

Rubric of All Rubrics

9-8

Superior papers are specific in their references, cogent in their definitions, and free of plot summary that is not relevant to the question. These essays need not be without flaws, but they demonstrate the writer's ability to discuss a literary work with **insight and understanding** and to control a wide range of the elements of **effective composition**. At all times they stay focused on the prompt, providing **specific support**--mostly through direct quotations--and connecting scholarly commentary to the overall meaning.

7-6

These papers are less thorough, less perceptive or less specific than 9-8 papers. They are **well-written but with less maturity and control**. While they demonstrate the writer's ability to analyze a literary work, they reveal a more limited understanding and less stylistic maturity than do the papers in the 9-8 range.

5

Safe and "plastic," **superficiality** characterizes these essays. Discussion of meaning may be **formulaic**, mechanical, or inadequately related to the chosen details. Typically, these essays reveal simplistic thinking and/or immature writing. They usually demonstrate inconsistent control over the elements of composition and are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as the upper-half papers. However, the writing is sufficient to convey the writer's ideas, stays mostly focused on the prompt, and contains at least some **effort to produce analysis**, direct or indirect.

4-3

Discussion is likely to be unpersuasive, perfunctory, **underdeveloped** or **misguided**. The meaning they deduce may be inaccurate or insubstantial and not clearly related to the question. Part of the question may be omitted altogether. The writing may convey the writer's ideas, but it reveals **weak control** over such elements as diction, organization, syntax or grammar. Typically, these essays contain significant **misinterpretations** of the question or the work they discuss; they may also contain little, if any, supporting evidence, and practice **paraphrase and plot summary at the expense of analysis**.

2-1

These essays compound the weakness of essays in the 4-3 range and are frequently unacceptably **brief**. They are **poorly written on several counts**, including many **distracting errors in grammar and mechanics**. Although the writer may have made some effort to answer the question, the views presented have little clarity or coherence.

Rubric for AP Essays

Score	Letter Grade	Point Value (40)	Criteria for score
9	A	40	Excellent, specific thesis; excellent illustrations/specific, detailed support; excellent organization; sound mechanics; effective imagination, sees and makes connections; no major grammatical errors (SVA, PNC, PNA, CS, SF, RO)
8	A-	38	Excellent, specific thesis; excellent illustrations/specific, detailed support; efficient organization; less imagination of speculation; a few mechanical flaws which do not reduce the impact of the analysis; no more than 1 instance of major grammatical errors
7	B+	37	Intelligent, yet less concise thesis; effective illustrations; sound organization; adequate mechanics; a "safe" paper, beautifully done; no more than 2 instances of major grammatical errors
6	B	36	Good, safe thesis, completely adequate in every way; some illustrations; a beginning, middle, and end; significantly less imagination; no more than 3 instances of major grammatical errors
5	B-	35	The thesis is adequate, yet unnecessarily general; predictable illustrations; general analysis; a few definite mechanical flaws; intelligent observations and conclusions; contains minor errors in comprehension of work (mistaken character or place names, etc.); no more than 3 instances of major grammatical errors; use of 2 nd person or 1 st person – one instance
4	C	34	The thesis is too large or vague; some illustrations, but surface analysis; definite mechanical flaws or carelessness; the writing has "moments" when it's an essay as opposed to a plot summary or other form; shows major problems with comprehension of work; no more than 4 instances of major grammatical errors
3	C-	33	An adequate report; the thesis is much too large or vague; an intelligent summary; few illustrations; punctuation flaws; might reflect a simple lack of effort or hurried, last-minute preparation; 4 or more instances of major grammatical errors; use of 1 st or 2 nd person – more than one instance
2	D	32	The thesis, if it exists, is hiding; it is up to the reader to find it; assortment of rambling generalizations; amidst all the generalization, there are enough intelligent observations to justify a passing grade; many grammatical errors; 5 or more instances of major grammatical errors
1	F	24	Lack of effort; no thesis, therefore nothing to illustrate; no interest in topic; usually, rather brief, undeveloped; completely off-topic; shows no comprehension of work; contains 6 or more major grammatical errors.

Essay Scoring Guide

ORGANIZATION

- 8/9** Clear, logical, fluid and follows format with artful transitions; focused on thesis
- 6/7** Logical; follows format with smooth transitions
- 5** Present, but there may be some confusion
- 3/4** Flawed; does not follow format; weak control

CRITICAL THINKING

- 8/9** Insightful, meaningful; demonstrates writer's ability to discuss and clearly analyze with insight, understanding, and control
- 6/7** Less thorough, less incisive, or less specific; demonstrates writer's ability to analyze literary work, but reveal a more limited understanding than 9/8 papers
- 5** Safe, plastic, superficial; reveals simplistic thinking and/or immature writing with thin, commonplace information that addresses prompt
- 3/4** Misinterpretations, underdeveloped or misguided; paraphrase and plot-summary at the expense of analysis

FACTUAL CONTENT

- 8/9** Skillful use of excellent concrete detail selection; documented correctly
- 6/7** Good concrete detail selection; documented correctly
- 5** Acceptable use of concrete detail selection; documented correctly
- 3/4** Weak and/or flawed concrete detail selection; doesn't support topic sentence / question

SENTENCE VARIETY / DICTION

- 8/9** Excellent, critical use of varied sentence structure; powerful, excellent word choice used correctly; wording is obviously well chosen
- 6/7** Good variety; good word choice used correctly which emphasizes the point
- 5** Limited with simple sentences; average, ordinary word choice or odd word choice; diction may be marred by repetitions and imprecision
- 3/4** Sentences are awkward, ambiguous, and/or confusing / little if any sentence variety; simple word choice; words used incorrectly; slang; odd phrasing

MECHANICS / REVISION

- 8/9** Superior paper with stylistic flair that expresses ideas with clarity and skill; excellent grammar, punctuation, spelling
- 6/7** Minimal / insignificant mechanical errors that do not detract from meaning
- 5** Mechanics and/or legibility is a consistent problem; repeats may be a concern
- 3/4** Essay is hard to understand due to grammar, mechanics, and/or legibility; evidence of careful proofreading is scanty, or nonexistent.

9/8 (A): Excellent / Powerful / Rich Content

38-45 Points: A

7/6 (B): Good / Solid

30-37 Points: B

5 (C): Adequate / Average

22-29 Points: C

4/3 (D): Demonstrates Problems / Rudimentary

15-21 Points: D

Essay Scoring Guide

(Staple this page on the top of your paper.)

Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Title _____

9=100, 8=94, 7=90, 6=86, 5=80, 4=77, 3=70, 2=60, 1=50

9 Excellent use of thoughtfully chosen, apt, and specific-to-the-text evidence: concrete details, references and quotes (10 or more). Response to the prompt is a convincing, insightful, perceptive commentary and interpretation, free of plot summary. Personal style is evident in pleasing sentence variety, vocabulary (precise and fresh diction); sentence structure is sophisticated; it has finesse, creativity without going too far. Ideas are expressed with clarity and skill; the paper addresses the what, the how, the why. Well-organized with careful development, excellent thesis, smooth transitions, sound sentence structure, uses literary present tense, no passive voice, no to-be verbs. The conclusion is an epiphany; the reader understands something perhaps never before considered. Virtually no errors exist in spelling, grammar usage, and mechanics.

8 All of the above, but perhaps the style of the student paper is not as evident. There are at least 8 or 9 quotes.

7 This paper has a few minor problems, fewer examples and quotes, but at least 6 or 7. It is less insightful, less developed than an 8/9; it may miss the why of the question. The conclusion is effective. The paper is still well-written, developed and analyzed. There is good control over sentence structure, diction and mechanics.

6 This is a safe paper, carefully done, but it needs more. It uses at least 5 quotes. More than a 5, less than a 7.

5 Superficial, obvious, vague details and quotes (4) from the text, but they are used correctly; commentary is generic, but there is some analysis. The conclusion is only adequate. The paper slips into passive voice or uses to-be verbs. No serious errors in spelling, grammar, usage, mechanics.

4 The supporting evidence of this paper is weak paraphrasing, vague and inaccurate. The analysis and commentary are misguided and unclear. There is plot summary instead of analysis. The writer uses a vague and predictable introductory paragraph and/or a repetitive and weak conclusion. Ideas drift off the topic or prompt. The answer restates the question. This paper lacks transitions. There is repetitive diction and/or awkward diction/vocabulary. The writer uses passive voice and to-be verbs excessively. The writer uses the past tense instead of the literary present. The writer does not embed quotes. The paper is not 2 pages written or 3 pages typed.

3 This paper has weaker writing skills than a 4. It has less organization, more misinterpretations, inadequate development, serious omissions. Quotes are missing. The student uses contractions and/or a chatty, non-academic tone. The writer uses a negative and/or judgmental tone. The writer does not answer all the parts of the question. There is no conclusion.

2 There are very few, if any, concrete details. Thesis is weak or non-existent. There are distracting errors in sentence structure, diction, spelling, grammar, usage, mechanics. The paper rambles because of a lack of control, organization, and/or development. The writer does not answer all the parts of the question. The paper is illegible.

1 This paper is unacceptably brief or incoherently long, full of mechanical errors. It misses the focus of the topic. The writer does not answer the question. The writer draws or writes silly/cynical things.

COMMENTS: _____

AP Essay Rubric (culmination of various AP rubric commentaries)

9-8 9 is the top score, but there is a very little difference between a 9 and 8, both being scores for excellent papers which combine adherence to the topic with excellent organization, content, and insight facile use of language, and mastery of mechanics. 9 essays demonstrate uncommon skill and sometimes put a cultural/historical frame around the subject. Descriptors that come to mind while reading include **mastery, sophisticated, complex, specific, consistent, well supported.**

The paper is well organized; it follows a logical sequence (general to specific, most to least important point, chronological order). It follows the prompt well. The introduction follows the guidelines provided. The thesis is clear, focused, narrow and direct.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Magical at times Attempts more challenging concepts (i.e., figurative lang., symbolism, extended metaphor, organization, pacing, narrative strategies) Mature beginnings; Takes risks - always under control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong sense of control – organization Insightful (often tied to human condition) Mature in style and vocabulary Tight link of support (text references) to author's intent
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7 7 is a thinner version of the excellent paper, still impressive, cogent, convincing, but less well handled in terms of organization, insight or vocabulary. Descriptors that come to mind while reading include **clear understanding, less precise, less well supported, maturing, this writer has potential, but hasn't quite got to it all.**

The paper is well organized and logical. It has adequate support, but needs specific detail to improve. The topic sentences touch on the basics of the essay topic with the novel but may be buried. Support is fair, but explanation (commentary) needs development; the paper lacks an appropriate conclusion. "7" papers tend to have two out of three points are well made and are in depth; one point is weak, too superficial, or incorrect.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More fluid in style Sections insightful Often one section well developed by student affected by time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear or implied thesis Attempts more difficult tasks Sense of completion
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6-5 6 is an above average paper, but it may be deficient in one of the essentials mentioned above. It may be less mature in thought or less well handled in terms of organization, syntax, or mechanics. Descriptors might include **less mature, some difficulties, but just above average.** The 5 paper is the thinner version of the 6. Readers prefer to separate essays into top half or bottom half. The five defies that process. Descriptors might include **superficial, meager, irrelevant, and insufficient.**

The explanation (commentary) is inadequate or vague; the support is weak, too general, or fails to prove a point. The introduction is fair to weak, and fails to introduce the topic or fails to address the key ingredients of the topic and/or address the name of the author. Two or three points are weak or incorrect. More errors are careless. The thesis is weak and/or misdirected. There are some grammatical errors. "6" papers tend to have problems with development of the essay idea, but they are at least addressed.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent but adequate; Less difficult concepts (i.e. diction - rather than POV, symbolism, syntax) Linear in organization; (step by step) Laborious 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional insight; Limit thesis - often 3 parts Summary conclusion Once over lightly
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4-3 4 is an average to below average paper which maintains the general idea of the writing assignment, shows some sense of organization, but is weak in content, maturity of thought, language facility, and/or mechanics. It may distort the topic or fail to deal adequately with the one important aspect of the topic. The 3 essay compounds the weaknesses of the 4. Some descriptors that come to mind include **incomplete, oversimplified, meager, irrelevant, and insufficient.**

The explanation (commentary) and support are inadequate or missing. The thesis is weak, unclear, or missing. There may be careless use of first person. Two or three points are weak or incorrect. There is no connection to the prompt and/or the concrete detail is simply plot summary. Word choice is awkward or simplistic. A "3" paper will have numerous careless errors. A common problem here is the paper is too brief; ideas are presented, but not developed sufficiently.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Listers" "Labelers" (0 analysis) Pointless allusion; Poor analogies Paraphrasing through over quoting (i.e., long passages) Limited task (i.e., diction); Proving the obvious Clichés ("makes you stop and wonder") 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Obviously"; 2nd person (you); Colloquial diction "even" Implied analysis, but inaccurate; Funnel opening (truisms) Immature focus (get the reader's attention) 0 sense of completion (abrupt)
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2-1 2 is the score assigned to a paper that makes an attempt to deal with the topic but demonstrates serious weaknesses in content and coherence and/or syntax and mechanics. It is an unacceptable grade. Descriptors include **serious misreading, unacceptably brief, and/or poorly written.** 1 is the score given to any on-topic response that has very little redeeming quality. It may be brief or very long, but will scarcely coherent, usually full of mechanical errors or completely missed the focus of the prompt. Descriptors include **vacuous, inexact, and mechanically unsound.**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Off topic; Soap Box Lecture "I"; Argues against writer's position Testimonials; Teacher Lecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining of Terms; Major grammatical problems Brevity; 0 Analysis Inaccuracies
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0 0 is given to a response with no more than a reference to the task.

Literary Analysis Scoring Guide

- 9-8** With apt and specific references to the story, these well-organized and well-written essays clearly analyze how _____ uses literary techniques to _____. The best of these essays will acknowledge the complexity of this _____. While not without flaws, these papers will demonstrate an understanding of the text as well as consistent control over the elements of effective composition. These writers read with perception and express their ideas with clarity and skill.
- 7-6** These papers also analyze how _____ uses literary techniques to _____, but they are less incisive, developed, or aptly supported than papers in the highest ranges. They deal accurately with technique as the means by which a writer _____, but they are less effective or less thorough in their analysis than are the 9-8 essays. These essays demonstrate the writer's ability to express ideas clearly, but they do so with less maturity and precision than the best papers. Generally, 7 papers present a more developed analysis and a more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than do essays scored 6.
- 5** These essays are superficial. They respond to the assignment without important errors in composition, but they may miss the complexity of _____'s use of literary techniques and offer a perfunctory analysis of how those techniques are used to _____. Often, the analysis is vague, mechanical, or overly generalized. While the writing is adequate to convey the writer's thoughts, these essays are typically pedestrian, not as well conceived, organized, or developed as upper-half papers. Usually, they reveal simplistic thinking and/or immature writing.
- 4-3** These lower-half papers reflect an incomplete understanding of the _____ (story, passage, essay, poem, etc.) and fail to respond adequately to the question. The discussion of how _____ uses literary techniques to _____ may be inaccurate or unclear, misguided or undeveloped; these papers may paraphrase rather than analyze. The analysis of technique will likely be meager and unconvincing. Generally, the writing demonstrates weak control of such elements as diction, organization, syntax, or grammar. These essays typically contain recurrent stylistic flaws and/or misreadings and lack of persuasive evidence from the text.
- 2-1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 4-3 range. They seriously misunderstand the _____ or fail to respond to the question. Frequently, they are unacceptably brief. Often poorly written on several counts, they may contain many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Although some attempt may have been made to answer the question, the writer's views typically are presented with little clarity, organization, coherence, or supporting evidence. Essays that are especially inexact, vacuous, and/or mechanically unsound should be scored 1.
- 0** This is a response with no more than a reference to the task or no response at all.

Poetry Analysis Scoring Guide

- 9-8** These well-organized and well-written essays clearly demonstrate an understanding of how the speaker / author in _____ uses _____ to convey _____. In their references, they are apt and specific. Though not without flaws, these papers will offer a convincing interpretation of the poem, as well as consistent control over the virtues of effective composition, including the language unique to the criticism of poetry. They demonstrate the writer's ability to read perceptively and to write with clarity and sophistication.
- 7-6** These essays also demonstrate an understanding of _____'s poem; but, compared to the best essays, they are less thorough or less precise in their analysis of how the speaker / author uses _____ to convey _____. In addition to minor flaws in interpretation, their analysis is likely to be less well-supported and less incisive. While these essays demonstrate the writer's ability to express ideas clearly, they do so with less mastery and control over the hallmarks of mature composition than do papers in the 9-8 range.
- 5** While these essays deal with the assigned task without important errors, they have little to say beyond what is easiest to grasp. Their analysis of how _____ conveys _____ may be vague. As a critical explanation, they deal with the poem in a cursory way. Though the writing is sufficient to convey the writer's thoughts, these essays are typically pedestrian, not as well conceived, organized, or developed as upper-half papers. They may reveal simplistic thinking or immature writing.
- 4-3** These lower-half essays often reflect an incomplete or over-simplified understanding of the poem. Typically, they fail to respond adequately to part of the question. Their analysis may be weak, meager or irrelevant, inaccurate or unclear. The writing demonstrates uncertain control over the elements of effective composition. These essays usually contain recurrent stylistic flaws and/or misreadings, and they often lack persuasive evidence from the text. Essays scored 3 exhibit more than one of the above infelicities; they are marred by a significant misinterpretation, insufficient development, or serious omissions.
- 2-1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 4-3 range. Writers may seriously misread the poem. Frequently, these essays are unacceptably brief. They are poorly written on several counts and may contain many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. While some attempt may have been made to answer the question, the writer's observations are presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Essays that are especially inexact, vacuous, and/or mechanically unsound should be scored 1.
- 0** This is a response with no more than a reference to the task or no response at all.

Prose Analysis Scoring Guide

- 9-8** Answers all parts of the question completely. Using specific evidence from the work and showing how that evidence is relevant to the point being made. Fashions a convincing thesis and guides reader through the intricacies of argument with sophisticated transitions. Demonstrates clear understanding of the work and recognizes complexities of attitude/tone. Demonstrates stylistic maturity by an effective command of sentence structure, diction, and organization. Need not be without flaws, but must reveal an ability to choose from and control a wide range of the elements of effective writing.
- 7-6** Also accurately answers all parts of the question, but does so less fully or effectively than essays in the top range. Fashions a sound thesis. Discussion will be less thorough and less specific, not so responsive to the rich suggestiveness of the passage or precise in discussing its impact. Well written in an appropriate style, but with less maturity than the top papers. Some lapses in diction or syntax may appear, but demonstrates sufficient control over the elements of composition to present the writer's ideas clearly. Confirms the writer's ability to read literary texts with comprehension and to write with organization and control.
- 5** Discusses the question, but may be simplistic or imprecise. Constructs a reasonable if reductive thesis. May attempt to discuss techniques or evidence in the passage, but may be overly general or vague. Adequately written, but may demonstrate inconsistent control over the elements of composition. Organization is attempted, but may not be fully realized or particularly effective.
- 4-3** Attempts to answer the question, but does so either inaccurately or without the support of specific evidence. May confuse the attitude / tone of the passage or may overlook tone shift(s) or otherwise misrepresent the passage. Discussion of illustrations / techniques / necessary parts of the prompt may be omitted or inaccurate. Writing may convey the writer's ideas, but reveals weak control over diction, syntax, or organization. May contain many spelling or grammatical errors. Essays scored three are even less able and may not refer to illustrations / techniques at all.
- 2-1** Fails to respond adequately to the question. May misunderstand the question or the passage. May fail to discuss techniques / evidence used or otherwise fail to respond adequately to the question. Unacceptably brief or poorly written on several counts. Writing reveals consistent weakness in grammar or other basic elements of composition. Although may make some attempt to answer the question, response has little clarity and only slight, if any, evidence in its support. Although the writer may have made some attempt to answer the prompt, the views presented have little clarity or coherence; significant problems with reading comprehension seem evident. Essays that are especially inexact, vacuous, and /or mechanically unsound should be scored 1.
- 0** A blank paper or one that makes no attempt to deal with the question receives no credit.

Language Analysis Scoring Guide

A **9** essay has all the qualities of an 8 essay, and the writing style is especially impressive, as is the analysis of the specifics related to the prompt and the text.

An **8** will effectively and cohesively address the prompt. It will analyze and/or argue the elements called for in the question. In addition, it will do so using appropriate evidence from the given text. The essay will also show the writer's ability to control language well.

A **7** essay has all the properties of a 6, only with a more complete, well-developed analysis/argument or a more mature writing style.

A **6** essay adequately addresses the prompt. The analysis and/or argument is on target and makes use of appropriate specifics from the text. However, these elements are less full developed than scores in the 7, 8, and 9 range. The writer's ideas are expressed with clarity, but the writing may have a few errors in syntax and/or diction.

A **5** essay demonstrates that the writer understands the prompt. The analysis/argument is generally understandable but is limited or uneven. The writer's ideas are expressed clearly with a few errors in syntax or diction.

A **4** essay is not an adequate response to the prompt. The writer's analysis/argument of the text indicates a misunderstanding, an oversimplification, or a misrepresentation of the given passage. The writer may use evidence which is inappropriate or insufficient to support the analysis/argument.

A **3** essay is a lower 4, because it is even less effective in addressing the prompt. It is also less mature in its syntax and organization.

A **2** essay indicates little success in speaking to the prompt. The writer may misread the question, only summarize the passage, fail to develop the required analysis/argument or simply ignore the prompt and write about another topic. The writing may also lack organization and control of language and syntax. (*Note: No matter how good the summary, it will never rate more than a 2.*)

A **1** essay is a lower 2, because it is even more simplistic, disorganized, and lacking in control of language.

Advanced Placement English

Persuasive Scoring Guide

- 9-8 Papers meriting these scores persuasively defend, challenge, or qualify the _____ through a well-reasoned presentation of evidence from observation, experience, or reading. Evidence from reading does not, of course, automatically put papers in this scoring range. Papers in this category aptly support what they have to say and demonstrate stylistic maturity by an effective command of sentence structure, diction, and organization. The writing reveals an ability to choose from and control a wide range of the elements of effective writing, but it need not be without flaws.
- 7-6 Essays earning these scores defend, challenge, or qualify the _____ through a coherent presentation of evidence from observation, experience, or reading, but lack the more carefully nuanced thought or the more detailed development of examples of 9-8 papers. Some lapses in diction or syntax may be present, but the writing demonstrates sufficient control of the elements of composition to present the writer's ideas clearly. The arguments in these essays are sound, but may be presented with less coherence or persuasive force than essays in the 9-8 range.
- 5 These essays present a position that attempts to defend, challenge, or qualify the _____ but do not sustain a coherent presentation. They are adequately written, but may demonstrate inconsistent control over the elements of composition. Organization is evident but may not be fully realized or particularly effective.
- 4-3 Essays earning these scores do not respond adequately to the question's tasks. They may not define a clear position or may attempt to develop a position with evidence that is not well chosen or well integrated for the purpose. The writing is sufficient to convey the writer's ideas, but may suggest weak control over diction, syntax, or organization. These essays may contain consistent spelling errors or some flaws in grammar.
- 2-1 These essays fail to respond adequately to the question's tasks. Although the writer attempts to respond to the _____, the response exhibits little clarity about the writer's attitude or only slight or misguided evidence in its support. These essays may be poorly written on several counts, be unpersuasively brief, or present only assertions without substantive evidence. They may reveal consistent weaknesses in grammar or other basic elements of composition. Essays that are especially inexact, vacuous, and/or mechanically unsound should be scored 1.
- 0 This is a response with no more than a reference to the task or no response at all.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SHORT STORY WRITING RUBRIC

CRITERIA/DEFINITIONS	4	3	2	1
Story Structure	Establishes a strong plot, conflict, climax, setting, and point of view. Develops an effective blend of dialogue, narration, and action.	Establishes plot, conflict, climax, setting, and point of view. Develops a mostly effective blend of dialogue, narration, and action.	Some elements of story structure are present and/or weak blending of dialogue, narration, and action.	Few or no story structure elements are present and/or no blending of dialogue, narration or action is present.
Characterization	Develops complex characters through effective blend of dialogue, narration, and action.	Develops characters through a blend of dialogue, narration, and action.	There is some character development through dialogue, narration, and/or action.	Characters are not developed. Doesn't blend dialogue narration and action.
Description	Creates vivid "pictures" through concrete language and rich sensory detail; use of metaphor, simile, analogies, and other literary devices; incorporates the five senses.	Creates "pictures" through concrete language and sensory detail; uses many literary devices and incorporates sensory detail.	Some use of concrete language and sensory detail; uses some literary devices and/or sensory detail.	Uses little or no concrete language and sensory detail.
Word Choice	Uses appropriate, sophisticated, precise vocabulary. There is a clear sense of audience.	Uses many effective and appropriate words. A sense of audience is evident.	Uses some effective and appropriate words. There is some sense of audience.	Uses few or no correct or effective words. There is little or no sense of audience.
CONVENTIONS - The extent to which the response exhibits conventional spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, capitalization, grammar, and usage.				
Punctuation	Exhibits correct grammar in each sentence. Smooth, fluid sentences. No run-ons or fragments. Error free punctuation.	Exhibits mostly correct grammar. Errors in punctuation do not interfere with communication.	Exhibits errors in grammar that somewhat interfere with communication.	Exhibits errors in grammar that interfere with communication. Awkward sentences throughout.
Spelling and Usage	Exhibits correct spelling and usage. Error free.	Exhibits mostly correct spelling and usage.	Exhibits errors in spelling and usage that somewhat interfere with communication.	Exhibits errors in spelling and usage that interfere with communication. Misspelled/misused words throughout.
Presentation	Neat and professional, clean presentation; shows attention to details.	Neat, easy to read.	Sometimes hard to read; careless presentation.	Little or no attention to presentation.
MEANING - The extent to which the response exhibits sound understanding, interpretation, and analysis of the task and texts.				
Accuracy of response	Arrives at correct responses consistently through correct and appropriate computations.	Arrives at correct responses most of the time; if the response is incorrect it is the result of a minor error.	Arrives at correct responses some of the time. A few of the responses may be incorrect because of major errors.	Arrives at incorrect responses because of major errors in computation.
Conceptual understanding	Shows a depth of understanding of concept with ample support.	Shows understanding with adequate support.	Shows some understanding with some support.	Understanding is not evident.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ESSAY WRITING RUBRIC

CRITERIA/DEFINITIONS	4	3	2	1
CONTENT - The extent to which the paper exhibits sound understanding, interpretation, and analysis of the task and text				
• Introduction of thesis	Thesis is insightful and clearly stated. Key terms are defined. Introduction is energizing	Thesis stated. Some key terms are defined. Introduction is interesting.	Thesis is vague. Terms are not defined. Introduction is not clear.	There is no thesis. No terms defined. No introduction.
• Opening	Clear focus on topic. Thorough introduction of topic. Powerful message conveyed to reader.	Topic is introduced. Sufficient focus on topic. Message conveyed to reader.	Little focus on topic and purpose. Vague message conveyed to reader.	No focus on topic. No message conveyed to reader.
• Development of ideas	Interesting, sophisticated, insightful. Strongly supports thesis.	Development of ideas is clear, evident, and supports thesis.	Simplistic. Does not support thesis. Varying in quality.	Absent or ineffective.
• Supporting evidence and details	Uses examples, reasons, explanations, etc., that are relevant, appropriate, and convincing.	Examples, reasons, details, and explanations are sufficient and accurate.	Some examples, reasons, details, etc. are sufficient and accurate.	Vague, missing, inaccurate evidence.
• Conclusion	Extends, connects, comments on key ideas and topics.	Summarizes main ideas, echoes key concepts.	Restates main idea.	Absent, incomplete, or unfocused.
DEVELOPMENT - The extent to which the response exhibits direction, shape, coherence				
• Sentence variety (word choice, word order, sentence length)	Well varied sentence structure throughout piece.	Evidence of some sentence variety.	Occasional sentence variety.	No sentence variety.
• Paragraph development	Each paragraph clearly and consistently relates to the main idea, contributes to an effective argument, and reinforces the content; smooth transitions.	Many paragraphs relate to main idea, contribute to an effective argument, and reinforce the content; often uses smooth transitions.	Some paragraphs relate to main idea, contribute to an effective argument, and have smooth transitions.	No or few paragraphs relate to main idea, contribute to an effective argument or have smooth transitions.
Organization with pre-set	Requirements of format are met consistently throughout piece.	Many of the requirements of format are met in the piece.	Some of the requirements of format are met in the piece.	Few or none of the requirements for the format are met.
Designing organization	Creates an organizational pattern that effectively supports the topic/thesis of the piece.	Creates an organizational pattern that adequately supports the topic/thesis of the piece.	Creates an organizational pattern that inconsistently supports the topic/thesis of the piece.	Little or no organizational pattern to support the topic/thesis of the piece.