

Descriptive Essay Scoring Guide

	4	3	2	1
Ideas & Content	The writing is clear, focused and interesting. The subject is described with relevant, carefully selected details that evoke multiple senses; author provides a thorough exploration of the topic, making thoughtful connections and insights.	The writing is clear. The subject is described with relevant details; author makes some insights or connections.	The writing is not consistently clear. The subject is rarely described with relevant details; author makes weak insights or connections.	The writing is frequently unclear. The subject is not described with relevant details; author does not make insights or connections.
Descriptive Organization	Compelling intro communicates a clear Descriptive thesis. Body paragraphs are arranged in such a way as to enhance the impact of the essay. Effective transitions are used. Conclusion is strong.	Intro communicates a Descriptive thesis. Transitions are used. Body paragraphs are arranged in logical order. Transitions are used. Conclusion is clear.	Intro does not clearly communicate a Descriptive thesis. Body paragraphs are not all arranged logically. Transitions are lacking. Conclusion is weak.	Thesis is not present or inconsistent with assignment. Structure of essay is unclear. Transitions are not used. Conclusion is missing or conflicts with essay.
Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Spelling	There are few or no errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling.	There are some errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling	Errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling interfere with the audience's understanding of the process.	Serious and numerous errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling make understand the essay very difficult.
Style (Voice/Word Choice)	The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer demonstrates deep commitment to the topic. The writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. Word choice is consistently precise and impactful.	A voice is present. The writer seems committed to the topic, and there may be a sense of "writing to be read." In places, the writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere.	The writer's commitment to the topic seems inconsistent. A sense of the writer may emerge at times; however, the voice is at time either inappropriate or ineffective. Many words are imprecise, redundant, or confusing.	The writing provides little sense of involvement or commitment. There is no evidence that the writer has chosen a suitable voice. Word choices are mostly imprecise, redundant, or confusing.
Sentence Fluency	The writing has an effective flow and rhythm. Sentences show a high degree of craftsmanship, with consistently strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable.	The writing flows; however, connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid. Sentence patterns are somewhat varied, contributing to ease in oral reading.	The writing tends to be mechanical rather than fluid. Occasional awkward constructions may force the reader to slow down or reread.	The writing tends to be either choppy or rambling. Awkward constructions often force the reader to slow down or reread.

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