

Free Response Essay Holistic Scoring Guide

Question: _____

Strong Essays: 9 (100%) - 8 (90%)

- Has a clear, well developed, sophisticated thesis.
- Is well organized.
- Information is discussed in logical order
- Each paragraph has a topic sentence
- Argument is easy to follow.
- Completely and fully addresses all of the terms of the question.
- Supports the thesis with specific evidence.
- Demonstrates insightful and critical analysis - more than just a regurgitation of someone else's ideas.

Good Essays: 7 (80%) - 6 (70%)

- Has a clear, well developed, sophisticated thesis.
- Is well organized.
- Information is discussed in logical order
- Each paragraph has a topic sentence
- Argument is easy to follow.
- Addresses all parts of the question adequately, but may be more complete on one part of the question than another.
- Supports the thesis with specific evidence.
- Answers the question adequately, but does not demonstrate outstanding insight or critical analysis.

Mixed Essays: 5 (60%) - 4 (50%)

- Contains a thesis, but this is superficial or simplistic.
- Responds to the question unevenly.
- May contain errors, either factual or interpretive.

Weak Essays: 3 (40%) - 2 (30%)

- Thesis is confused, absent, or merely restates the question.
- Misconstrues the question.
- Partial but inadequate response to question - omits major tasks.
- May contain major errors.
- May contain vague or irrelevant information.
- Contains minimal relevant supporting evidence - few appropriate specific facts.

Poor Essays: 1 (20%) - 0 (10%)

- Writing is off-task or irrelevant.
- Major errors of fact.

Notes: _____

