

AP Literary Essay Rubric

Score	Description
0	A zero is given for no response, or for a response that makes no more than a passing reference to the task.
1 (50) 2 (55)	The 1/2 essay combines two or more serious failures. It may not address the assignment, may indicate serious misreading of the text, may not offer textual evidence, or may use textual evidence in a way that suggests a failure to understand the text. This essay may be unclear, badly written, lack a thesis or focus, or be unacceptably brief. Errors are usually numerous and egregious. (Occasionally, a paper in this range is smoothly written but devoid of content.) The 1 essay is vacuous, inept, and mechanically unsound.
3 (60) 4 (65)	The 3/4 essay fails to demonstrate understanding of part(s) of the text and/or fails to answer part(s) of the question. The thesis may be absent or unclear, and the discussion may be perfunctory or weak. The essay provides little or no analysis, may utilize simplistic and/or repetitive diction, and/or may demonstrate weak composition skills.
5 (70)	The 5 essay is adequate; it addresses the assigned topic, but does not answer it fully and/or specifically. This essay is characterized by a simple or obvious thesis and a decent but general grasp of the text; insight is limited. The essay may employ textual evidence sparingly or offer evidence without attaching it to the thesis. The essay is clear and organized, but may be written somewhat mechanically. Diction may be simplistic; the paper may be marred by errors.
6 (80) 7 (85)	The 6/7 essay responds to the assignment clearly and directly but is less developed than the 9/8 paper. However, it is still impressive, cogent, and generally convincing. It demonstrates a solid understanding of the text and supports its clear thesis with appropriate textual evidence. Though analytical, the argument and diction in this essay are less precise; use of the text is competent, but not subtle. The writer's style is forceful and clear, with few if any errors.
8 (90) 9 (95)	The 8/9 essay responds to the text analytically and is focused, well-written, clearly argued, accurate, and complete. This essay supports a coherent, thoughtful thesis with specific, strong textual evidence and employs subtlety in its use of the text. The diction is interesting and precise. The writer's style is fluent, flexible, and error-free. A 9 essay demonstrates exceptional insight and language facility.