

All Category Essay Rubric

WRITING RUBRIC	1- Needs Improvement: Does not meet Standards D	2- Fair: Meets some Standards C	3- Great: Meets Standards B	4- Excellent: Exceeds Standards A
Clear Thesis	Argument is unclear, thesis is extremely weak, or it does not apply to this assignment	Paper has a weak argument; thesis is too general.	Good argument, clearly articulated in thesis, though it might need refining	Thesis presents a clear, focused, and compelling argument
Sheridan-Baker Thesis	Thesis does not follow the formula of the sheridan baker thesis machine. Thesis does not address prompt.	Thesis is missing many elements of the sheridan baker thesis machine. The thesis is vague and simple.	Thesis does not include all elements of the sheridan-baker thesis machine. The thesis could be more clear and concise or more sophisticated.	Thesis includes all elements of the sheridan-baker thesis machine. The thesis is clear, concise, focused and compelling.
Textual Evidence	-Argument is based on little to no evidence -Connections between evidence and argument are absent/incorrect	-Evidence is insufficient, Unclear connections between evidence and argument	Paper's argument is supported by relevant evidence, though not always the strongest or most specific quotations, or not fully explained in commentary	- Argument is thoroughly supported by strong, specific, and appropriate evidence -Evidence is clearly introduced, analyzed, and connected to the argument
Commentary, Interpretation, & Analysis	Essay lacks analysis or does not include analysis that successfully addresses prompt and explains connects textual evidence to argument.	Analysis is vague, unoriginal, or overly simple. Essay includes too much summary. Every piece of textual evidence is not supported with analysis.	Essay demonstrates effective analytical skills but this analysis could be pushed further through further clarification or more in-depth analysis.	Essay demonstrates sophisticated analysis that is specific, clear, original, and thoroughly explained. Analysis displays insight, the ability to make connections and inferences, and the recognition of patterns.

Conventions of Writing: Grammar & Punctuation (Mechanics)	The piece contains many grammatical or mechanical errors or moments of awkward phrasing	The piece contains three or four grammatical or mechanical errors or moments of awkward phrasing.	The piece contains one or two grammatical or mechanical errors or moments of awkward phrasing.	The piece demonstrates mastery of grammar and mechanics.
Topic Sentences & Transitions	The whole essay lacks smooth transitions.	The essay incorporates some transitions, but some areas of the essay don't flow smoothly.	The essay incorporates transitions, but they do not flow smoothly or there is not enough variety in the transitions.	The essay incorporates a variety of smooth transitions throughout the entirety of the essay.
Clear Focus & Organization	Little to no connection of ideas between paragraphs. Lacking organization and coherence paper wanders from one idea to the next and does not effectively address prompt	Occasional connection of ideas between paragraphs.	The essay could be organized in a more logical manner, could have smoother transitions, or each paragraph could have a clear focus and connection to the thesis.	- Generally well-constructed flow of ideas. -Paragraphs are ordered thoughtfully, and each paragraph relates to central argument -Transitional sentences create a logical progression of ideas
Academic Language	The whole piece is written in an informal style.	The piece contains mostly informal language with a few moments of academic language.	The piece contains mostly sophisticated, academic language but contains a few moments of informal language.	The piece uses sophisticated, academic language throughout the whole essay

Academic Verbs	The piece frequently includes weak verb choices such as “says,” being verbs, or passive voice.	The piece includes weak verb choices such as “says,” being verbs, or passive voice.	The piece includes one or two weak verb choices such as “says,” being verbs, or passive voice. The verbs could include more variety.	The piece contains a variety of strong, active verbs throughout the essay.
In-Text Citations	There are 4 or more mistakes in the MLA citations	There are two or three mistakes in the MLA Citations:	There is one mistake in the MLA Citations	The essay contains proper citations. In parenthetical citations, there is the author’s last name and the page numbers ONLY. There is no period inside the quotation marks and the period comes after the closing of the parenthetical citation. A question mark or exclamation mark is inside the quotation marks when necessary, and there is also a period after the citation. The citation comes at the end of the entire sentence.
MLA Format	There are four or more formatting issues.	There are two or three formatting issues.	There is one formatting issue.	Paper is double-spaced in Times New Roman, 12 point font, heading is in the top left corner with student name, teacher name, class, and date, header in right corner includes last name and page number. Paper includes 1 inch margins and the essay’s title is centered and properly formatted (no underlining or bolding). The text title is properly formatted. There are no extra spaces between paragraphs.

CEI Paragraphs	Essay does not include CEI paragraphs. The paragraphs don't have a clear focus.	Most paragraphs are not CEI paragraphs.	Most body paragraphs are CEI paragraphs, but one paragraph ends on a quote without interpretation.	Essay contains excellent CEI paragraphs. All paragraphs contain a clear, sophisticated claim that is supported by evidence and further analysis.
TIES	There are not enough ties introducing quotes.	Most quotes do not include smoothly incorporated ties.	All quotes do not include smoothly incorporated ties that introduce the quote by acknowledging the speaker, the situation. Etc.	All quotes smoothly incorporate ties that introduce the quote by acknowledging the speaker, the situation, etc.
Quotes	There are not enough quotes in the essay or they are not relevant to the prompt.	The essay is missing a few quotes or some of the quotes are not relevant to the prompt.	The essay is missing one quote or it is not relevant to the prompt. Author could have selected better quotes to support the argument	There are the required number of quotes in the essay, and they are all relevant to the prompt and carefully selected to support the essay's thesis.
FATt Sentence	FATt sentence is missing several major components.	An element of the FATt sentence is missing.	FATt sentence correctly includes all components but the title is formatted incorrectly and/or the FATt sentence is awkwardly phrased.	FATt sentence correctly includes all components; the title is formatted correctly; and the sentence structure is strong.
Quotes (with ties)	There are not enough quotes in the essay or they are not relevant to the prompt. There are not enough ties introducing quotes.	The essay is missing two quotes or two quotes are not relevant to the argument. Most quotes do not contain smoothly incorporated ties.	The essay is missing one quote or it is not relevant to the prompt. Author could have selected better quotes to support the argument. All quotes do not include smoothly incorporated ties that introduce the quote by acknowledging the speaker, the	There are the required number of quotes in the essay, and they are all relevant to the prompt and carefully selected to support the essay's thesis. All quotes smoothly incorporate ties that introduce the quote by acknowledging the speaker, the situation, etc.

			situation. Etc.	
Present tense	Essay is not written in present tense.	Essay is written in present tense but contains three or more errors.	Essay is written in present tense but contains several tense errors.	Essay consistently uses present tense.
Conclusion	The paper trickles off with no clear landing point.	The conclusion seems repetitive or is too vague or uninteresting.	The conclusion is interesting but could be pushed further.	The conclusion effectively leaves readers with something new to consider. The final point is sophisticated and intriguing.
3rd Person	The essay includes more than three first/second person pronouns.	The essay includes two first or second person pronouns.	The essay slips out of 3rd person one time.	The essay maintains 3rd person. There are no first or second person pronouns, such as I, me, you, we, us, etc.
Works Cited	The works cited page contains more than five errors or there is no works cited page.	The works cited page contains more than three or four errors.	The works cited page contains one or two errors.	The works cited is properly formatted and contains the correct number of sources. The works cited page is on its own page and contains a centered title: "Works Cited." The sources are in alphabetical order and are aligned with a hanging indention. All of the required information is included for each source type and is formatted properly.
Block Quotes	The block quote contains three or more formatting issues.	The block quote contains two formatting issues.	The block quote contains one formatting issue.	The essay includes a properly formatted block quote. The quote is at least 4 lines, the quote is introduced with a tie and a colon, all lines of the quote are indented in from the left, there are no quotation marks, and the

				period goes before the citation.
Semicolons	The essay demonstrates poor understanding of semicolons.	The essay demonstrates little understanding of semicolons.	The essay demonstrates some understanding of semicolons.	The essay demonstrates mastery of semicolons.
Commas	The essay demonstrates poor understanding of commas.	The essay demonstrates little understanding of commas.	The essay demonstrates some understanding of commas but could improve.	The essay demonstrates mastery of comma usage.
Colons	The essay does not contain any colons.	The essay uses a colon but incorrectly	The essay uses a colon correctly except the sentence structure does not work for a comma. The sentence may include a verb that should be excluded in place of the colon.	The essay demonstrates understanding of colons
Sensory details	The piece does not include any sensory details	The piece contains one sensory detail.	The piece contains some sensory details.	The piece contains many vivid sensory details.
Style/ Voice	The piece lacks a distinguished writing style.	The piece has moments of a clear sense of voice but is inconsistent.	The piece has a strong sense of voice but it could be more unique.	The piece maintains a clear point of view with a distinguished writing style. There is incredibly strong sense of voice. The whole piece is unique, creative, and specific.
Originality	Most parts of piece are cliché or general.	The piece has some creativity but many areas are cliché or general.	Most of the piece is unique and creative with a few vague moments.	The whole piece is unique and creative.
Creative title	No title	Title is present, but does not appear to be	Title is related to the poem and topic	Title is creative, sparks interest, and is related to the topic

		related to the poem and topic.		
Content and topic	Demonstrates a limited understanding of topics from the speech and of required poetic devices.	Demonstrates a fair understanding of topics from the speech and of required poetic devices.	Demonstrates a good understanding of topics from the speech and of the required poetic devices.	Demonstrates an excellent understanding of topics from the speech and of required poetic devices.
Word choice	Uses a limited vocabulary that does not communicate strongly or capture the reader's interest. Jargon or clichés may be present and detract from the meaning.	Uses words that communicate clearly, but the writing lacks variety, punch, or flair.	Uses vivid words and phrases that linger or draw pictures in the reader's mind, but occasionally the words are used inaccurately or seem overdone.	Uses vivid words and phrases that linger or draw pictures in the reader's mind, and the choice and placement of the words seems accurate, natural and not forced.
Grammar and mechanics	Contains many errors in conventions, grammar, and usage.	Contains several errors in conventions, grammar, and usage	Contains a few errors in conventions, grammar, and usage	Is essentially error-free in conventions, grammar, and usage
Form	Uses an inappropriate poetic form	May use an appropriate poetic form but is ineffective	Effectively uses the appropriate poetic form	Creatively uses an appropriate poetic form
Poetic techniques	Does not effectively use any poetic devices	Uses some poetic devices to reinforce the theme but they may be cliché or unoriginal	Effectively uses poetic devices to reinforce theme.	Effectively uses poetic techniques to reinforce the theme. The techniques are incredibly unique, creative, and specific.
Prompt & Effort	Student's work lacks understanding of the assignment.	Student's work demonstrates some understanding of the	Student's work demonstrates understanding of the assignment.	Student's work demonstrates a complete understanding of the assignment and goes beyond the requirements.

		assignment		
Show vs. Tell	The piece only tells the reader the meaning.	The piece mostly tells the audience the meaning, but a few instances show.	The piece mostly shows the audience the meaning, but in some instances it tells instead.	The piece demonstrates mastery of show vs. tell.