Florida International University
Department of Biological Sciences

Scoring rubric for written work

Content and Critical Thinking

? Scientific reasoning and problem solving
[ 4 ] Explains clearly, thoroughly and concisely how scientific reasoning can be used to answer a biological question.
[ 3 ] Explains only in a general way how scientific reasoning can be used to answer a biological question.
[ 2 ] Has difficulty explaining how scientific reasoning can be used to answer a biological question.
[ 1 ] Unable to explain how scientific reasoning is applied to biological questions. Cannot identify problems or approaches for solution.

? Content
[ 4 ] Introduction is relevant and thorough. Significance of topic is explained, content is focused. Conclusions are well supported.
[ 3 ] Introduction is relevant, but limited. Significance of topic is mentioned, content occasionally unfocused. Conclusions are mostly supported.
[ 2 ] Introduction sketchy or unrelated, with little other content, which tends to digress. Conclusions are poorly supported.
[ 1 ] No introduction, or exclusively introductory content. Does not address the significance of topic, content is unfocused. Conclusions are either not offered or unsupported.

? Logical organization
[ 4 ] Presents information in logical sequence, at an appropriate level that holds reader interest.
[ 3 ] Presents information in a mostly logical sequence, at an appropriate level that a general reader can follow.
[ 2 ] Presentation of information is somewhat disjointed. Some material is not relevant to the topic.
[ 1 ] Information is not presented logically or is presented at an inappropriate level. Material is not related to the topic.

? Use of biological terms and concepts
[ 2 ] Some incorrect applications of biological terminology and limited understanding of biological concepts.
[ 1 ] Incorrect use of biological terminology, poor understanding of biological concepts.
Use of references
[ 4 ] All references are correctly cited in the body of the paper and in the reference list.
   Most references are to the primary literature.
[ 3 ] Most references are correctly cited in the body of the paper and in the reference list.
   Many references are to the primary literature.
[ 2 ] Some references are correctly cited in the body of the paper and in the reference list.
   Uses few references to the primary literature.
[ 1 ] Either no citations, no reference list, or all references are entirely from secondary or
   non-scientific literature sources.

Presentation

Mechanics
[ 3 ] Generally proper sentence structure and word usage. Few grammatical errors and
   misspellings.
[ 2 ] Some difficulty with sentence structure and word usage. More than a few
   grammatical errors and misspellings.
[ 1 ] Incorrect sentence structure and word usage. Many grammatical errors and
   misspellings.

Format
[ 4 ] Conforms to assignment format guidelines with regard to length, margins, font size,
   binding, and figures (if required).