

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition Grading Rubric for Essays

AP essays are graded on a nine point scale. Below are the requirements for each category.

9 - 8 papers demonstrate → originality and imagination. They are clearly focused discussions composed of coherent arguments of exceptional clarity. These papers leave the reader convinced of the soundness of the discussion, impressed with the quality of the writing style, and stimulated by the intelligence and insight of the writer. These essays are unified with specific and accurate references or examples. They possess a thoughtful and articulate thesis. They possess a mature command of language, vocabulary, and sentence structure.

9 - A+ 8 - A

7 - 6 papers demonstrate → solid, logical, and persuasive discussion, but they lack the originality and maturity of the "9" papers. Furthermore, the development of the essay lacks the grace and style of the "9" papers and may seem a bit predictable and plodding. These essays possess an articulate thesis and sufficient details to support the thesis. The command of language, vocabulary, and sentence structure is adequate. Ideas are clearly presented and some sentence variety exists.

7 - B+ 6 - B

5 papers demonstrate → a thorough but not totally convincing discussion of the topic, marked by the sense that the writer has not completely thought out the issue. In addition, there are some writing errors that may distract the reader from the writer's argument. The writing is simplistic; the ideas, superficial and hastily constructed. The introduction and the conclusion are empty or repetitive.

5 - C

4 - 3 papers demonstrate → that an attempt has been made to organize the essay but the structure is flawed and the supporting detail is weak. Sentence patterns are simplistic and vocabulary is immature. Serious problems with the mechanics of standard written English may exist.

4 - D 3 - D-

2 - 1 papers demonstrate → a lack of understanding of the task or the process of writing. These essays do not have a thesis and do not address the topic or question. They draw obscure or irrelevant conclusions and are seriously deficient in the conventions of standard written English. Vocabulary and sentence structure are simplistic.

2 and 1 - F