

General Rubric for Scoring Essays

8-9 These are well-organized and well-written essays. With apt and specific references to the passage, they will analyze the prompt in depth and with appropriate support. While not without flaws, these papers demonstrate an understanding of the text and a consistent control over the elements of effective composition. These writers read with perception and express their ideas with clarity, skill and maturity.

6-7 They are less incisive, developed, or aptly supported than papers in the highest ranges. They deal accurately with the prompt, but they are less effective or thorough than the 8-9 essays. These essays demonstrate the writer's ability to express ideas clearly but with less maturity and control than the better papers. Generally, essays scored a 7 present a more developed analysis and a more consistent command of the elements of effective exposition than essays scored a 6.

5 Customarily, these essays are superficial and unfocused. The writing is adequate to convey the writer's thoughts, but these essays are typically ordinary, not as well conceived, organized or developed as upper-level papers. Often, they reveal simplistic thinking and/or immature writing. They may also be characterized by *uneven or limited development*.

3-4 These lower-half essays may reflect an incomplete understanding of the passage and fail to respond adequately to part or parts of the prompt. The discussion may be inaccurate or unclear, and misguided or undeveloped; these essays may paraphrase or summarize rather than analyze. The treatment is likely to 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 lack persuasive evidence from the text.

1-2 These essays compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 3-4 range. They seriously misread the passage or fail to respond to the question. Frequently, they are unacceptably brief. Often poorly written on several counts, these essays 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.

0 These essays do not address the topic at all or are illegible.