Critical Response Rubric (v3)

Score each response 1–4 on five questions. It takes about two minutes. Judge what's written, not whether you agree.

Dimension	4	3	2	1
Claim & Clarity — Is their position clear and easy to follow?	One clear position, stated plainly; easy to follow throughout	Clear position, but broad, or a tangent or awkward bit slows you down	Vague or buried; you have to guess what they mean	No position, it changes midway, or too muddled to follow
Evidence — What do they offer as proof?	2+ specific examples, facts, or scenarios	1 specific example, or several vague ones	Only vague or loosely related support	None; opinion only
Reasoning — Does the conclusion follow from the proof?	Every step follows	One small leap	A big gap or one clear fallacy	Doesn't follow, contradicts itself, or several fallacies
Counterargument — Do they deal with the other side?	States the strongest opposing view fairly and answers it	States a real objection and answers it	Mentions one briefly, in a weak form, or doesn't answer it	None, or misrepresents the other side
Calibration — Does their confidence match their proof?	Firm where proof is strong, qualified where thin	One overstated or understated point	Repeatedly overclaims ("always," "obviously") or hedges everything	Absolute certainty on thin proof

Quick rules

- Ignore length and polish. Short and sharp can be a 4.

- Don't fact-check, and don't expect citations.
- Rate the quality of the argument, not your agreement.
- Off-topic or joke: score all 1s and flag it.
- One flaw, one penalty. Torn? Overclaiming → Calibration · thin examples → Evidence · step that doesn't follow → Reasoning · rambling or hard to follow → Claim & Clarity.

Examples

Prompt: *Should schools ban phones in class?* Each excerpt is scored on its own dimension only.

Dimension	Example excerpt	Score	Why
Claim & Clarity	"Schools should ban phones during lessons, but allow them at lunch."	4	One clear, specific position, plainly worded.
Evidence	"After my teacher started collecting phones at the door, our class's average quiz score went up."	3	One specific example; more would make it a 4.
Reasoning	"Test scores dropped last year, and last year we had phones, so phones caused the drop."	2	Big gap: assumes phones are the cause without ruling out anything else.
Counterargument	"Some say phones help students look things up. True, but teachers can allow them for set tasks and ban them otherwise."	4	Fair version of the other side, directly answered.
Calibration	"Phones obviously destroy every student's focus, and any school that allows them is failing."	1	Absolute certainty with no proof offered.

How to raise the lower scores

- **Evidence (3 → 4):** "After my teacher started collecting phones at the door, our class's average quiz score went up. My cousin's school also saw fewer detentions for off-task behavior after its ban." *Added a second specific example.*
- **Reasoning (2 → 4):** "Test scores dropped last year, when we had phones. That's a hint, not proof, because the school also changed its schedule that year. Comparing classes with and without phone rules in the same year would show whether phones are the cause." *Admits the gap and says what would close it.*
- **Calibration (1 → 4):** "Phones often hurt focus, and what happened at my school suggests a ban during lessons would help. It may matter less for students who use them for note-taking." *Replaced "obviously" and "every" with claims the proof can carry.*