**A GENERIC AP OPEN ESSAY RUBRIC**

Each AP essay question has its own specific rubric attached. This guide is for overview

purposes of the rubric.

9-8 9 is the top score, but there is very little difference between a 9 and an 8, both

being scores for excellent papers which combine adherence to the topic with

excellent organization, content, and insight, facile use of language, and

mastery of mechanics. 9 essays demonstrate uncommon skill and sometimes

put a cultural/historical frame around the subject. Descriptors that come to

mind while reading include **masterly, sophisticated, complex, specific,**

**consistent, effective, well-supported.**

7 -7 is a thinner version of the excellent paper; still impressive, cogent,

convincing, but less well-handled in terms of organization, insight, or

vocabulary. Descriptors that come to mind while reading include **clear**

**understanding, less precise, less well-supported, maturing, this writer has**

**potential, but hasn’t quite got it all.**

6- 6 is an above average paper, but it may be deficient in one of the essentials

mentioned above. It may be less mature in thought or less well-handled in

terms of organization, syntax, or mechanics. Descriptors might include **less**

**mature, some difficulties, but just above average.**

5 - The 5 paper is a thinner version of the 6. Descriptors would include

**superficial, vague, uneven, and mechanical.**

4-3 or 4 is an average to below-average paper which maintains the general idea of the

writing assignment, shows some sense of organization, but is weak in content,

maturity of thought, language facility, and/or mechanics. It may distort the

topic or fail to deal adequately with one important aspect of the topic. The 3

essay compounds the weaknesses of the 4. Some descriptors that come to

mind include **incomplete, oversimplified, meager, irrelevant, and**

**insufficient.**

2 - 2 is the score assigned to a paper that makes an attempt to deal with the topic

but demonstrates serious weaknesses in content and coherence and/or syntax

and mechanics. It is an unacceptable score. Descriptors include **serious**

**misreading, unacceptably brief, and/or poorly written.**

1- 1 is the score given to any on-topic response that has very little redeeming

quality. It may be very brief or very long, but will be scarcely coherent,

usually full of mechanical errors, or completely missed the focus of the

prompt. Descriptors include **vacuous, inexact, and mechanically unsound.**