

College Essay Rubric

	IDEAS	ORGANI-ZATION	VOICE	WORD CHOICE	SENTENCE FLUENCY	CONVEN-TIONS
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Clear and focused paper holds the reader's attention * Ideas are fresh and original *Details are quality and go beyond the obvious and predictable *Ideas show insight and understanding of what is important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Organization enhances the central idea and compels the reader through the text *Introduction and conclusion engage the reader and focus attention *Pacing, support, and transitions are controlled, logical, and effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Writer is individual, compelling, and engaging *Person behind the words is honest and sincere *Strong commitment to topic is clear *Tone adds flavor and texture *Reader wants to share and talk about this piece *Many moments of surprise and delight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Words are powerful and engaging, specific and accurate *Language is natural and effective * Writer has carefully chosen the precise word for the right spot *Striking words and phrases catch the reader's eye 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Writing flows with rhythm and cadence *Purposeful and varied sentence structure enhances meaning *Writer has thought about the sound of the words as well as the meaning *Dialogue and fragments, if used, sound natural 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Conventions are used effectively to enhance readability *Only minor "touch-up" is needed to publish *Conventions are used for stylistic effect *Paragraphing is effecting *Spelling of difficult words is usually correct
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Topic is narrow and manageable *Paper is clear and focused *Details are relevant and provide important information * Writer shows involvement with the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Order moves the reader easily through the text *Effective introduction and conclusion *Sequencing and details are logical and effective *Transitions work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Writer reveals personality and attitudes *Reader senses the person behind the words *Strong involvement with topic is evident *Some surprise and delight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Writing is energetic with lively verbs and precise nouns and modifiers *Words and phrases create pictures *Language is effective, not overdone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Sentences are well built and varied in structure *Writing has rhythm and flows naturally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Conventions are generally correct and contribute to clarity *Piece is close to being ready to publish *Paragraphing is sound *Spelling is usually correct
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Development is general and may be unfocused * Topic is recognizable but theme is not clear *More general observations than specific details *Ideas are reasonably clear there's no strong sense of purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Order moves the reader without confusion *Introduction and conclusion are present *Sequence is logical but "programmed" *Transitions and pacing are inconsistent *Organization doesn't always support main idea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Writer is sincere but not fully involved. *Earnest and pleasant, with occasional delight *Voice is expressed inconsistently *Writer discards personality in favor of safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Language lacks energy and precision *Words are adequate but without flair and originality *Occasional colorful language *Familiar words and phrases communicate but don't engage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Writing has pleasant, steady beat *Sentences are usually grammatical but not well crafted *Some occasional variety in sentence structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Conventions are handled inconsistently *Paragraphing is awkward *Some errors are distracting but not serious *Spelling inconsistent *Moderate editing would fix most errors
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Topic is yet undefined and development is basic *More information is needed for support *Ideas are not detailed enough to show understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attempts at introduction and conclusion are recognizable *Connections are fuzzy *Sometimes the sequencing takes away from the content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Writing is neither unique nor distinctive *Reads as though it could have been written by almost anybody *One or two moments of voice, but mostly generalities and vague language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Language is only functional *Words are generally used correctly *Attempts at original language seem like thesaurus overload *Jargon and clichés are present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *More mechanical than fluid *Sentences are routine and unvaried *Writing is inconsistent with some awkward phrasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Conventions distort meaning *Many errors distract from readability *Difficult words often misspelled *Extensive editing required for publication *Paragraphing is attempted
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *No clear sense of purpose or topic *Reader must infer meaning *Information and details are limited and unclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *No clear sense of direction *Order seems random *Connections are missing *No real introduction or conclusion *Reader is confused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Writer is indifferent and uninvolved from topic and/or audience *Writing is lifeless and mechanical *Writing is functional and monotonous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Language is vague and vocabulary is limited *Redundancy and incorrect word use distract the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Sentences are choppy, incomplete, awkward, and unvaried *Even with editing, there would be no flow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Errors repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read *Poor conventions are noticeable *Paragraphing is haphazard or missing *Extensive editing (every line) required