

Grade Range for Essays

Kendall Johnson -- English 1036

Grade	Hong Kong (also in UK)	United States	Standard	Grade Point
A+	77% - higher	98% - 100%	Excellent	4.3
A	73% - 76%	93% -97%	Excellent	4.0
A-	70% - 72%	90% - 92%	Excellent	3.7

Thesis: The argument in the body of the essay anticipates and accommodates complexity and contradiction in analysing the text(s); student demonstrates sustained interpretative thought that links paragraphs together, that defines carefully key terms, evaluates the significance of analysis, and connects specific qualities of the text(s) to abstract ideas. The thesis statement anchors a strong argument, reflects creative and even original thought, and is not merely descriptive.

Evidence: Essay shows careful, detailed reading of primary texts and depth of analytical interpretation; careful selection of passages and attention to features of the passage related to grammar, punctuation / syntax, diction, plot, character, narrative voice, figures of speech (symbols, metaphors, allegories, irony), tone, and features related to textual layout or publication.

B+	67% - 69%	88% - 89%	Good	3.3
B	63%- 66%	83% - 87%	Good	3.0
B-	60% - 62%	80% - 82%	Good	2.7

Thesis: Clear and convincing argument that demonstrates understanding of the primary texts and central themes or issues. Thesis statement goes beyond mere description.

Evidence: Essay reflects some careful, close reading through selection and analysis of important passages. Adequate attention paid to features such as: grammar, punctuation / syntax, diction, plot, character, narrative voice, figures of speech (symbols, metaphors, allegories, irony), tone, and features related to textual layout or publication.

C+	57% - 59%	78% - 79%	Satisfactory	2.3
C	53% - 56%	73% - 77%	Satisfactory	2.0
C-	50% - 52%	70% - 72%	Satisfactory	1.7

Thesis: Essay begins with a thesis but it is descriptive and general—more like a topic sentence than the foundation of an argument with consequences. Body of the essay shows basic comprehension of primary texts but does not go beyond summary and description of the text(s). The essay lacks transition between its parts, skipping from idea to idea.

Evidence: Lack of attention to significant details. Summary and description override analysis and interpretation of the text. Quotation fills in for explanation and evaluation. Overall the essay

reads in a way that is general and vague; lacks a key term or idea that the essay is careful to define and explain over the course of the essay.

D+	45% - 49%	65%- 69%	Pass	1.3
D	40% - 44%	60% - 64 %	Pass	1.0

(please note: in US institutions, a "D" grade is sometimes considered a "Fail")

Thesis: Attempts to formulate a thesis and build an argument from paragraph to paragraph reflect problems in comprehension, interpretation, or sustained effort. Essay is stuck in a vague assertion and general description.

Evidence: Citations from the text substitute for the writer's analysis. Evidence is merely descriptive and there is little or no consideration of style or themes communicated in the primary texts. Obvious lack of effort and carelessness in regard to interpretation of the text(s).

F	less than 40%	less than 60%	Fail	0
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No or very little argument, evidence, or thesis. Incomplete essay reflected no effort or care regarding the assignment.