

GRADING CRITERIA

A+ (90-100)

- **Argument:** Clear development of a specific, challenging and original thesis. The writer has taken significant risks successfully; in the resulting piece, distinctive ideas and content have discovered their necessary distinctive form. Detailed reference to appropriate texts, with evidence of individual response. Ability not only to expound subject but to see it around—subtleties and ambiguities, qualifications and concessions, relations to other subjects, etc.
- **Presentation, structure:** Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. Almost no typographical errors.
- **Language Skills:** Sentence structure correct, with full range of sentence types (compound, complex, and compound-complex), with full range of punctuation (including semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses). Graceful style, neither pompous nor breezy, and few errors.
- **Research/scholarship:** Evidence of effective, extensive and independent research, with proper documentation of sources. Quotations used appropriately and purposively.

A (80 to 89)

- **Argument:** The writer has taken risks and most of them succeed. Clear development of a specific and challenging thesis, with proper paragraphs. Detailed reference to appropriate texts, with evidence of individual response. Ability not only to expound subject but to see it around—subtleties and ambiguities, qualifications and concessions, relations to other subjects, etc.
- **Presentation, structure:** Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. Almost no typographical errors.
- **Language Skills:** Sentence structure correct, with full range of sentence types (compound, complex, and compound-complex), with full range of punctuation (including semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses). Graceful style, neither pompous nor breezy, and few errors
- **Research/scholarship:** Evidence of effective and independent research, with proper documentation of sources. Quotations used appropriately and purposively.

B (70 to 79)

- **Argument:** Clear development of a specific thesis, with proper paragraphs. Adequately detailed reference to texts. Ability to expound reasonably sophisticated ideas with clarity.
- **Presentation/structure:** Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. A few typographical errors.
- **Language Skills:** Sentence structure correct, with reasonable range of sentence types and range of punctuation. Style not too wordy, with errors relatively few and minor. full
- **Research Scholarship:** Evidence of adequate research, with proper documentation of sources.

C (60 to 69)

- **Argument:** Reasonably clear development of a thesis, with proper paragraphs. Basic ability to expound ideas, whose development might be rather thin. Effort to support points with references to the text. Tendency to replace analysis with descriptive retelling of plot.
- **Presentation/structure:** Presentation showing lapses in tidiness and/or proofreading. Poor use of paragraphs.
- **Language Skills:** Sentence structure correct, but perhaps overly simple, with tendency to avoid punctuation besides period and comma. Errors relatively few, but occasionally serious, with evident misunderstanding of some point of elementary grammar (comma splices, fragments, semicolon errors, subject-verb disagreements, poorly integrated quotations)
- **Research/Scholarship:** reasonable effort at documentation, but rather thin.

D (50 to 59)

- **Argument:** Difficulty with paragraphing or consecutive thought. Ideas inchoate but clouded by weak expression. Overgeneralization with inadequate support, or examples that run to lengthy paraphrase, with little or no analysis.
- **Presentation/Structure:** Very poor to non-existent use of paragraphs. Inadequate and inaccurate documentation. Multiple typographical errors.
- **Language Skills:** Errors of grammar or diction frequent enough to interfere with understanding.
- **Research/Scholarship:** Little serious effort to research the topic.

F (49 and down)

- **Argument:** Ideas too simple for level of course. Argument completely incoherent. Erroneous content showing little or no understanding of subject.
- **Presentation/Structure:** Very sloppy proof-reading. Documentation virtually non-existent.
- **Language Skills:** writing frequently ungrammatical.
- **Research/Scholarship:** Non-existent. Content largely “borrowed” from sources with no individual distillation, but no apparent attempt to deceive.

0 (Report to Department)

- Plagiarism with intent to deceive