



# Essay Contest Judging Rubric

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

For each criterion listed, score the essay on a scale provided. Use a separate form for each essay. Do not score in decimals or fractions – whole numbers only.

Criteria	5	4	3	2	1	Score
	Excellent	Above average	Average	Below average	Poor	
<b>Understanding of the topic:</b> To what extent did the writer demonstrate a clear understanding of the question and responded with supporting details from the story and current news events. <b>(4x value)</b>	In-depth understanding: key concepts related to the question and the story are identified and fully defined; excellent use of literary techniques such as comparison and contrast	Key concepts related to the question and the story are adequately identified and defined; average use of literary techniques to describe viewpoints	Key concepts are partially identified and defined; statement that viewpoints exist but little use of supporting details	Some concepts are identified but not defined; lack of reference to any viewpoints	Complete lack of reference to the question and the story; irrelevant information; unsupported statements, incomplete details	1-20
<b>Effectiveness in expressing a point-of-view:</b> To what extent did the writer present his/her point of view?  <b>(2 ½ times value)</b>	The student integrates personal feelings, experiences, hopes, fears, reflections or beliefs with the text. The personal response is rooted in the text and a clear understanding of the whole text, and its subtext(s), and makes connections to other texts.	The student connects personal feelings, experiences, hopes, fears, reflections or beliefs with the text. The personal response refers to the text, conveys a sense of understanding of the text and partial understanding of its subtext.	The student explores personal feelings, experiences, hopes, fears, reflections or beliefs and makes a superficial or concrete connection to the text.	The student retells or paraphrases the text or identifies devices in isolation making only a superficial reference to personal feelings or experiences. Or the student writes about personal feelings, etc., without connecting to or referring to the text.	The student response shows little or no interaction with or understanding of the text.	1-15
<b>Original thinking relative to the topic:</b> To what extent was the original thinking relative to the subject? <b>(2 ½ times value)</b>	Fully, relative to the topic	Mostly relative to the topic without errors	Partially relative with minor errors	Somewhat relative with significant errors	Not relative to the topic at all	1-15
<b>Literary style, grammar and spelling</b>  <b>(Double value)</b>	Literary style completely clear and effective, excellent grammar and spelling  Varied sentence structure, essay well developed and cohesive	Literary style partially clear and effective, good grammar & spelling  Sentence structure somewhat varied; essay well developed and cohesive	Use of literary technique to convey main ideas but lacking clarity  Sentence structure lacks variety but essay mostly developed	Lacks use of literary technique  Many errors in grammar and spelling	Irrelevant and/or erroneous information, main ideas unclear, illegible, grammar and spelling errors consistent throughout essay	1-10

Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_