

# General Rubric

*The following scoring guide is used to evaluate student essays. While the guide does not fit every essay, it does establish the basic standards for scores. In general, teachers reward each essay for what it does well. Thus, the more substance and analysis a paper contains the higher it will be scored. Papers with many distracting errors in writing should be scored no higher than 3.*

\_\_\_\_\_ **8-9** papers respond to the assignment clearly, directly and fully. These papers approach the text analytically and illustrate their points with numerous textual references and/or quotations. They show subtlety in their use of the text, and their own style indicates flexibility and mastery. They need not, however, be free from errors.

\_\_\_\_\_ **6-7** papers respond to the assignment clearly and directly but with less development than 8-9 papers. They indicate a good understanding of the text and support their points with appropriate textual references and/ or quotations. While their approach is analytic, the analysis is less precise than in 8-9 papers, and use of the text is competent but not subtle. The writing is forceful and clear, but need not be free from errors.

\_\_\_\_\_ **5** papers typically address the assigned question intelligently but do not answer it fully and specifically. They are characterized by a good but general grasp of the text and by the ability to use the text to frame an apt but imprecise response to the assignment. They may use textual references and quotations sparingly or without clearly enough supporting their points. The style of 5 essays is characterized by adequate clarity and organizational divisions, but may be mechanical or banal.

\_\_\_\_\_ **3-4** papers fail in some important way to fulfill the assignment. They may omit some part of the question, fail to provide minimal textual support for their points, or base their

analysis on a misreading of some part of the text. Nevertheless, these essays normally present one or more incisive points among others of less value. The writing may be similarly uneven in development, with lapses in organization or clarity.

\_\_\_\_\_ **1-2** papers commonly combine two or more serious failures: they may not address the actual question; they may indicate serious misreading of the text; they may not use textual supports or may use it in a way that suggests failure to understand the text; they may be unclear, badly written or unacceptably brief. The style of these papers is usually marked by egregious errors or by abruptness that suggests the student did not finish; but some may be smoothly written, though devoid of content.

## **Conversion table (50-point scale/25 point scale):**

**Upper Half: 9=A+** (50/25); **8=A** (47/24); **7=B+** (44/22); **6=B** (41/21);

**Lower Half: 5=C** (38/19); **4=C-** (35/18); **3=D** (32/17); **2=D-** (29/15); **1=F** (26/13)

SHORTHAND: 8-9 = SUBTLE; 6-7 = COMPETENT; 5 = ADEQUATE; 3-4 = SOME GOOD POINTS; 1-2 = UNREDEEMED

*The best papers answer the question directly, often in the first sentence.*

*Papers without examples and/or quotations are almost always lower half*

*Universal AP Rubric: being a general guide to the goodness of all things, or lack thereof*

This general scoring guide should be supplemented with specific requirements for individual assignments. Even so, it won't fit all papers. The general rule in all scoring, but especially for those papers that don't fit the scoring guide, is to reward the students for what they do well. (Do not read the papers deducting "points" for errors as the paper proceeds.) At the same time, badly written papers with many distracting errors should be scored in the lower half, probably no higher than a 3.

Conversion table: 9=A+; 8=A; 7=A-; 6=B+; 5=B; 4=B-; 3=C+; 2=C; 1=C  
(for lower scores, improvise minus numbers)

8-9 papers respond to the assignment **clearly, directly and fully**. These papers approach the text analytically and illustrate their points with numerous textual references and/or quotations. They show subtlety in their use of the text, and their own style indicates flexibility and mastery. They need not, however, be free from errors.

6-7 papers respond to the assignment **clearly and directly but with less development** than 8-9 papers. They indicate a good understanding of the text and support their points with appropriate textual references and/or quotations. While their approach is analytic, the analysis is less precise than in 8-9 papers, and use of the text is competent but not subtle. The writing in these papers is forceful and clear, but need not be free from errors.

5 papers typically **address the assigned question intelligently but do not answer it fully and specifically**. They are characterized by a good but general grasp of the text and by the ability to use the text to frame an apt but imprecise response to the assignment. They may use textual references and quotations sparingly or without clearly enough supporting their points. The style of 5 essays is characterized by adequate clarity and organizational divisions, but may be mechanical or banal.

3-4 papers **fail in some important way to fulfill the assignment**. They may omit some part of the question, fail to provide minimal textual support for their points, or base their analysis on a misreading of some part of the text. Nevertheless, these essays normally present one or more incisive points among others of less value. The writing may be similarly uneven in development, with lapses in organization or clarity.

1-2 papers commonly **combine two or more serious failures**: they may not address the actual question; they may indicate serious misreading of the text; they may not use textual supports or may use it in a way that suggests failure to understand the text; they may be unclear, badly written or unacceptably brief. The style of these papers is usually marked by egregious errors or by abruptness that suggests the student did not finish; but some may be smoothly written, though devoid of content.

Shorthand version:

8-9 = SUBTLE 6-7 = COMPETENT 5 = ADEQUATE 3-4 = SOME GOOD POINTS 1-2 = UNIZEDEEMED