

2024 – AWPE Scoring Guide

Holistic reading requires scorers to assign essays to categories based on the dominant characteristics of the essay. The categories below are used to identify scores of papers in six distinct groups.

A 6 paper commands attention by engaging the material in an insightful and mature manner. The response is clear, logical, and convincing. Further, the response is fully developed, relying on well-chosen examples and persuasive reasoning. The 6 paper demonstrates a strong control of language, a fluid use of sophisticated sentences and a notable understanding of the conventions of written English.

A 5 paper is clearly thoughtful and competent. The response consistently relies on effective examples that are carefully developed. All parts of a 5 paper will be on topic, though the overall response will not be as accomplished or elaborated upon as a 6 paper. A 5 paper often has a less fluent and complex style than a 6 paper, but it does show a clear control over word choice and sentence variety while coherently observing the conventions of written English.

A 4 paper is satisfactory, though uneven in its delivery. It demonstrates an understanding of the prompt and presentation of a thesis, though that thesis may not be logically positioned or clearly stated. Still, the thesis does have support in the form of examples, though the examples may not be fully developed, and some examples may not directly support or relate to the position and topic. The reasoning may be marginal in some parts of the response, and the response in general will be less developed and accomplished than a 5 paper. A 4 paper demonstrates adequate accuracy in sentence control and sentence construction. The 4 paper recognizes and adheres to the conventions of written English.

A 3 paper demonstrates that the student will benefit from additional instruction in reading, logic, and sentence construction. The response may indicate an unclear understanding of the text or topic, and the examples may benefit from additional development and analysis. A 3 paper may be characterized by any of the following: little sentence variety, word choice that could be more appropriate and concise, occasional misunderstandings of major concepts in grammar and usage, or frequent minor misunderstandings at the sentence level.

A 2 paper indicates a student is likely to receive significant benefits from instruction in reading, essay organization, and sentence generation. Typically, the response is basic in nature and often presents unclear logic or coherence throughout, and because of these qualities, the essay often diverges from the text or topic. Its prose is usually characterized by at least one of the following: simplistic or imprecise word choice; use of a single type of sentence construction; many repeated misunderstandings of grammar and syntax.

A 1 paper shows that a student would benefit from both intensive and extensive instruction in all aspects of reading and writing. The response may not engage the topic's demands, or there may not be a recognized response to the basic aspects of the prompt. The response may be very brief in nature. It often displays a pervasive struggle with word choice and coherence at the sentence level.