

## Essay Scoring Rubric

### High Performance Essays (A to B+) exhibit the following traits:

#### Content:

- Writer indicates a critical relationship to outside sources; the writer doesn't just re-present a surface reading of outside texts
- Writer has a clearly defined controlling idea that is interesting, even provocative. This should be an argument, not a well-known fact or insupportable opinion
- The controlling idea anticipates the flow of the essay
- The controlling idea has a strong degree of support
- Fluid integration of quotes, paraphrasing or other forms of evidence such as personal experience
- Writer should have a strong narrative voice

#### Organization:

- A high performance essay does not necessarily fit into conventional (intro/body/conclusion) sections. However, the structure should be clear to the reader
- The essay's structure should make the controlling idea as clear as possible.
- The evidence that supports your main point should be discussed separately and in detail
- Very effective use of transitions between paragraphs

#### Mechanics and Grammar:

- High level of sentence variety and structure usage
- Good diction
- Few errors of spelling, grammar, punctuation or syntax

### Medium performing essays (B to C+) exhibit the following traits:

#### Content:

- Writer is aware but not necessarily in dialog with outside sources
- Generally uncritical use of sources
- Thesis produces a basic claim
- Adequate incorporation of support
- Some use of quotes, paraphrasing or other evidence

- Thesis indicates some awareness of essay flow
- Narrative voice is occasionally strong but falters

**Organization:**

- Writer has made some effort to structure the essay around the controlling idea
- Attempts to use transitions between paragraphs

**Mechanics and Grammar:**

- Some sentence variety and complex usage of sentence forms
- Some awareness of diction
- Some errors of spelling, grammar, punctuation and syntax

**Low Performing essays (C- to F) exhibit the following traits:**

**Content:**

- Writer is unaware of or is not in dialog with outside sources
- Writer has severely misinterpreted outside sources
- Uncritical use of sources
- Controlling idea is ambiguous or unclear
- Inadequate support
- Little use of quotes, paraphrasing or other forms of evidence
- Lack of awareness of the need for essay flow
- Weak narrative voice

**Organization:**

- Structure is not apparent
- Structure does not serve to make the controlling idea clear
- No attempt to use transitions or connectives

**Mechanics and Grammar:**

- Little sentence variety and complex usage of sentence forms
- No awareness of diction
- Frequent errors of spelling, grammar, punctuation or syntax

