Outline for End-of-Course Exam **ESSAY ONE**

**Reading the essay: As you are reading be sure to**

* Underline the thesis
* Underline all claims
* Identify the evidence that is being used. Mark it up in some way.
  + Be sure to distinguish the different types of evidence that are being used.
    - Are there statistics?
    - Is there factual information?
    - Studies?
    - Theoretical/philosophical?

**Question 1**: Identify the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis.

The author’s argument for this passage is that (indentify the thesis of the passage). Write one or two more sentences expanding on the thesis that the author presents in their argument.

**Question 2**: Explain the author’s line of reasoning by identifying the claims used to build the argument and the connections between them.

The author makes fill in the number claims to support his argument that (fill in the thesis). The first claim is (fill in the claim). The second claim is (fill in the claim).

The first claim the author makes is (fill in the claim). This supports their argument because (write 2-3 sentences on how this supports the claim).

The second claim the author makes is (fill in the claim). This supports their argument because (write 2-3 sentences on how this supports the claim).

**Question 3**: Evaluate the effectiveness of the evidence the author uses to support the claims made in the argument.

Note: This response must be at least three paragraphs. Refer to the rubrics for information regarding scoring.

**Option A: Effective Argument is Present**

The argument that the author presents is effective because (fill in the reasons)

Examples of topic sentences that can be used for this question:

* The author’s use of evidence strongly supports the argument because…
* The author’s credibility also supports their argument because
* The author establishes their argument with a strong line of reasoning.

**Option B: Effective Argument is NOT Present**

Although the author presents a clear argument that (insert thesis), the argument is not effective because (fill in reasons).

Examples of topic sentences that can be used for this question

* The evidence used by the author is not effective because (insert reasons).
* The author’s credibility interferes with the effectiveness of the argument.
* The line of reasoning established by the author does not strongly support the argument.

**Potential ways that you could address this question**

* + Author credibility
    - What are the credentials of the author?
    - Do his credentials relate to the topic that they are discussing? (i.e. Is a scientist discussing science? Or is a scientist discussing business?)
  + Evidence
    - Where is the evidence coming from? Is it cited? Or is it generally stated (i.e. studies have shown VS. A study conducted by the University of ….)
    - Does the evidence support the claims? Does it support ALL claims?
  + Line of reasoning
    - Does the evidence support the argument? HOW does it support the argument?
    - If it does not support the argument, WHY does it not support the argument?
      * Are there logical fallacies present in the argument?
    - Is there a counter argument present?
      * If there is not, how does this weaken the argument?
      * If there is, how does this strengthen the argument?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Performance Levels | | | |
| Question 1 | The response misstates the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis  1 point | The response identifies, in part and with some accuracy, the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis  2 Points | The response accurately identifies the author’s argument, main idea, or thesis.  3 Points |
| Question 2 | The response omits or misidentifies the author’s claims and provides little or no explanation of how the author establishes a line of reasoning  2 Points | The response identifies some of the author’s claims and the connections between them that produce a limited explanation of the author’s line of reasoning.  4 Points | The response identifies the author’s relevant claims and the connections between them, producing a thorough explanation of the author’s line of reasoning  6 Points |
| Question 3 | The response omits or misidentifies some of the evidence. The response disregards how well the evidence supports the argument.  2 Points | The response partially identifies and evaluates the evidence. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the evidence in supporting the argument’s claims is limited or general.  4 Points | The response provides a thorough and detailed evaluation of how well the evidence supports the argument. The response evaluates the relevance and credibility of the evidence.  6 Points |