

Analytical Essay Rubric

	5 A-level essay (AP 9-8)	4 B-level essay (AP 7-6)	3 C-level essay (AP 5-4)	2 D-level essay (AP 3-2)	1 F-level essay (1)
THESIS & INTRODUCTION	Thesis indicates clear sense of purpose and insightful or original perspective. Thesis addresses how the theme/writer's intent is revealed through specific techniques. Thesis guides the entire paper. Intro names author, work, & offers relevant contextual background.	Thesis indicates a sense of purpose and addresses the prompt, but implies rather than directly addresses theme/writer's intent. Attempts to address too many techniques. Thesis mostly guides paper. Intro names author, work, & may offer more plot summary than context.	May be broad or general but addresses prompt. Does not address theme/writer's intent. Thesis exerts some control over paper. Intro may name author, work, and too much plot summary.	Thesis attempts to address the prompt but gives no clear sense of purpose. Intro lacks relevant context.	Thesis is undeveloped, factually based, or ignores the prompt. Intro may lack author, work, or context.
REASONING: CLAIMS & EVIDENCE	Substantiates thesis with a range of well-chosen evidence that is integrated smoothly and effectively through interpretive claims. Knows when to use direct quotes or indirect paraphrasing appropriately. Layers increasingly specific, cohesive arguments within ¶s	Supports thesis with some well-chosen, some adequate evidence. Quotes may be integrated through description of context rather than interpretive claims. Layering of arguments may lack fluency, sophistication, & cohesion.	Provides related evidence. May sometimes show simplistic choices. Makes an attempt to give context for evidence.	Provides insufficient evidence; summarizes, oversimplifies, or contains errors.	Contains summary instead of evidence. Shows a significant misreading or misunderstanding of the text.
ANALYSIS	Demonstrates thorough and logical reasoning. Explicitly explains how individual evidence proves claims and how they work together to reveal theme/writer's intent.	Demonstrates logical reasoning. Shows a clear understanding of the topic, but only implies how evidence proves claims and may lack insight into how claims & evidence connect to theme/writer's intent.	Displays some logical reasoning though in places analysis may be predictable or not fully developed. Contains a basic understanding of the topic but may not contain insight.	Contains insufficient analysis. May rely on summary, lists, or descriptions in place of analysis. May misread or oversimplify the text.	Lacks coherent analysis. Displays simplistic response to thesis. Suggests a misunderstanding of text or prompt.
ORGANIZATION OF PARAGRAPHS & ESSAY	Demonstrates logical sequence of ideas within paragraphs & throughout paper. Topic sentences relate directly to thesis & signify ¶ placement within essay. Closing sentences offer a synthesis of ideas. Uses transitions well within paragraphs & throughout essay. Conclusion restates using different phrasing from intro.	Demonstrates logical sequence of ideas throughout most of the paragraphs and the paper. Topic sentences focus on topic, but introduce specific evidence. Closing sentences relate more to specific evidence than synthesis of ¶. Transitions are inconsistent. Conclusion restates, but is repetitive.	Demonstrates logical sequence of ideas with some breaks in unity; some ¶s lack topic sentences or closing sentences; conclusion may simply restate thesis; uses transitions inconsistently. Paper is still focused, but lacks consistent unity, cohesion, and coherence.	May be lapses in the logical organization. Lacks transitions. Loss of focus.	Sequence of ideas or paragraphing is illogical. Conclusion may be undeveloped.
DICTION, SYNTAX, & TONE	Word choice is specific, accurate, and precise and results in clarity in the presentation of ideas. Sentence styles are varied and work together to create a tone appropriate to the essay's purpose and yet natural and conversational enough to invite the reader to join in the energy of the essay's discourse.	Word choice is generally effective, resulting in an overall clarity of presentation of ideas. There is some variety in sentence style and structure and overall the essay is fairly pleasant to read. Yet, the tone may become overly didactic or pedantic in an effort to sound "scholarly."	Word choice is functional but lacks precision. The writer's intent is clear, but may become muddled by incorrect or fuzzy connotative use. Sentence structure tends to be predictable. Tone is inconsistent.	Word choice is simple, predictable and may be imprecise in multiple places. Sentence structure is simplistic and a sense of tone is all but absent.	Language is vague, inaccurate, and even informal or inappropriate. Little sentence variety and weak structure within the simple sentences. No tone.
VOICE & STYLE	The writer speaks to the reader in a consistently individual and engaging cadence. The writer's personal style reveals a clear awareness of audience and purpose, as well as a connection between writer and topic that adds interest to the essay. Skillful use of rhetorical devices stylistically enhances logical arguments.	The writer speaks with a level of individuality and engagement, but it is inconsistent. Awareness of audience and purpose are mostly clear, and the essay often evidences a connection between the writer and topic, but not consistently. Awkward use of rhetorical devices detracts from logical reasoning.	The writer seems serious about the piece but neither fully engaged nor involved. Obvious generalities replace efforts to involve the reader or topic on an individual level. Gratuitous use of rhetorical devices is distracting.	The writer seems indifferent, uninvolved, or distanced from the topic, the reader, or a consideration of audience or purpose.	The writer exhibits little connection to audience or topic. The result is mechanical and reads with no individual voice.
CONVENTIONS: GRAMMAR, MECHANICS, & MLA	No significant errors. Follows MLA format and citation conventions.	Minor errors that do not show systematic misunderstanding of a grammatical concept, but instead reflect inaccurate proofreading. Occasional errors in punctuating quotation introductions or parenthetical citations.	Occasional errors in grammar, word usage and other conventions, but they do not interfere with coherence or meaning. Consistent errors in punctuating quotation introductions and/or parenthetical citations.	Essay is coherent but flawed by frequent errors in grammar & MLA conventions. May contain awkward phrasing or faulty sentence structure.	Frequent errors create confusion and ambiguity. Contains flawed sentence structure and/or phrasing.