

Judging Guidelines

In general, it was decided that essays should be evaluated on the merits of the arguments, clarity of expression, and points made in each paper.

<p style="text-align: center;">SCORE “SIX”</p> <p>A six paper is superior. It does ALL OR MOST of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses and develops ideas in a sustained and compelling manner, showing creativity and insight. • Defends or persuades with precise and relevant evidence; clearly defines and frames issues. • Effectively organizes ideas in a clear, logical and coherent manner, using appropriate structure to enhance the central idea or theme. • Demonstrates involvement with the text and speaks purposefully to the audience in an appropriate, individualistic, and engaging manner. • Uses sophisticated sentence structure and word choice, with a sense of control for stylistic effect. • Commits few, if any, errors in standard English grammar/usage and mechanics. 	<p style="text-align: center;">SCORE “FIVE”</p> <p>A five paper is distinctly above average. It does ALL OR MOST of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively focuses and develops ideas in an effective and detailed manner. • Defends or persuades with important and relevant evidence; defines and frames issues. • Organizes ideas clearly and coherently, using structure appropriate to purpose. • Communicates a sense of commitment to the topic and involves the audience. • Uses varied sentence structure and effective word choice. • Commits few errors in standard English grammar/usage and mechanics. 	<p style="text-align: center;">SCORE “FOUR”</p> <p>A four paper adequate. It exhibits ALL OR MOST of the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequately focuses and develops ideas with some detail. • Defends or persuades with support and clarity, using relevant evidence. • Organizes ideas in a satisfactory manner with adequate coherent and logic. • Uses a voice that is appropriate to audience and purpose. • May use a variety of sentence structure and word choice, but occasionally displays some wordiness or ineffective diction; sentences may be predictable. • Commits some errors in standard English grammar/usage and mechanics that do not impede meaning; indicates basic understanding of conventions.
<p style="text-align: center;">SCORE “THREE”</p> <p>A three paper is inadequate. It is clearly flawed in SOME OR ALL of the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses, but may not display mature or well-developed ideas. • Attempts to defend or persuade, but position is unclear or evidence is limited. • Displays minimal organization; may contain irrelevancies, digress, ramble, or lack logic. • Lacks sincerity in the writer’s attempt to involve the audience. • Uses sentence structure or word choice that is somewhat limited, simplistic, mundane, or inaccurate. • Contains flaws in standard English grammar/usage and mechanics that do not impede meaning; indicates some consistent misunderstanding of the conventions. 	<p style="text-align: center;">SCORE “TWO”</p> <p>A two paper is very weak. It reveals serious and persistent problems in communications. It compounds the weaknesses of the 3 paper in SOME OR ALL of the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks focus and development; may list items with little or no supporting detail. • Defense or persuasive stance is unclear or absent; evidence is vague or missing. • Contains serious flaws in structure, organization and coherence. • Fails in the writer’s attempt to involve the audience. • Uses sentence structure or word choice that is highly limited, simplistic, or inaccurate. • Displays consistent violations in standard English grammar/usage and mechanics that impede understanding. 	<p style="text-align: center;">SCORE “ONE”</p> <p>A one paper is extremely weak. It has few redeeming qualities. It at least mentions the topic, but generally fails to communicate with the reader.. It does SOME OR ALL of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simply repeats the topic or fails to provide adequate development. • Fails to establish a position and/or develop persuade view; evidence is missing. • Shows almost no structure, organization or coherence. • Does not address the audience appropriately. • Uses limited or immature sentence structure and or choice. • Overwhelms the reader with serious violations of standard English grammar/usage and mechanics.