

Generic Scoring Guide for AP English Literature

9-8	These well-written essays reveal an understanding of the entire passage. They define clearly the speaker's state of mind and discuss, with apt and specific reference, how literary devices reflect these responses. These papers may have minor flaws, but they will be characterized by a convincing interpretation of the passage and consistent control over the elements of effective writing. They demonstrate the writer's ability to read with perception and to express ideas with clarity and skill.
7-6	These essays also reveal an understanding of the passage. The discussion of the speaker's state of mind is less fully developed, dealing with fewer changes or less aptly supported. The essays specifically analyze literary devices but less effectively or less thoroughly than 9-8 essays. They may contain minor flaws in interpretation and may consider fewer elements of style and syntax. These essays demonstrate the writer's ability to express ideas clearly, but with less maturity and control than the top papers. Generally, 6 essays present a more limited analysis and less consistent command of the elements of effective writing than essays scored 7.
5	These essays are characterized by superficiality. They deal with the assigned topics without important errors, but they discuss only the most obvious changes; the handling of style and syntax may be vague or mechanical. The writing is adequate to convey the writer's thoughts, but these essays are typically pedestrian, not as well-conceived, organized or developed as the upper half papers. Often they reveal simplistic thinking and/or immature writing.
4-3	These lower half essays may reflect an incomplete understanding of the passage, and fail to respond adequately to part or parts of the question. The discussion of the speaker's state of mind may be inaccurate or unclear. The treatment of literary devices is weak, meager or irrelevant. The writing demonstrates weak control over the elements of composition. These essays typically contain recurrent stylistic flaws and/or misreadings, and lack persuasive evidence from the text. Typically, essays scored 3 exhibit more than one of the above problems; they are flawed by weak writing skills, significant misinterpretations, inadequate development, or serious omissions.
2-1	These essays compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 4-3 range. They seriously misread the passage or fail to respond to the question. Frequently, they are unacceptably brief. They are often poorly written on several counts; they may contain many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Although some attempt to answer the question may have been made, the writer's views typically are presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence.
0	This score is for off-topic responses. Indicates blank response