Letters will be scored using the criteria indicated below. Refer to the assignment handout for an overview of the assignment and a description of expectations.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Below Standard/**  **Not Acceptable**  **(0 points)** | **Meets Standard**  **(3 points)** | **Exceeds Standard**  **(5 points)** | **Score** |
| **Content** |  |  |  |  |
| Human contributions to biodiversity loss. | Letter includes 0-1 factor | Letter includes 2-3 factors | Letter includes 4 or more factors |  |
| Relationship among contributing factors | Not addressed | Includes general statement, but no examples | Includes general statement supported by an example |  |
| Impacts on society | Significance to society of biodiversity loss not addressed | Presents a basic argument for the significance of biodiversity loss to society | Presents a thorough argument for the significance of biodiversity loss including impacts on biological resources, ecosystem services, and social and spiritual benefits |  |
| Causes of current biological diversity losses compared to past mass extinctions | No comparison made | Basic comparison made, but lacking in detail | Comparison made including specific details regarding which causes varied |  |
| Rates of current biological diversity losses compared to past mass extinctions | No comparison made | Basic comparison made, but lacking in detail, quantification | Comparison made including specific, quantitative details regarding how rates varied |  |
| Recommendation for conservation priority | No recommendation made | Recommendation made, some information on reasons for choice and criteria used included | Recommendation made, thorough explanation of reasons for choice and criteria used included |  |
| Writing | Disorganized letter that communicates issue of biodiversity loss, but lacks detail or contains major inaccuracies. 5+ grammatical errors. | Clear and organized letter that communicates issue of biodiversity loss, but is missing some detail or contains minor inaccuracies. 2-4 grammatical errors. | Well-crafted letter that eloquently communicates issue of biodiversity loss, its causes, impacts, and the board’s recommendation to the public. 0-1 grammatical errors. |  |