AP English

Writing Rubric

8-9 These well-organized and well-written essays integrate an analysis of the passages’ formal elements with an insightful discussion of relationships to theme and/or characterization. With apt and specific references to the excerpts, these essays persuasively analyze the complexity of the theme and its relationship to these passages. They may also discuss several of the author’s techniques used in the passages. Though not without flaws, they demonstrate the writer’s ability to read perceptively and to write with clarity and sophistication.

6-7 These essays also demonstrate how formal elements of the passage convey theme and/or characterization. But in describing the strategies, they are less thorough or less precise than essays in the topmost range. In addition to minor flaws in interpretation, their discussion is likely to be less well-supported and less incisive. Although these essays demonstrate the writer’s ability to articulate ideas clearly, they lack the mastery and control of composition possessed by papers in the 8-9 range. 7 papers present a more developed analysis and a more consistent command of the elements of effective composition.

5 These essays are superficial. Although they struggle to describe the purposes of the passages, their discussion tends to be vague, mechanical, or inadequately supported. They manage the assigned tasks without important errors of interpretation, but they have little to say beyond what is most obvious and easy to grasp. They tend to deal with the material in a cursory manner; they are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as upper-half papers. Often they manifest simplistic thinking and/or immature writing.

3-4 These papers reflect an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the passages. Their discussion of the meaning is limited or skewed, and/or they do not convincingly explain how the passages create and convey response. Although not without sensible observations, they misread portions of the passages or offer assertions that may be unsupported or even irrelevant. The writing typically reveals uncertain control over the elements of college-level compositions. Essays scored 3 exhibit more than one of the above problems; they are marred by significant misinterpretation, poor development, or serious omissions.

1-2 These essays compound the weaknesses of papers in the 3-4 range. They may seriously misread the passages. Often, they are unacceptably brief. They may be poorly written on several counts, and may contain many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Although some attempt may have been made to discuss how the passages reflect theme or characterization, the writer’s observations are presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Essays that are especially inexact, vacuous, and/or mechanically unsound should be scored 1.