AP ESSAY SCORING GUIDELINES

**These descriptions are adapted from the general standards applied** by AP readers to student essays. They will be in effect for all essays and papers in AP Lit & Comp. Please familiarize yourself with them *thoroughly.*

**A** (8-9): Writers of these well-written essays clearly understand the **relationship between the question/topic** and the **literary work**(s) under discussion. They perceive **complexities**, include **TEXTUAL EVIDENCE**, and contain **no factual errors** about the literary work(s). These essays demonstrate **stylistic maturity** by an effective command of **grammar, sentence structure, diction** (vocabulary), and **organization.** The writing need not be completely free of mechanical errors, but it must reveal the writer’s ability to choose from and control a wide range of the elements of effective writing.

**B** (6-7): These essays also accurately discuss the question/topic in **relationship to** the literary work(s), but they do so **less perceptively** than do essays at the top level. Their discussion may be **less thorough and specific**. They are well-written in an appropriate style but with **less maturity** than the top essays. Some lapses in diction or syntax may appear, but the writing demonstrates sufficient control over the elements of effective writing to present the writer’s ideas clearly.

**C/ C-** (5): These essays discuss the question/topic, but they do so **imprecisely or less effectively** than the essays at the **A-B levels**. Their discussion may be **TOO GENERAL.** They may even **misunderstand** some aspects of the literary work(s). These essays are adequately written but may demonstrate **inconsistent control** over the elements of effective writing. **Organization** is evident, but it may not be fully realized or particularly coherent.

D/**D-**(4): These essays address the main ideas involved in the question/topic, but they do so **inaccurately or without the support of APPROPRIATE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE.** The discussion may be **insufficiently developed** or may concentrate on **only one point or idea.** Some may contain a **significant misunderstanding** of the question/topic or the literary work(s). The writing is sufficient to convey the writer’s ideas, but it suggests weak control over grammar, sentence structure, diction, or organization. These essays may have some serious errors of grammar and/or other mechanics of good writing.

**F** (3 and below): These essays show some effort at addressing the question/topic and may make **some accurate observations** about the literary work(s), but they supply **little or no evidence** for their ideas. They generally **omit analysis** and rely instead on **PLOT SUMMARY**. Essays that are **poorly written** on several counts of grammar, sentence, diction, and mechanics or are **UNACCEPTABLY BRIEF** belong at this level. The writing reveals consistent weaknesses in the elements of effective writing.