

College Application Essay Scoring Rubric

Criteria to be Assessed	4	3	2	1
1. Ideas	Writing successfully presents the topic in a novel or unique way. Writing includes excellent and specific concrete detail and insightful commentary.	Writing presents the topic in an interesting way. Writing includes good concrete detail and some insightful commentary.	Writing presents the topic in an ordinary way. Writing includes concrete detail, but commentary is obvious, simplistic, or generic.	Writing presents topic in an ordinary way. Concrete details and commentary are either weak or missing.
2. Organization	Writing has a compelling and logical flow of ideas.	Writing has a logical flow of ideas.	Organization is rough but workable. It sometimes gets off topic.	Writing is aimless and disorganized.
3. Topic Sentences and Transitions	Paragraphs have focused and poignant topic sentences and smooth, almost seamless transitions.	Paragraphs have focused topic sentences and obvious transitions.	Paragraphs have topic sentences that need to be more focused and rough transitions.	Paragraphs lack topic sentences and transitions.
4. Description	Writing consistently and effectively shows rather than tells through specific and vivid details.	Writing shows rather than tell, but details could be more specific and vivid.	Writing includes some showing but needs more.	Writing uses all telling and no showing.
5. Voice	Writing reveals your unique personality and view of the world, leaving the reader to want to know more about who you are.	Writing reveals some of your thoughts and feelings, but needs more personality behind it.	Writing is bland. There is either no hint of a real person behind the writing.	Writing is too informal. It sounds like you don't care about the topic of the essay.
6. Word Choice	Writing uses words that are striking and fresh but natural, varied, and vivid.	Writing makes some quality but also some routine or ordinary word choices.	Writing uses words that are dull or uninspired. Writing sounds like you are trying too hard to impress.	Writing uses the same words over and over. Some words may be confusing or inappropriate.
7. Grammar Usage and Sentence Fluency	Writing uses proper grammar 100% of the time. Sentences flow well and vary in construction and length.	Writing has a few grammar problems. Sentences flow well but do not vary much.	Writing has enough grammar errors to distract a reader. Some sentences do not flow well and/or are not varied at all.	Writing has numerous grammar mistakes and poor sentence construction that make the paper hard to read.
8. Spelling and Punctuation	Writing uses correct punctuation and spelling 100% of the time.	Writing has a few errors to fix, but generally uses correct conventions.	Writing has enough errors in the essay to distract a reader.	Writing has numerous errors that make the paper hard to read.

Total Score _____ **X 3.13 =** _____ **/100**