

Rubric "Quick Note" Explanations for ENGL 1302 Persuasive Essay

Context and Purpose:

Is aware that he/she is writing a persuasive paper and the purpose is to persuade an audience.

Understands that a larger conversation exists about the topic or argument.

Appeals to, and seems appropriate to, a general audience of college student peers OR to the specific audience the student names in the essay.

Mastery, for our purpose, means that the student is saying sensible things about the topic they have chosen.

Structure and Organization:

Readers can follow the ideas being presented to them.

No set or predetermined arrangement, but a thesis should provide a road map for where the essay will go.

Reader expectation for an essay means that when attentively reading the essay, the reader can follow the writer's thoughts. Some sophisticated and complex essays require more work from the reader. However, the reader shouldn't be working to make sense of the essay.

Content Development:

Content, for our purpose, means that the first year writer has presented reasons to support the thesis and uses his/her sources and evidence to develop the ideas or support them.

There should be several reasons or ideas given in support of the thesis rather than one idea being revisited throughout the essay.

Sources and Evidence:

Sources and evidence do not have to come from peer reviewed, scholarly journals, or from statistical data reports. These first year writers may use popular sources (TIME, NEWSWEEK, NY TIMES or other periodicals); they may use video or interviews; they may use personal anecdotes that help explain the issue, support the thesis, or appeal to the emotions of audience.

Control of Syntax and Mechanics:

Students' use of written language is clear, natural, and easy to read.

More sophisticated control of language and syntax would demonstrate this sophistication with apt and advanced vocabulary. However, "putting on" language that seems uncomfortable to the reader is not a sophisticated use of language no matter how many SAT words the student chooses to use! CONTROL is important. There is nothing wrong with simple, straightforward language that clearly gets the points across to the reader!

One or two "errors" don't indicate lack of control over language and syntax.