

# Grading Standards for English 112 Essays

## **8, 7 (A) Excellent, Outstanding, Fluent, Thought-Provoking, Original**

This paper is a superior and carefully organized response to the assigned topic, each paragraph having a controlling idea and excellent supporting detail, the style fluent and the content thought-provoking. It addresses all aspects of the prompt and follows all directions indicated in the prompt. There are few if any major mechanical errors. The presentation shows thought and original insights on the part of the writer, independent of the teacher and/or text. **Literature** *These essays discuss appropriate works, incorporate full and accurate detail, and offer high-quality discussion of significance. The student demonstrates a sophisticated use of primary or secondary source material, integrating direct and indirect citations skillfully to develop and support a compelling argument. Use of in-text parenthetical documentation is correct and consistently used throughout the paper (page numbers only for primary sources; mention of author and title of any secondary sources used).*

## **6 (B) Good, Above Average, Clear, Well-Organized**

This paper is a good response to the assigned topic, in which each paragraph has a controlling idea that is adequately supported by detail. The sentences are clear and show some variety. Mechanical errors are not overly distracting to the reader. The writer has mastered the material presented by the text and the teacher. **Literature** *These essays discuss appropriate works, incorporate detail, and offer above-average discussion of significance. The student employs primary or secondary sources well, but not exceptionally well. All sources are used to support the argument, and there is good integration of source material (both direct and indirect) with the writer's own ideas. The use of documentation is basically consistent and correct, showing that the student understood and intended to implement the documentation rules, although occasional minor errors (misplaced quotation marks, misplaced punctuation with parenthetical citations, etc.) may appear.*

## **5, 4 (C) Average, Adequate, Competent, Fair, Unoriginal**

This paper is an adequate, routine response to the assigned topic. A central idea is stated, perhaps too generally, but it is more or less held to and supported in token fashion. The style is moderately clear and the mechanics are reasonably competent. Errors in grammar, punctuation, usage, and organization may be distracting but do not seriously interfere with a reader's understanding of the paper. **Literature** *These essays discuss a work, but may incorporate little detail and the discussion of significance is mostly unoriginal and/or uninteresting. They exhibit adequate but not exceptional integration of other material to support an argument (quotes may be dropped into the essay with little or no introduction, for example) and adequate but not perfect in-text documentation of primary or secondary texts (i.e., there is no apparent intent to mislead or plagiarize, but several less serious errors in documentation may occur).*

## **3 (D) Below Average, Inadequate, Ineffective, Unclear, Under-Developed**

This paper is an inadequate response to the assigned topic, by virtue of one or more of the following: significant mechanical errors that make the communication ineffective, weaknesses of word choice that suggest serious deficiency, insufficient support or poor understanding of the topic. There may be a stated controlling idea, but the relation of details to it is unclear. **Literature** *These essays discuss a work but may give virtually no detail or discussion of significance. The student's use of primary sources is inadequate (either because he/she has not used nearly enough to support the argument or has grossly over-used primaries without proper discussion and integration into an argument); the student shows a lack of understanding of parenthetical in-text citation of primary sources, and, if secondary sources are used, the student may sometimes cite them and sometimes fail to cite them.*

## **2, 1 (F) Failure for one or more of the following reasons: Blocked Communication, Plagiarism-Cheating, Major Errors, Illiteracy, Directions Not Followed, Badly Under-Developed**

This paper is an altogether unacceptable response to the assigned topic whether by failure of the writing, the thought or both. The voice of the writer fails to appear because someone else's language was appropriated or because gross errors have blocked communication. A controlling idea is not stated or, if so, it is incoherent or undeveloped. Errors in diction may suggest illiteracy. **Literature** *This score is for essays that mention a work of literature or a character, however briefly, but otherwise have no redeeming features. This essay may demonstrate total incompetence with use of sources (either a failure to use primary texts, or a blatant over-use of primary or secondary texts, so that the writer's own voice fails to appear), and there is an almost complete absence of any attempt at documentation of sources.*