

CLAQWA Online:

Building Your Thinking and Writing Skills



Cross-Disciplinary

Examples are provided for each trait at all five levels. When preparing to respond to an assignment, review levels 4 or 5 of each trait for examples of quality responses. Comments explaining strengths and weaknesses are also provided at each level.

If an instructor has noted a weakness in a particular trait, go to the level indicated by the instructor and review the example. Pay particular attention to the "pop-up" comments, where problems are explained and suggestions are provided for improvement. Next, go to higher levels to see improved writing examples and comments for that trait.

CLAQWA Analytic Scale Traits:

Assignment Parameters	Organization and Development: Structural Integrity	Organization & Development: Reasoning & Development of Ideas	Language: Contextual & Audience Appropriateness	Observation of Standard Edited English: Grammar and Mechanics
1. Assignment Requirements	5. Opening	9. Reasoning	12. Word Choice	16. Grammar and Mechanics
2. Main Idea	6. Coherence Devices	10. Quality of Details	13. Comprehensibility	
3. Audience	7. Paragraph Construction	11. Quantity of Details	14. Sentence Construction	
4. Purpose	8. Closing		15. Point of View	

ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS

Level	Trait 1: Assignment Requirements
5	The writer addresses and develops each aspect of the assignment. (Quality is judged through other categories.)
4	The writer addresses each aspect of the assignment.

- 3 The writer addresses the appropriate topic and partially fulfills assignment requirements.
- 2 The writer addresses the appropriate topic, but omits most or all of the assignment requirements.
- 1 The writer is off topic or vaguely addresses the topic.

Level **Trait 2: Main Idea**

- 5 The paper clearly has and maintains a main idea throughout.
- 4 The main idea is clear, although a rare extraneous element is introduced.
- 3 The paper has a main idea, but additional unrelated ideas distract the reader.
- 2 The main idea is not maintained or it is unclear.
- 1 The paper lacks a main idea or appears to reflect the writer's "free association."

Level **Trait 3: Audience**

- 5 The writer exhibits a keen awareness of the audience's needs and expectations.
- 4 The writer exhibits an awareness of the audience's needs and expectations.
- 3 The writer exhibits reader awareness and addresses the appropriate audience throughout the text, although in some sections the audience is ambiguous.
- 2 The writer shows a lack of reader awareness by addressing one or more inappropriate audiences.
- 1 The writer shifts between multiple and/or inappropriate audiences because of a lack of reader awareness.

Level **Trait 4: Purpose**

- 5 The elements of the paper clearly contribute to the writer's purpose, which is obvious, specific, maintained, and appropriate for the assignment.
- 4 The writer's purpose is present, appropriate for the assignment, and maintained throughout.
- 3 The writer's purpose is present and appropriate for the assignment, but elements may not clearly contribute to the purpose.
- 2 The writer presents multiple purposes or the purpose is inappropriate for the assignment.
- 1 The writer's purpose is not evident.

ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT: STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY

Level **Trait 5: Opening**

- 5 The writer uses the opening to introduce the main idea, capture the reader's attention, and prepare the reader for the body of the paper.
- 4 The writer uses the opening to introduce the main idea and prepares the reader for the body of the paper.
- 3 The writer uses the opening to identify the main idea, but does not prepare the reader for the body of the paper.
- 2 The main idea is not clear from the opening.
- 1 The opening is absent or is unrelated to the main idea.

Level **Trait 6: Coherence Devices**

- 5 Transitional words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs (coherence devices) smoothly connect the paper's elements, ideas and/or details, allowing the reader to follow the writer's points effortlessly.
- 4 Coherence devices are rarely missing and do not impact the reader's understanding.
- 3 Coherence devices appear throughout the paper, but additional and appropriate connectors would enhance the flow.
- 2 Coherence devices are attempted but are ineffective.
- 1 Coherence devices are absent or inappropriate.

Level **Trait 7: Paragraph Construction**

- 5 Each paragraph is unified around a topic that relates to the main idea. All paragraphs support the main idea and are ordered logically.
- 4 Paragraphs support the main idea and are ordered logically, but an occasional paragraph may not be unified around a single topic.
- 3 Paragraphs exist but some may be misplaced, include more than one topic, or be unrelated to the main idea.
- 2 Paragraph breaks are attempted but are illogical and misplaced. Topics may also be unrelated to the main idea.
- 1 There are no paragraph breaks. Topics may be unrelated to the main idea and presented illogically.

Level **Trait 8: Closing**

- 5 Closing synthesizes the elements, supports the main idea, and finalizes the paper.
- 4 Closing summarizes the elements, supports the main idea, and finalizes the paper.
- 3 Closing summarizes the elements, supports the main idea, may introduce unrelated or new details, but does not finalize the paper.
- 2 Closing presents a few elements which are consistent with the main idea, may introduce unrelated or new ideas, but does not finalize the paper.
- 1 Closing is absent or introduces unrelated ideas.

ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT: REASONING & CONSISTENCY

Level **Trait 9: Reasoning**

- 5 The essay exhibits a logical progression of sophisticated ideas that support the focus of the paper.
- 4 The essay exhibits a logical progression of ideas that support the focus of the paper.
- 3 The progression of ideas is interrupted by rare errors in logic, such as absolutes or contradictions.
- 2 The attempt at a progression of ideas is unsuccessful due to errors in logic, such as absolutes or contradictions.
- 1 The ideas are illogical and appear to reflect the writer's "stream of consciousness."

Level **Trait 10: Quality of Details**

- 5 Details help to develop each element of the text and provide supporting statements, evidence or examples necessary to explain or persuade effectively.
- 4 Details support the elements of the text with sufficient clarity, depth and accuracy.
- 3 Details are related to the elements of the text, but do not support those elements with sufficient clarity, depth and accuracy.
- 2 Details are loosely related to the elements of the text, but are lacking clarity, depth and accuracy.
- 1 Details do not develop the elements of the text.

Level Trait 11: Quantity of Details

- 5 All points are supported by a sufficient number of details.
- 4 Most points are supported by a sufficient number of details.
- 3 Additional details are needed to develop **some** points.
- 2 Additional details are needed to develop **most** points.
- 1 Virtually no details are present.

LANGUAGE: CONTEXTUAL AND AUDIENCE APPROPRIATENESS

Level Trait 12: Word Choice

- 5 Vocabulary reflects a thorough grasp of the language appropriate to the audience. Word choice is precise, creating a vivid image. Metaphors and other such devices may be used to create nuanced meaning.
- 4 Vocabulary reflects a strong grasp of the language appropriate to the audience. Word choice is accurate.
- 3 Vocabulary reflects an inconsistent grasp of the language and may be inaccurate or inappropriate to the audience.
- 2 Vocabulary is typically inaccurate and inappropriate to the audience. Word choice may include vague, non-descriptive, and/or trite expressions.
- 1 Word choice is limited to vague, non-descriptive, and/or trite expressions and may include homonyms, errors, word choice inappropriate to the audience, and "thesaurus writing."

Level Trait 13: Comprehensibility

- 5 All sentences are clear and understandable.
- 4 The sentences are clear and understandable with rare ambiguities.
- 3 Most sentences are understandable but may include ambiguities.
- 2 Many sentences lack clarity and may misuse academic language.
- 1 Most sentences lack clarity and may misuse academic language.

Level Trait 14: Sentence Construction

- 5 Clear and concise sentences vary, with the degree of complexity reflecting the audience and purpose.

- 4 Sentences vary, with the degree of complexity reflecting the audience and purpose.
- 3 Sentence variety is limited but attempts complex structure.
- 2 Complex structure is attempted without success and/or sentence structure is simplistic, but not throughout the text.
- 1 Sentences are simple and repetitive.

Level

Trait 15: Point of View

- 5 Point of view is consistent and appropriate for the purpose and audience.
- 4 Point of view is appropriate for the purpose and audience, and a rare shift returns to the original point of view.
- 3 Point of view shifts occasionally, or may be consistent but inappropriate, for the purpose and/or audience.
- 2 Point of view is attempted, but shifts frequently.
- 1 Point of view is not established, confusing the reader.

GRAMMAR AND MECHANICS: OBSERVATION OF STANDARD EDITED ENGLISH

Level

Trait 16: Grammar and Mechanics

- 5 Sentences are grammatically and mechanically correct.
- 4 Rare grammatical and mechanical errors exist, but do not affect readability.
- 3 A limited variety of grammatical errors exist.
- 2 A variety of grammatical errors appear throughout the paper possibly affecting readability.
- 1 Most sentences exhibit multiple grammatical and mechanical errors, obstructing meaning.

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