

California State University, Chico
General Education Scoring Guide for Writing

Scoring Level	Content	Organization & Argumentation	Sources & Evidence	Grammar & Other Surface Features
3 - Accomplished	In addition to meeting the requirements for a “2,” the writing shows evidence of deep engagement with intellectual material of course/discipline, imagination, and creativity. Few or no errors of fact or interpretation. Writing could be used as a model of how to fulfill the assignment.	In addition to meeting the requirements for a “2,” writing flows smoothly from one idea to another. The reader can easily follow the claims and examples used to support the ideas expressed. The writer’s decisions about focus and organization facilitate reading.	Sources used to support argument are appropriate to the topic being explored, assignment and disciplinary conventions. Citation style clear and consistently applied.	In addition to meeting the requirements for a “2,” the writing is essentially error-free in terms of mechanics and shows considerable evidence of proofreading and editing. Models the style and formatting appropriate to the assignment.
2 - Competent	Content of text fulfills the assignment. Writing demonstrates engagement with intellectual and/or creative material of the course/discipline. Few errors of fact or interpretation.	Sequencing of ideas and transitions makes the writer’s points accessible. Examples are adequately developed and claims supported in most cases. The purpose and focus of the writing are clear to the reader, and the organization and tone achieve the purpose of the assignment and communicate effectively.	Most sources used to support argument are appropriate to the topic being explored, the assignment and disciplinary conventions. Demonstrates competence in documenting sources; the reader would have little difficulty referring back to cited sources.	While there may be minor errors, the paper follows normal conventions of spelling and grammar throughout. Appropriate conventions for style and format are used consistently throughout the writing sample.
1 – Beginning	Requirements of the assignment have not been fulfilled. Little/no evidence of engagement with material of the course/discipline. The paper reveals numerous errors of fact or interpretation.	Writing lacks transitions and/or sequencing of ideas, making reading and understanding difficult. Examples and/or claims are weak or missing in many cases. The writer’s decisions about focus and organization interfere with communication.	Sources are unclear or inappropriate to topic being investigated, assignment or disciplinary conventions. Writing does not consistently follow appropriate style and/or format. Source documentation is incomplete. It may be unclear which references are direct quotes and which are paraphrased.	Writing contains numerous errors in spelling, grammar (such as subject/verb agreements and tense), sentence structure and/or other writing conventions that interfere with comprehension.

SOME BRIEF DEFINITIONS

Focus: the purpose, theme, or overall argument in a text—and the way that other features in a text point toward this focus.

Organization: the arrangement of ideas or points in a text according to the writer’s purpose and knowledge of disciplinary conventions.

Style: an author’s choices about vocabulary, tone, clarity, and connotation that project her sense of purpose and audience.

Formatting: conventional visual and layout elements (such as bulleted lists, graphs, and pictures) that writers use to organize a document.