

25-Point Essay Rubric

Criteria	4: Exemplary (A)	3: Proficient (B)	2: Needs Refining (C)	1: Poor (D)	0: Unacceptable (F)
Instructions	The essay shows a thorough understanding of the instructions for both formatting and answering the prompt. For example, there are no quotes from the text, and the essay is clearly divided into multiple paragraphs.	The essay shows a basic understanding of the instructions for both formatting and answering the prompt, though there is heavy paraphrasing.	The essay does not show a thorough understanding of the instructions for both formatting and answering the prompt. For example, the essay is not broken into paragraphs and there is heavy paraphrasing or quoting of the text.	The essay does not show a basic understanding of the instructions for both formatting and answering the prompt. For example, the essay is not broken into paragraphs OR the text is quoted.	The essay does not show a basic understanding of the instructions for both formatting and answering the prompt.
Summary	All summarizing is exactly accurate and tightly structured.	All summarizing is generally accurate, but somewhat vague and so not exactly structured.	All summarizing is mostly vague or irrelevant, and so inaccurate and unstructured.	All summarizing is mostly inaccurate and so irrelevant, and the structure is unclear.	There is no discernible accuracy in or careful structuring of any summarizing.
Analysis	Explanations of concepts and arguments are exacting and comprehensive and coherent. Connections between concepts and lines of reasoning are explicitly identified and explained.	Explanations of concepts and arguments are competent but incomplete or not entirely coherent. Connections between concepts and lines of reasoning are not explicitly identified and explained.	Explanations of concepts and arguments are superficial, incomplete, and so not entirely coherent. Connections between concepts and lines of reasoning are not identified and explained.	Explanations of concepts and arguments are largely indiscernible, i.e., the position taken is unclear, incoherent or difficult to defend. No connections between concepts and lines of reasoning are identified.	There is no discernible explanation of the text.
Argument	The essay reflects a coherent, accurate, and insightful argument. Where relevant, the essay identifies and successfully discusses at least one substantive objection to the thinker's work.	The essay reflects a somewhat coherent and generally accurate argument. Where relevant, the essay identifies and discusses at least one substantive objection to the thinker's work.	The essay reflects an attempt at articulating an argument, but that articulation is unclear, incomplete, or inaccurate. Where relevant, the essay identifies, but does not adequately discuss at least one substantive objection to the thinker's work.	The essay hardly reflects an attempt at articulating an argument. Instead, there is, e.g., only descriptive work. Where relevant, the essay neither identifies nor adequately discusses at least one substantive objection to the thinker's work.	There is no discernible argument articulated. Where relevant, there is no discernible recognition of at least one substantive objection to the thinker's work.
Clarity	The essay is clearly written; there are no typos, grammatical errors, or word choice issues.	The essay is mostly clearly written; there are no typos or grammatical errors, but some word choices could be improved.	The writing lacks clarity: there are typos, grammatical errors, inexact formulations, or word choice issues.	The writing lacks clarity: there are significant typos, grammatical errors, or word choice issues.	The writing is plagued by typos, grammatical errors, and poor word choices obfuscate meaning to the point of unintelligibility.