

Essay Grading Rubric:

A – Essay is well-crafted, engages the text on a deep and critical level, with clear ideas, connections between ideas, appropriate summary, and textual evidence whose relevance and meaning is explained in the paper. Essay should be focused on one clear question or topic and include a clearly identifiable thesis that states this question (topic/problem) and an answer to this question/position on this topic. This purpose should be kept in view throughout the entire essay: each subsequent idea should be relevant to this thesis, and this relevance should be explicitly stated. Connection to the text is maintained at all times. Writing flows well and does not have any grammatical or spelling errors. Texts are properly cited, length follows the guidelines, and an Author’s Note is included.

B – Essay does not maintain a strict connection to the text or provide enough textual support for ideas, thesis is not clear enough or is too broad, organization of paper needs improvement—ideas do not flow or follow one another in a way that makes sense. More emphasis on explicit connections and clarity is needed. However, ideas are still interesting, relatively focused, and engage the text. Few grammatical or spelling errors, minor citation problems. (A “B” paper may not have all of these problems, but these are common reasons behind a “B” grade.)

C – Organization of paper and connection of ideas needs significant work. No clear thesis or direction in paper. Little engagement with the text or textual support, ideas are untethered and tangentially related without clear explanation of their relevance and meaning. Writing echoes the text without providing original analysis or thought; paper is primarily a general summary with little focus around a question or position taken in regards to that question. (A “C” paper may not have all of these problems, but these will be common reasons behind a “C” grade.)