**Example 2. Assignment Sheet for Short Essays in the RTTP game “War of the Romantics.”**

**Short Position Papers**

**Objective.** To develop skills in proposing arguments, thinking critically about music, and engaging with cultural topics through succinct writing examples.

**Directions.** Position papers are tied to the Reacting to the Past game “War of the Romantics.” Students will receive topical assignments in their character role sheets and are expected to reference/quote primary source readings and address the issue at hand directly. Students are NOT evaluated on what position they take, but rather are evaluated on how proficiently they argue on behalf of their character’s objectives. Position papers should be published to the course’s blog, undersigned by the appropriate character or characters, and posted in the respective journal forum (*Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, etc.). Blog profiles must include full character names and portraits that will appear next to each post.

**Preparatory Readings.** Although you may draw on content, ideas, and style from a variety of sources in the game book, students should read the following examples first to shape their own position papers to the appropriate style and discourse.

Hanslick, Eduard. “On the Beautiful in Music” (1854). In *Strunk’s Source Readings in Music History*, ed. Leo Treitler, 1202–12011. Rev. Ed. New York: Norton, 1998.

Brendel, Franz. “Inaugural Address”(1859). In *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, eds. Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin, 327–8. 2d Ed. Belmont, CA: Shirmer, 2008.

Brahms, Johannes et. al. “Manifesto” In *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, eds. Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin, 328–329. 2d Ed. Belmont, CA: Shirmer, 2008.

**Grading Rubrics**

Although the focus and topic for each position paper is different, the following rubrics on a 5-point scale provide general guidance in shaping your best response. Students should review these before posting each essay.

A **“5” Response** follows directions, is highly organized, clear in prose, and original in thought. The submission is highly polished and free of grammatical and spelling errors. The author references supporting resources properly, makes clever use of analysis and primary sources, and demonstrates a high level of critical thinking and persuasive writing. **Excellent.**

A **“4” Response** follows directions, has overall good organization and clear prose, and provides some original ideas. There may be a handful of misspellings and grammatical errors, but the paper is acceptable in writing style. The author cites and uses primary sources properly and provides some text and music analysis. The author may get off topic and include some material that does not strengthen the essay. **Good.**

A **“3” Response** has some recognizable organization and readable prose, but summarizes rather than argues. There are large block quotes or paraphrased passages from secondary sources that are not effectively integrated into the argument. There is infrequent use and citation of sources and several misspelled words and grammatical errors. A primary topic is discussed, but not tied to an argument, and there is little evidence of critical thinking. **Average.**

A **“2” Response** rarely follows directions. The topic is related to the assignment, but there is no argument put forward. There is no use of secondary sources or poor use of them. The essay is rife with grammatical and spelling errors. It appears that the student has cut and pasted information from various sources without citation and strung ideas together into an incoherent mess. Components are missing, such as analysis and reference to supporting sources. **Poor.**

A **“1” Response** is incomplete or absent. The word count may be well under the requirement and clearly the author has not read directors or taken interest in the assignment. The writing style is incomprehensible at times and the topic is unclear. The student has plagiarized another source or submitted a related, but off topic essay for this assignment. **Failing.**