

Scientific Communication Writing Assignment Rubric – Peer Evaluation

your name: Katharine Brown

assignment reviewed: #92 Decline of Northern Spotted owls

Using the rubric below, please evaluate each of your assigned news articles in each of the areas shown, filling out a separate evaluation form for each news article. Please highlight the part of the rubric text that explains why you chose a specific assessment category. In the “General Feedback” section at the bottom of this form, please include more specific feedback, including things that you liked as well as things that you feel could be improved upon and suggestions on how to improve them.

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement
Content: Does the news article convey the writer’s understanding of a biological topic?	The news article introduces a biological topic and clearly illustrates the writer’s understanding of the topic including what is known and not known about it and how understanding the biology associated with the topic helps us understand larger issues or concepts.	The news article introduces a biological topic and presents information about it, but the topic is not explained clearly or doesn’t distinguish between what is known vs. what is not known or doesn’t explain how understanding the biology associated with the topic helps us understand larger issues or concepts.	The news article does not illustrate the writers understanding of the topic and does not indicate what is known vs. what is not known or how understanding the biology associated with the topic helps us understand larger issues or concepts.
Audience: Is the writing appropriate for the target audience?	The news article avoids jargon and clearly defines terms and ideas for a non-expert audience.	The news article defines or explains some terms, but some key terms or ideas would be challenging for a non-expert audience.	The news article lacks definitions and explanations, making the topic inaccessible to a non-expert audience.
Organization: Is the news article clearly organized?	The news article is well organized and easy to follow with good transitions between the paragraphs.	The news article is generally organized and easy to follow but conceptual connections aren’t always clear.	The news article is disorganized, and the information presented doesn’t flow well.

Rubric continues on next page

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement
Format, spelling & grammar: Does the news article follow the recommended format and is it free of writing errors?	The news article follows guidelines for paper length and format and has been carefully proofread for spelling and grammatical mistakes.	The news article is outside the recommended length or does not conform to the formatting guidelines; the news article contains a small number of spelling and/or grammatical errors.	The news article is significantly outside the recommended length and does not conform to the formatting guidelines; the news article contains numerous spelling and/or grammatical errors.
Citations: Are the citations presented appropriately?	The news article contains appropriate in-text citations and a list of references for all source material.	The news article is missing either appropriate in-text citations or a list of references.	The news article is missing appropriate in-text citations and a list of references OR citations are missing for one or more sources.
Rationale for choosing topic: Did the writer indicate why they chose the topic?	The rationale for choosing the topic is clearly explained.		No rationale for the topic's choice is provided.

General feedback (5 points):

Your first primary source link does not work, so you might want to clear that up with the teacher and find out what the issue is it could be accessing the link from a pdf. Your paper is very easy to follow and understand, but it seems like you need to add a few more citations. For the rationale, talk a bit more about the specifics of why you like ecology and the northern spotted owls. I can understand why you did not include anything that was not really known about the topic, so you may want to talk about other unknowns which are harming their population or ask the teacher if you should include the part about things that are not known about your topic. I really loved how you defined terms that may be unfamiliar and further used your explanation to connect back to your topic. Your structure is easy to follow and goes smoothly, the only part that could be changed would be moving the sentences about the owls being an indicator species. You are missing some citations such as when you mention a 2003 study without citing the site that you got that information from.

Overall assessment (excellent, good, needs improvement):

The material you present is excellent and the writing itself is good, but put a bit more detail into the rationale, add in a few of the citations, and figure out how to get you primary source 1 to work. (excellent/good)