Generic Scoring Guide for AP Essay Questions

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| **9-8** | The writers of these well-constructed essays completely answer the question using evidence and explaining relevance of the evidence. With a convincing thesis, the write demonstrates a clear understanding of the task and the piece. Although not without flaws, these essays reflect the writer’s ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing to provide a keen analysis of the literary text. |
| **7-6** | Developed a sound thesis, these writers answer all parts of the question. These essays may not be entirely responsive to the underlying meanings, but they provide specific examples and meaningful evidence. The analysis is less persuasive and somewhat less sophisticated than 8 & 9 essays. They seem less insightful, or discussion is more limited. Nonetheless, they confirm the writer’s ability to read literary texts with comprehension and to write with organization and control. |
| **5** | These essays construct a reasonable thesis. They discuss the work without serious errors, but the analysis is often superficial. The writer may be vague and demonstrate insufficient development. Typically, these essays reveal simplistic thinking. May include misinterpretations of particular references or illustrations which distract from the overall effect. The writer also exhibits some lack of control over the elements of composition. |
| **4-3** | These essays attempt to discuss the part of the question. The discussion, however, is undeveloped or inaccurate. These writers may misread the passage in an essential way or rely on paraphrase. Illustrations and examples tend to be misconstrued, inexact, or omitted altogether. The writing may be sufficient to convey ideas, but typically characterized by weak diction, syntax, grammar, or organization. Essays scored a 3 or even less able, may not refer to technique at all, and will exhibit even more misinterpretation, inadequate development, or serious omissions. |
| **2-1** | These essays fail to respond adequately to the question. They may demonstrate confused thinking and/or weakness in grammar or other basic elements of composition. Mechanical errors may be distracting. They are often unacceptably brief. Although the writer may have made some attempt to answer the question, the views presented have little clarity or coherence, and significant problems with reading comprehension are evident. Essays that are scored 1 are especially inexact or mechanically unsound, and do less to address the topic. |
| **0** | This score is reserved for essays that make no more than a reference to the task, those that are off-topic, and for a blank sheet. |