is varied; and the tone contributes to the meaning of the paper. Sentence-level error must be minimal.

Often a “5” paper has one or two "4" or even "3" moments, but they do not significantly detract from the overall force of the piece.

Name, (class and date optionally) are on top of document, if there are more than one author, names are in alphabetical order by last name.

Finally, the "5" paper leaves the reader with a sense of having read—and being eager to reread—a complete, satisfying piece of work.

In summary, the “5” work is on time, close to the word count designated by the instructions, and with minimal grammatical errors the topic chosen shows that the author has done their research about the topic. In the body the author defends, answers all questions asked and supports their topic chosen with citing references or substantial facts so that the reader is left with very little questions as to where the author stands on the issue. APA format is followed and all citations are correctly listed where needed.

---

The "4" paper is significantly more than competent. It delivers substantial information—substantial in both quality and interest. The writing does everything a 3 writing does but offers a sustained and meaningful structure and a project that is more complex than what one finds in a 3-range writing.
The writing might tackle a significant contradiction, problem, or moment of connection and develop it in a sustained way.

The writing shows the student beginning to take interpretive risks, responding to the assignment and to the readings in thoughtful and distinctive ways.

The use of words in the "4" writing is more precise and concise than in the "3" writing.

Name, (class and date optionally) are on top of document, if there are more than one author, names are in alphabetical order by last name.

The writing demonstrates coherence in its overall presentation: the relationships between the writing's parts are clear. The transitions between paragraphs are for the most part smooth, and the sentence structure is skillfully varied.

4 papers may include "3" moments in otherwise well-reasoned and well-developed analyses.

Sentence-level error must be minimal. Sentence structure is varied, with competent use of subordination. APA format is followed and all citations are correctly listed where needed.

3

The "3" writing is competent: it meets the assignment, has few mechanical errors, and is reasonably well organized and developed. 3 papers demonstrate the student's ability to work with more than one reading and to create meaningful connections between assigned readings.

3 writings comment on and use the ideas in the readings rather than just summarizing them.

3 writings often achieve a passing grade by demonstrating one outstanding or two significant moments of analysis in an otherwise flawed or undistinguished performance.

3 writings often create coherent relationships between paragraphs even if they have not developed a larger organizational structure.
In a 3 writing, there is evidence of an emerging project—something the student wants the writing to accomplish but nothing more.

A 3 writing has sentence-level errors under control. Although errors may appear on each page, they do not significantly impede the meaning of the writing. Sentence structure is somewhat varied and there is some use of subordination. There are fewer than three of the following kinds of errors per page: mixed construction, fragments, verb endings. APA format is followed and some citations are correctly listed where needed.

2

This paper resembles a rough draft. It may reveal some organization, but what is presented is neither clear nor effective. It may contain the germ of some good ideas, but these are not well developed or unified.

A 2 writing may do one thing really well and another not at all—for instance, it may be full of interesting ideas but entirely without formal control. Or it may be very correct and neat but present no original ideas at all.

A 2 writing may overgeneralize about the reading or depend largely on undirected summary. Or it may depend on uncritical personal response in order to avoid dealing with the reading directly.

It is unable to make a meaningful connection between the reading. It may also show no effort from the reader to do any reading outside of the class to understand how to make a connection or understand the concept of the writing. Alternatively, these writings sometimes attempt a series of connections that do not make much sense.

A 2 writing often has a significant pattern of sentence-level error, especially with sentence boundaries, verbs, and mixed construction. APA format is followed and some citations are correctly listed where needed.

Name, (class and date optionally) are on top of document, if there are more than one author, names are in alphabetical order by last name.
An 0-1 writing does not engage with the assigned readings and does not work effectively.

An 0-1 writing demonstrates a serious lack of basic reading comprehension or an inability to grasp the outline of an author's argument.

It has no coherent sense of project, little sense of the connections between paragraphs, and/or no organizational structure.

It has significant sentence-level error that makes the writing difficult to follow.

A writing should not pass if the following kinds of errors occur more than once or twice a page: fragments, mixed constructions, incorrect verb endings.

Name is missing, or if multiple names, they are not listed in alphabetical order.

A writing shall not pass if submitted past the due date.