

Essay Rubric

	Knowledge	Ideas	Evidence	Style	Writing
Outstanding (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Thorough knowledge of the text or texts discussed in the essay. •No omission of material significant to the argument. •No significant factual errors •Names correctly spelled. •Factual knowledge appropriate to the subject and required by the discussion provided •Fully addresses the assigned question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Specific argument (answer to a good historical question), expressed in a specific thesis statement •Supporting ideas clearly stated •All the ideas in the essay fully support thesis •Potential arguments against author's points noted and accounted for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ideas amply supported by appropriate evidence •Evidence generally presented as paraphrases •Quotations aptly chosen and limited in number and length •All evidence is both described adequately (so someone unfamiliar with the material can understand the evidence) and interpreted (so that the reader knows what the evidence means to the author •Contradictory evidence is noted and explained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •In Microsoft Word •Single-spaced •1" margins all around •Author's name on first page •Page citations for all references (quotes or paraphrases) •On time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Complete sentences •No to few grammatical/spelling errors. •Topic sentences in each paragraph; contents follow topic sentences •Paragraphs in logical sequence •Introduction with specific thesis statement that could support only an essay on this material •Conclusion that sums up the argument and explains significance •Material analyzed with only necessary narration •All necessary information supplied to reader
Very Good (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Good knowledge of the text or texts discussed. •Only minor omissions of material significant to the argument •Few factual errors •Names correctly spelled •Most factual knowledge appropriate to the subject and required by the discussion provided •Addresses the assigned question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Specific argument (answer to a good historical question) at least partially addressed by thesis statement •Supporting ideas almost all individually clearly stated •Familiar with some potential arguments against author's points •Attempts to account for counter-arguments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ideas generally supported by evidence •Evidence generally presented as paraphrases •Quotations generally aptly chosen and limited in length and number •Most evidence interpreted as well as presented; all evidence is adequately described •Some contradictory evidence accounted for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as above •May be not more than one week late 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Complete sentences •Only minor grammatical/spelling errors. •Paragraphs generally cohere, usually have topic sentences •Paragraphs mostly arranged in a logical sequence--may be a minor digression •Introduction that clearly points to the argument; may not contain a specific statement of the argument •Conclusion that at least sums up the argument •Little narrative for its own sake •Most necessary information supplied to reader
Acceptable (C)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Overall knowledge of the text or texts sound, but places where that knowledge is not complete. •Some material significant to the argument omitted •Several factual errors •Names misspelled •Does not provide all the necessary factual knowledge required by the discussion •May wander off the assigned question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Essay has a topic, but not a fully developed argument (answer to an historical question); thesis too general, vague, or could apply to an entirely different essay •Argument not well supported by ideas or supporting ideas not clearly stated •Argument not well supported by the evidence •May not show awareness of potential counter-arguments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •May not be enough evidence to support argument •May not use the right evidence to support argument •Evidence may not be interpreted, simply presented •Evidence may not be adequately described •Evidence may be inconsistently used •Quotations may not be aptly chosen or may be excessive •Contradictory evidence may not be accounted for or adequately accounted for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as above •May be not more than one week late 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Occasional incomplete or run-on sentences •Grammatical and spelling errors •Not all paragraphs have topic sentences, may contain more than one topic •Logic of the essay not fully clear. •Introduction may not clearly point to where the essay is going •Conclusion may not clearly explain where the essay has been or may introduce a new topic •May contain sections where narrative replaces analysis •Some knowledge assumed on part of the reader

<p>Poor (D)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Evidence of gaps in the knowledge of the text or texts, but does have some knowledge •Material significant to the argument omitted •Significant factual errors or garbled information •Names misspelled •Fails to provide significant factual information required by the discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Essay is “about” something, but has little by way of an argument; may lack a thesis •Evidence may be presented without reference to ideas, as pure description •While evidence may be arranged in a way that implies a particular viewpoint, that viewpoint is not specified and there is little awareness of other possible viewpoints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Evidence may be quite limited •Evidence may not hang together •Evidence may not be adequately described •Evidence may not be interpreted or the interpretation of the evidence may be improbable or impossible •There may be excessive quotation •Contradictory evidence may not be accounted for 	<p>Same as above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Does not contain specific page citations for references •May be not more than one week late 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •May have incomplete or run-on sentences •May contain many spelling and grammatical errors •Paragraphs may not have topic sentences •Introduction may not point to where the essay is going •Conclusion may not refer back to the contents of the essay or there may not be a conclusion •The essay may be largely narrative without analysis •The reader may not be supplied with the information needed to understand the essay.
<p>Unsatisfactory (F)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Serious gaps in knowledge--may not show evidence of having read the text or texts •Multiple factual errors •Important evidence missing •Names are misspelled. •Little necessary supporting information. •Off-topic (automatic unsatisfactory, no matter how good the essay otherwise is) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •No thesis •No line of argument •Ideas not well connected to each other •Unaware of potential arguments against points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Little evidence for ideas in the paper •Excessive quotation. •Quotations uninterpreted •Contradictory evidence not accounted for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Errors in style (see outline of required elements of style above) •The paper is significantly shorter than the assignment calls for. •More than one week late (automatic no credit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Many serious writing errors •Major structural deficiencies •No introduction/conclusion •Paragraphs disorganized •Logic of the essay not clear •Essay is a personal "response" to the text(s) or contains complaints about the assignment. •No analysis, only narration •Most knowledge on the part of the reader assumed.