

GRADING RUBRIC FOR A PERSUASIVE OR LITERARY ESSAY

(The average length for top papers is around 700-750 words)

Begin with a sharp hook, use captivating lines, and end with a spectacular zinger!

- A) INTRODUCTION – 20 POINTS (Start with a good “hook”)
- (10) Answer the question by making a clear thesis statement.
For a literary essay, also name the work and its author.
 - (10) List at least three logical and distinct topics to prove that your thesis statement (argument) is valid (List of Three).
- B) CONTENT OF BODY PARAGRAPHS – 36 POINTS /12 POINTS PER PARAGRAPH
- (21) You use at least three quotes or three citations of specific events to prove or illustrate the point you make in each paragraph of the body of your essay. (For a literary essay, these will be drawn from the text.) (7)
 - (15) You provide good explanations or interpretations of these citations at the end of each body paragraph to tie these points to your thesis and wrap up your paragraph. Use a transitional expression from the other side. (5)
- C) ORGANIZATION AND LOGIC OF BODY PARAGRAPHS – 24 POINTS
- (6) Each paragraph represents one topic you make in your introduction. (2)
 - (6) You have clear topic sentences to begin each paragraph. (2)
 - (3) You use good transitional expressions at the end of each paragraph. (1)
 - (9) The points you make are logical and strong, and clearly help you prove your thesis statement. (3)
- D) MECHANICS – 10 POINTS
- (10) Points subtracted for syntax, spelling, improper diction or tone, punctuation and grammatical errors.
- E) CONCLUSION – 10 POINTS
- (4) Summarize your thesis statement again, and assert that your thesis statement is proven because:
 - (2) You’ve supported the evidence you listed in the introduction paragraph, and you list these three points of evidence again (List of Three).
 - (2) You’ve done all of the above gracefully, without sounding repetitious – Here’s the art in essay writing! (In a literary essay, it is customary to name both the work and the author again!)
 - (1) Relate the issue you just discussed in the paper to real-life matters. (End with a great zinger!)

- **Know your audience!**
- **Use tone and diction that is appropriate to your audience!**
- **Get them with Hook, Line and Zinger!**
- **Build your argument from weakest point to strongest point!**
- **For a really strong argument, present opposing views first, and then dispute them!**