

The Atlantic & College Board Writing Prize Scoring Rubric

Guidelines for using the rubric:

Teachers should evaluate potential student entries with the following rubrics, which address six elements of composition. The focus of the contest is on analytic writing, so the scoring is designed to prioritize the “Required Component: Analysis.” Students are ineligible for points in the five “Other Components” unless they earn a score of 3 or 4 in the “Required Component: Analysis.” If a teacher determines that a student’s essay qualifies for 16 or more total points (out of 18 possible), the essay is eligible for submission to the contest judges.

Student _____ Total score _____

I. Required Component: Analysis (4 points)	Score
<p>Presents an accurate and insightful analysis of the author’s language choices, revealing with great insight and originality the specific ways the author uses particular words and imagery to achieve a purpose.</p> <p>Presents an accurate and insightful analysis of the intent or meaning of the work.</p> <p>Clearly and effectively integrates evidence from the selected document to support the student’s claims.</p>	4
<p>Presents an accurate analysis of the author’s language choices, revealing the specific ways the author uses particular words and imagery to achieve a purpose.</p> <p>Presents an accurate analysis of the intent or meaning of the work.</p> <p>Uses evidence from the selected document to support the student’s claims, but at times the student may not fully connect his or her citations to his or her analysis or may quote more text than is useful and necessary.</p>	3
<p>Includes some accurate analysis of the author’s language choices, but primarily summarizes the author’s message rather than reveals specific ways the author uses particular words and imagery to achieve a purpose.</p> <p>Presents a thoughtful but at times inaccurate analysis of the intent or meaning of the work.</p> <p>Attempts to use evidence from the selected document to support the student’s claims, but the references to the document are frequently general rather than specific.</p>	2
<p>Attempts to analyze the author’s language choices, but such attempts are often inaccurate, and the focus of the essay is on summarizing rather than analyzing.</p> <p>Presents a thoroughly inaccurate analysis of the intent or meaning of the work.</p> <p>Uses passages from the selected document to support the student’s claims, but those passages fail to support or are irrelevant to the argument.</p>	1
<p>Lacks an analysis of the author’s language choices.</p> <p>Lacks an analysis of the intent or meaning of the work.</p> <p>Lacks evidence or citations to support the student’s claims.</p>	0

II. Other Components: Context & Connections (3 points)		Score
<p>Provides brief yet insightful and accurate information about the cultural and/or historical context in which the document was created.</p> <p>Presents an accurate and insightful analysis of the cultural impact of the document.</p> <p>Clearly presents a logical and compelling argument or position on the connection of the document to the student's own community or experiences.</p> <p>Effectively uses evidence from the student's own community or experiences to support his or her argument or position.</p>	3	
<p>Provides accurate information about the cultural and/or historical context in which the document was created.</p> <p>Presents an accurate analysis of the cultural impact of the document.</p> <p>Presents a logical argument or position on the connection of the document to the student's own community or experiences.</p> <p>Uses appropriate evidence from the student's own community or experiences to support his or her argument or position, but some may be ineffective.</p>	2	
<p>Provides unclear, vague, or overly extensive information about the cultural and/or historical context in which the document was created.</p> <p>Presents a thoughtful but at times inaccurate analysis of the cultural impact of the document.</p> <p>Presents an argument or position on the connection of the document to the student's own community or experiences, but it may not be articulated logically.</p> <p>Uses evidence from the student's own community or experiences to support his or her argument or position, but some evidence may be inappropriate.</p>	1	
<p>Provides no information or only inaccurate information about the cultural and/or historical context in which the document was created.</p> <p>Lacks or presents a thoroughly inaccurate analysis of the cultural impact of the document.</p> <p>Lacks an argument or position on the connection of the document to the student's own community or experiences.</p> <p>Lacks evidence from the student's own community or experiences to support his or her argument or position.</p>	0	

III. Other Components: Organization		Score
<p>Clearly conveys a compelling stated or unstated thesis.</p> <p>Demonstrates logical and effective arrangement of the essay components, in service of the student's thesis.</p> <p>Demonstrates appropriate and effective use of transitional elements.</p>	3	
<p>Conveys an appropriate stated or unstated thesis.</p> <p>Demonstrates logical arrangement of the essay components, in support of the student's thesis.</p> <p>Demonstrates appropriate use of transitional elements.</p>	2	
<p>Conveys an inappropriate stated or unstated thesis.</p> <p>Demonstrates logical arrangement of the essay components, but they don't support the student's thesis.</p> <p>Uses transitional elements but may not do so appropriately.</p>	1	
<p>Lacks a stated or unstated thesis.</p> <p>Lacks logical arrangement of the essay components.</p> <p>Lacks transitional elements.</p>	0	

IV. Other Components: Voice	Score
Articulates a unique and interesting perspective and ideas regarding the selected document. Presents an engaging and thorough discussion of complex ideas. Conveys passion for the topic and its relation to the student.	3
Presents an interesting perspective and ideas regarding the selected document. Presents a detailed and thorough discussion of complex ideas.	2
Presents a common perspective or ideas regarding the selected document. Presents a comprehensive but general discussion of complex ideas.	1
Presents an unclear perspective or unfocused ideas regarding the selected document. Presents a limited discussion of complex ideas.	0

V. Other Components: Effect/Impact	Score
Produces a strong aesthetic, emotional, and/or intellectual effect in the reader. Demonstrates a clear analytical, explanatory, or investigative purpose. Effectively conveys the significance of the essay topic as it relates to the selected document. Enhances the reader's understanding of the continuing impact of the selected document.	2
Suggests an analytical, explanatory, or investigative purpose. Suggests the significance of the essay topic as it relates to the selected document. Superficially addresses the continuing impact of the selected document.	1
An analytical, explanatory, or investigative purpose is not apparent. The significance of the essay topic as it relates to the selected document is not apparent. The continuing impact of the selected document is not apparent.	0

VI. Other Components: Writing Craft	Score
Demonstrates an innovative or sophisticated writing style. Demonstrates superior quality and clarity of expression of ideas and sentiments. Demonstrates mastery of writing mechanics, grammar, and usage.	3
Demonstrates an appropriate and effective writing style. Demonstrates appropriate expression of ideas and sentiments. Demonstrates appropriate writing mechanics, grammar, and usage with few, if any, errors.	2
Writing style is at times ineffective or interferes with the reader's understanding. Expression of ideas or sentiments is at times unclear. Writing mechanics, grammar, and usage are generally appropriate, but some errors may interfere with the reader's understanding.	1
Demonstrates an immature writing style. Expression of ideas or sentiments is often unclear. Demonstrates frequent errors in writing mechanics, grammar, and usage; and some errors may interfere with the reader's understanding.	0