

# Essay Writing Rubric

Key Trait	1	2	3	4
<b>Message</b>	<p>Topic is addressed in a brief or cursory manner; weak formulation of idea; writing not personal</p> <p>Statements are made with little reasoning or details and commentary are either weak or missing</p>	<p>Topic is approached in a common or predictable way, but still includes some clear ideas or pertinent details</p> <p>Some ideas presented are personal and interesting for the reader but lack depth within the details</p> <p>The essay may digress from the main message at times</p>	<p>Essay approaches the topic in an interesting way, including some clear and thought-provoking ideas</p> <p>Solid evidence with many details or examples that elaborate on the main ideas; as well as some commentary, insight, or reflection</p>	<p>Shows an interesting, unique or sophisticated approach to the topic</p> <p>Writing has a clear message that answers all parts of the prompt through techniques such as specific evidence, personal and interesting details, thought-provoking commentary, reflection, or real world application</p>
<b>Organization</b>	<p>No paragraphing skills evident. Writing lacks a sense of organization</p> <p>Essay may wander; lack of structure and organization</p>	<p>Some evidence of organization of ideas and writing</p> <p>Essay reveals some evidence of organizing thoughts; flow of ideas may be rough but understandable</p>	<p>Solid evidence of proficiency with paragraphing and organization of ideas</p> <p>Essay contains a basic structure and is organized with a logical flow of ideas for an easy read</p>	<p>Strong and overwhelming evidence of attention to organization of ideas</p> <p>Essay is well-structured and organized for an easy read</p>
<b>Voice</b>	<p>Writing lacks personal voice and experience with little attention to detail throughout. Words are confusing or misused in essay</p> <p>Many sentences are difficult to follow, off-topic, or have the same repetitive structure</p>	<p>Some evidence of student voice is apparent in parts of the essay through word choice, sentence types, and transitions.</p> <p>Essay may be too broad or bland to reveal the writer behind the ideas</p>	<p>Most of the writing shows solid evidence of personal voice through strategies such as skillful word choice, sentence variety, transitions, and attention to detail</p> <p>Essay may reveal the personality of the writer</p>	<p>Strong and overwhelming evidence of personal voice through strategies such as sophisticated word choice, sentence variety, transitions, and attention to detail</p> <p>Essay is engaging and reveals the personality of the writer or a unique viewpoint</p>
<b>Conventions</b>	<p>Little to no attention to grammar, usage, or mechanics</p>	<p>Some evidence of knowledge of grammar, usage and conventions</p>	<p>Solid evidence of awareness of proper grammar, usage, and mechanics</p>	<p>Nearly perfect application of proper grammar, usage, and mechanics</p>

Based on a rubric presented in [Traits of Writing](#) by Ruth Culham and modified by the Kealing Magnet Admissions Committee