

# Grading Rubric for the Multi-paragraph Essay

## Vestavia Hills High School English Department

### *A* **Brilliant/Excellent**

- Organizes clearly and logically:
  - Develops and supports a strong thesis
  - Divides thesis support into clear, unified paragraphs that contain topic sentences, concrete details, commentary, and clincher.
- Includes skillfully selected concrete details
- Incorporates quotes seamlessly with impeccable documentation
- Includes insightful, stunning commentary
- Uses powerful, applicable vocabulary, sophisticated style and established voice
- Varies sentences in length and structure
- Uses smooth and skillful transitions
- Repeats little or not at all
- Avoids errors in logic
- Contains few, if any, grammar errors
- Writes for the intended audience with an appropriate tone

### *B* **Good/Solid**

- Develops a clear and logical organization but not as skillfully as the “A” papers
- Includes appropriate concrete details
- Includes insightful commentary but less so than an “A” paper
- Incorporates quotes smoothly and with correct documentation
- Uses good vocabulary and style
- Employs above-average sentence variety
- Uses transitions correctly
- Repeats little or not at all
- Avoids errors in logic
- Contains few grammar errors
- Writes for the intended audience with an appropriate tone

### *C* **Competent/Adequate**

- Follows instructions but organization is predictable and less skillful than the “B” papers
- Includes acceptable but obvious concrete details
- Fails to incorporate quotes smoothly and/or document correctly
- Includes obvious, superficial, generic and/or irrelevant commentary
- Contains some grammar errors
- Uses average, simple vocabulary and/or wrong word choices
- Lacks interesting sentence variety
- Demonstrates a limited use of transitions
- Contains noticeable repeats

- Uses passive voice inappropriately
- Avoids inappropriate use of first and second person pronouns (*I, me, my, you, your, yours*) in a literary paper (for a “C” or higher)
- Avoids *would, should, could, may, might* when giving commentary in a literary paper (for a “C” or higher)
- Uses appropriate verb tense (for a “C: or higher)

***D* Serious Problems**

- Lacks or uses flawed, unclear, illogical organization
- Uses weak and/or erroneous concrete details
- incorporate quotes incorrectly or not at all
- Uses weak and/or irrelevant commentary
- Makes numerous grammatical errors
- Strays from the topic
- Uses simple vocabulary or inappropriate word choice (*thing, stuff, etc.*)
- Uses little or no sentence variety
- Fails to use transitions
- Repeats unnecessarily
- Uses first and/or second person pronouns incorrectly
- Uses *would, should, could, may, might* in a literary paper
- Uses inappropriate verb tense

***F* Fails to meet standards**