

Reviewing a Research Paper

Focus

1. Is the thesis stated clearly?
2. Does each paragraph support the thesis?

Organization

1. Can readers follow the organization?
2. Do topic sentences signal new ideas?
3. Do transitions help readers move from one paragraph to another?
4. Are ideas presented in a logical order?

Content

1. Is the supporting material persuasive?
2. Are the parts proportioned sensibly?
3. Is the paper concise—free of irrelevant, unimportant, or repetitious material?

Style

1. Is the voice appropriate—not too chatty, too stuffy, or too timid?
2. Are the sentences clear, emphatic, and varied?

Use of sources

1. Is quoted language word-for-word accurate? If not, do brackets or ellipsis marks indicate the changes or omissions?
2. Does a clear signal phrase prepare readers for each quotation?
3. Does a parenthetical citation follow each quotation and is the citation properly formatted?
4. Does the corresponding entry in the Works Cited include complete publication information about the source and is the information properly formatted?
5. Are summaries and paraphrases free of plagiarized wording (not copied or half-copied from the source?)
6. Are summaries and paraphrases documented with parenthetical citations?
7. Do readers know where the summaries and paraphrases begin? In other words, does a signal phrase mark the beginning of the cited material unless the context makes clear exactly what is being cited?