6-Point
Rubric for Expository Writing

Use this rubric to guide and assess your expository writing. Refer to it to improve your writing using the six traits.

Ideas

6  The topic, thesis, and details make the essay unforgettable.
5  The essay is informative with a clear thesis and specific details.
4  The essay is informative with a clear thesis. More specific details are needed.
3  The thesis of the essay should be clearer, and more specific details are needed.
2  The topic should be narrowed or expanded. Many more specific details are needed.
1  The writer should select a new topic.

Organization

6  The organization and transitions make the essay crystal clear and compelling.
5  The beginning interests the reader. The middle supports the focus. The ending works well. Transitions are used.
4  The essay is divided into a beginning, a middle, and an ending. Some transitions are used.
3  The beginning or ending is weak. The middle needs a paragraph for each main point. More transitions are needed.
2  The beginning, middle, and ending all run together. Paragraph breaks and transitions are needed.
1  The essay should be reorganized.

Voice

6  The writer’s voice has the confident, knowledgeable sound of a professional writer.
5  The writer’s voice sounds knowledgeable and confident. It fits the audience.
4  The writer’s voice sounds knowledgeable most of the time and fits the audience.
3  The writer sometimes sounds unsure, and the voice needs to better fit the audience.
2  The writer sounds unsure. The voice needs to fit the audience.
1  The writer needs to learn about voice.

Word Choice
The word choice is precise, with just the right nouns, verbs, and modifiers.
Specific nouns and action verbs make the essay clear and informative.
Some nouns and verbs could be more specific.
Too many general words are used. Specific nouns and verbs are needed.
General or missing words make this essay difficult to understand.
The writer needs help finding specific words.

Sentence Fluency
The sentences have flair and flavor, and the reader will enjoy them.
The sentences read smoothly.
Most of the sentences read smoothly, but some are short and choppy.
Many short, choppy sentences need to be rewritten to make the essay read smoothly.
Many sentences are choppy or incomplete and need to be rewritten.
Most sentences need to be rewritten.

Conventions
The essay is error free.
The essay has a few minor errors in punctuation, spelling, or grammar.
The essay has some errors in punctuation, spelling, or grammar.
Several errors confuse the reader.
Many errors make the essay difficult to read.
Help is needed to make corrections.