

Holistic Rating Scale to Mark an Essay

Student Name:

Date or Time Period of Assessment:

Assignment to be Graded:

The essay being awarded a rating at a specific scale point will show **some** or **all** of the following qualities.

A. Papers at the top two scale points exhibit the following general qualities.

- **well-developed**
 - **a feeling of active involvement with the subject**
 - **focused and intentional writing**
 - **originality**
 - **reader can detect a feeling of “voice” in the writing**
 - **command of sentence structure and vocabulary**
 - **technical errors do not intrude on the reader’s appreciation and pleasure**
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6• likeable paper written with creativity, animation and style

- has strong sense of personal “voice”
- is intentional and direct
- moves smoothly from a convincing beginning through a progression of occurrences or concepts to a convincing end
- particulars and illustrations used effectively to set mood, form character, or explain a controversy
- writer takes chances; outcomes convincing
- effortless skill in sentence structure evident; may involve suitable and accurate subordination, and effective use of parallel structures and fragments
- vocabulary proper and well-suited; it may be refined
- infrequent mechanical errors

5 • proficient paper, well-developed

- less skillful sense of personal “voice”, strength and creativity
 - is deliberate and centred
 - moves rationally from constructive opening through a sequence of circumstances or concepts to a finish
 - particulars and instances used effectively to set mood, unfold character traits, or detail an argument
 - writer takes some risks but effects are irregular
 - sentences regulated and diverse
 - subordination for the most part appropriate and accurate
 - vocabulary suitable and correct
 - few technical mistakes
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B. Papers at the two mid-points of the scale exhibit the following general qualities.

- **proficiently written**
- **show concern for formalities of standard English**
- **contain few cases of innovation or distinctiveness**
- **give little evidence of polish in ideas or vocabulary**

- **have a core of ideas that is for the most part clear but development often unsophisticated or fragmentary**
 - **indicate the writer shows some command of elemental sentence structures and vocabulary**
 - **have technical mistakes that reduce the effectiveness**
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4 • centred and ordered

- few examples of creativity
- substance of the paper exhibits lack of depth or insight
- logical arrangement of ideas
- introduction and conclusion but ideas not mature in nature
- writer takes small risks but outcome weak
- paragraphing, sentence structure, vocabulary elementary and accurate
- technical mistakes present

3 • paper considers topic but development unsubstantial and many times immature—little creativity or distinctiveness or chance-taking

- introduction and conclusion included
 - order and connection between ideas/events indistinct or unreasonable
 - sentences predictable
 - difficulties found with pronouns, verb tense and punctuation
 - vocabulary restricted, tedious and often idiomatic
 - technical mistakes inhibit comprehension
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C. **Papers at the bottom two scale points have numerous deficiencies.**

- **unsubstantial sense of intention, organization, and development**
 - **numerous difficulties with conventions of standard English**
 - **substance of theme or ideas insufficient and frequently hard to follow**
 - **no sense of “voice”**
 - **sentences elementary and tedious**
 - **numerous mistakes evident in usage**
 - **vocabulary restricted**
 - **paper laborious to read and understand**
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2 • some effort to centre on topic or relate a story shown but little, if any, development of ideas

- may have an introduction and conclusion but not strong
- some efforts at logical structuring of events evident
- some efforts at paragraph development seen
- the subject matter and the amount of material weak—may be restricted to a solitary example or happening
- vocabulary narrow in range and at times inappropriately idiomatic
- may have repetitive sentences in structure or content
- mistakes in usage and sentence structure frustrate reader’s flow of thought; however, writing is understandable

1 • little or no impression given of purpose, directedness or organization

- if development exists, it is unreasonable and baffling
- logical progression of ideas not observable
- few linkages between concepts or ideas
- no mastery or skill observed in structuring sentences
- word choice inappropriate and random
- vocabulary elemental and often used out of context
- mistakes in verb tense, point of view and idiom
- technical errors extreme and large in number so that understanding of the meaning lost