AP Research
Academic Paper
Scoring Guidelines

Effective from fall 2018
### Score of 1
**Report on Existing Knowledge**

- Presents an overly broad topic of inquiry.
- Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works OR through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.
- Describes a search and report process.
- Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.
- Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.
- Cites **AND/OR** attributes sources (in bibliography/works cited and/or in-text), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline-specific style.

### Score of 2
**Report on Existing Knowledge with Simplistic Use of a Research Method**

- Presents a topic of inquiry with narrowing scope or focus, that is NOT carried through either in the method or in the overall line of reasoning.
- Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works OR through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.
- Describes a nonreplicable research method OR provides an oversimplified description of a method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.
- Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.
- Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.
- Cites **AND/OR** attributes sources (in bibliography/works cited and/or in-text), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline-specific style.

### Score of 3
**Ineffectual Argument for a New Understanding**

- Carries the focus or scope of a topic of inquiry through the method**AND** overall line of reasoning, even though the focus or scope might still be narrowing.
- Situates a topic of inquiry within relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives, although connections to some works may be unclear.
- Describes a reasonably replicable research method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.
- Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.
- Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.
- Cites **AND** attributes sources, using a discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited AND in-text), with few errors or inconsistencies.

### Score of 4
**Well-Supported, Articulate Argument Conveying a New Understanding**

- Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.
- Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives **AND** logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.
- Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry.
- Supports a new understanding or conclusion through a logically organized line of reasoning **AND** sufficient evidence. The limitations and/or implications, if present, of the new understanding or conclusion are oversimplified.
- Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.
- Cites **AND** attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited AND in-text), with few to no errors.

### Score of 5
**Rich Analysis of a New Understanding Addressing a Gap in the Research Base**

- Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.
- Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives **AND** logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.
- Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry.
- Justifies a new understanding or conclusion through a logical progression of inquiry choices, sufficient evidence, explanation of the limitations of the conclusion, and an explanation of the implications to the community of practice.
- Enhances the communication of the student’s ideas through organization, use of design elements, conventions of grammar, style, mechanics, and word precision, with few to no errors.
- Cites **AND** attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited AND in-text), with few to no errors.