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|  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Thesis | Thesis provides a clear and well developed argument. Thesis statement has three unique and strong direction points. | Thesis provides an argument. Thesis statement has three direction points that may not be unique or strong enough. | Thesis provides an argument. Thesis statement is missing some direction points. | Thesis provides a weak argument. Thesis statement does not have any direction points. |
| Idea Development | Each paragraph has a clear argument and expands, explains, and supports the thesis statement. | Each paragraph has a clear argument but not all paragraphs support the thesis. | Some paragraphs do not contain a clear argument or do not support the thesis. | Paragraphs are missing a clear argument, are inaccurate, or are incomplete. |
| Evidence | Skillfully blends evidence from the text and biographical information to support argument. Pieces of evidence are related and explained. | Cites evidence from the text and biographical information. Pieces of evidence are related and somewhat explained. | Cites evidence from either the text or the biography. Pieces of evidence are not explained. | Does not reference textual or biographical evidence. |
| Organization | Essay is well organized, follows a logical progression. Includes an intro, 3 body paragraphs, and a conclusion. | Essay is organized, in most instances, follows a logical progression. Includes an intro, 3 body paragraphs, and a conclusion. | Essay is poorly organized, does not follow a logical progression. Includes an intro, some body paragraphs, and a conclusion | Essay is poorly organized and difficult to follow. Missing major required paragraphs. |
| Mechanics | There are few or no errors in mechanics, usage, or grammar. The writer correctly uses third-person pronouns. | There are some errors in mechanics, usage, or grammar. The writer usually uses third-person pronouns. | There are several errors in mechanics, usage, or grammar. The writer may use first and second-person pronouns. | Numerous errors in mechanics, usage, or grammar interfere with meaning. The writer may use first and second-person pronouns. |