

English 50 Final Exam Rubric

The following categories describe typical characteristics of papers at five levels of competence, not all the criteria by which papers will be judged. Because no essay will fit uniformly into a single category, the grader must judge which category BEST DESCRIBES a particular paper. Evaluation will take into account that the essays were written within a two-hour time frame, not a more extended period of drafting and revision.

5 (A) – Superior/Excellent

Critical Thinking: a thoughtful, in-depth argument, developed through the use of compelling examples and other kinds of support.

Structure: clear organization with effective thesis statement, topic sentences, and transitions.

Sentences: sophisticated structure, demonstrating a command of subordination and parallelism.

Vocabulary: employs precise choices.

Grammar: contains very few errors, showing a mastery of the conventions of written English.

4 (B) – Strong/More than Competent

Critical Thinking: a good response, developed with strong examples and other kinds of support.

Structure: clear organization with an identifiable thesis and topic sentences within an overall coherent organization.

Sentences: while the structure may be less complex than a “5” paper, it is still effective.

Vocabulary: appropriate choices, but may lack the precision of a “5.”

Grammar: may contain a few agreement, sentence structure, punctuation, or capitalization errors, but overall observes conventions of written English.

3 (C) – Competent

Critical Thinking: while some support may lack relevance, still responds to the prompt; may be repetitive.

Structure: writer recognizes principles of organization, but thesis may be ineffective and topic sentences inconsistent. Some paragraphs may lack unity.

Sentences: usually possesses a simpler structure than above categories, but still adequate.

Vocabulary: generalized vocabulary, lacking the precision associated with the above categories.

Grammar: contains some minor errors in mechanics and punctuation, and perhaps one or two more distracting agreement and sentence structure errors.

2 (D) – Weak/Inadequate

Critical Thinking: often displays some repetition and inadequate development. Parts may not respond to the prompt.

Structure: may have significant problems with thesis, topic sentences, and coherence.

Sentences: a fair number of awkward sentences; lacks subordination and parallelism.

Vocabulary: too general. Some words may be used inappropriately.

Grammar: often contains enough serious errors to be distracting.

1 (F) – Incompetent

Critical Thinking: may fail to respond to prompt, lack development, or be too brief.

Structure: logical organization is often completely lacking. May lack or have inappropriate thesis and topic sentences.

Sentences: are often overly simple or have confusing structure with excessive coordination.

Vocabulary: very basic with words used inappropriately.

Grammar: contains many distracting errors, often making the meaning difficult to determine.

GRADING SCALE

10	=	A
9 ½	=	A-
9	=	A-/B+
8 ½	=	B+
8	=	B
7 ½	=	B-
7	=	B-/C+
6 ½	=	C+
6	=	C
5 ½	=	C-
5	=	C-/D+
4 ½	=	D+
4	=	D
3 ½	=	D-
3	=	D-/F
2 ½	=	F