

PROFESSOR MARTIN'S RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT OF ESSAYS ABOUT LITERATURE

CRITERIA

LEVELS OF MASTERY: BEGIN (0-69), DEVEL (70-79), SKILL (80-89), EXCEP (90-100)

	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	SKILLED	EXCEPTIONAL
CONTENT & ORGANIZATION				
Focus & Unity				
Includes a developed introduction with thesis statement	No clear thesis	Thesis attempted but not covering same ground as essay	Clear thesis supported by evidence	Exceptional thesis in good academic style
Paragraphs are all related to topic	Paragraphs seem unrelated	Paragraphs relevant to topic but connections are unclear	Most paragraphs clearly relevant, supporting and explaining thesis.	Paragraphs all clearly related to central focus of essay
Follows any specific directions for the particular assignment	Fails to follow directions for focus, length, etc.	Attempts to follow directions but sometimes fails	Follows almost all specific directions provided	Follows all directions precisely
Organization				
Paragraphs follow a coherent, defined pattern	Unclear principle of organization	Some paragraphs should be re-ordered	Essay reads coherently and all points are made according to a defined pattern.	Paragraphs exceptionally well ordered to provide strong flow and synthesis of individual points.
Each paragraph is unified	Most paragraphs are not unified	Some paragraphs lack a clear focus	Most paragraphs unified around a clear focus	Paragraphs concisely unified and yet well developed.
Development				
Points are thoroughly developed	Many paragraphs too underdeveloped	Some paragraphs underdeveloped	Points are well developed in each paragraph. Arguments of the essay are supported with sufficient detail from sources.	Points are developed with originality and great clarity
Includes specific details, examples, reasons, etc.	Few details to support statements	Includes enough detail to indicate familiarity with text	Includes specific details throughout essay	Includes striking examples, insightful reasons, etc.

Comprehension of Literary Text				
Accurately describes plot, characters, structure and other basic elements	Contains several factual errors	Contains occasional errors	Shows understanding of the literary text by using appropriate examples to support thesis	Shows outstanding comprehension and perception
Includes all textual evidence relevant to topic	Includes little evidence showing familiarity with text	Includes incomplete evidence from text to support statements	Uses extensive evidence closely related to points being made	Includes all evidence relevant to points being made
Thoughtful Analysis				
Explains/interprets vs. summarizing	Mostly summarizing, with some errors	Summarizes accurately but little evidence of analysis	Interprets text analytically, understanding the intent of the literary text and supporting theses with appropriate detail, with some unnecessary use of summary	Analyzes text perceptively, using summarizing only as needed
Uses relevant literary terminology correctly	Shows little familiarity with relevant terms	Uses some relevant terminology, but not always correctly	Uses relevant literary terminology accurately	Incorporates literary terminology smoothly into style
Integrates discussion of form and content, techniques and themes	Fails to discuss form and techniques	Makes some attempt to include form as well as content	Includes most significant elements of form and content	Integrates form and content perceptively
Includes writer's own insights beyond what was said in class.	Cannot explain points made in class	Comprehends classroom analysis but adds no personal insights	Expands on classroom analysis with occasional original insights illustrating critical thinking	Integrates classroom analysis smoothly with original insights
COMPOSITION SKILLS				
Style				
Employs varied sentence structure	Mostly short simple sentences, fragments, and run-ons	Many short choppy sentences in need of transition	Varying sentence forms	Varied and sophisticated sentence forms
Uses precise and college-level vocabulary	Uses very limited vocabulary	Sometimes uses imprecise language	Uses precise vocabulary	Vocabulary is precise and college-level
Demonstrates control of dialect variation and fluency in mainstream U.S. English forms	Primarily uses dialect forms other than formal, mainstream U.S. varieties	Uses an equal mix of formal, mainstream U.S. English and dialect variation	Competent use of formal, mainstream U.S. English & competent use of dialect variation	Skillful command of mainstream U.S. English & skillful integration of dialect variation

Grammar & Mechanics				
Uses standard grammar	Includes more than six errors	Includes five or more errors	Includes less than three errors	Includes no errors
Punctuates and spells correctly	Includes more than six errors	Includes five or more errors	Includes less than three errors	Includes no errors
RESEARCH SKILLS (if required)				
Selecting and documenting sources				
Selects professional/academic sources	Cites mostly public internet material or other factual sources	Cites some academic sources, but some factual or unreliable	Cites reliable and appropriate sources and shows predominate use of professional/academic sources	Complete use of professional/academic sources
Follows MLA format correctly	Citations missing	Citations present but incomplete	Citations correctly written with occasional small errors	Citations written correctly throughout
Parenthetical citations and final citations correspond	No Works Cited page	More than two sources not listed in Works Cited	One or two missing sources in Works Cited	All parenthetical and final citations correspond
Incorporating sources correctly				
Clearly understands material borrowed from sources	Misinterprets sources frequently	Confused about some sources	Mostly shows evidence of comprehension of sources	Clearly understands any cited material
Avoids citing or copying accepted factual information	Most sources are common knowledge	Sometimes quotes and/or cites factual material	Cites appropriate sources, explaining common knowledge in own words	Cites appropriate sources and integrates common knowledge smoothly
Competently incorporates source material into essay	Constantly quotes without using quotation marks	Rarely summarizes or paraphrases, but cites quotations correctly	Incorporates source material that genuinely supports own ideas, with some variety in transitions	Incorporates source material with very smooth clear transitions