

	4	3	2	1
Thesis	Poses several <i>insightful</i> claims about the message. The writer's comprehensive understanding displays uncommon <i>depth</i> or <i>maturity</i> .	Poses several <i>clear claims</i> about the message. The writer's understanding is <i>adequate</i> and <i>predictable</i> .	Poses at least one claim about the literary work. The writer's understanding is <i>limited</i> and <i>may lack accuracy</i> .	May pose a claim about the literary work, but the writer's understanding is <i>minimal, confused, and incomplete</i> .
Supporting Ideas	Offers just enough background for the essay to make sense to the reader. Gives several thoughtful ideas or reasons to explain each claim. Supports these ideas with specific, carefully-chosen examples from the text and possibly personal knowledge or experience. The argument is not oversimplified. Provides <i>thoughtful commentary</i> to connect the above ideas, reasons, and examples to each other and to the author's message.	Offers background information. Gives several <i>expected</i> ideas or reasons to explain each claim. Supports with important examples mixed with less important ones. Examples are more <i>general</i> and details are less well-chosen than in the score level 4. Commentary is lacking; connections between examples and claims are too often left to the reader to understand. Overall, this writer needs to think more deeply about the author's message.	Explains at least one claim with <i>literal</i> ideas or reasons. Gives examples from the text, but these may be copied OR may be included without a clear purpose. May offer personal experience without connecting it to the text. Examples given may argue against the claim(s). Does not explain. The reader must guess why the writer has included the examples and how the ideas are related. This writer shows little awareness of the author's message beyond a basic, plot-based understanding.	The supporting ideas, if offered, are very <i>incomplete, unclear, or confusing</i> and may contain errors about the text. The writer may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retell or copy the text • merely list reasons or ideas • offer unrelated ideas • retell personal experience with little connection to the text • argue against the claim or ideas
Organization	Covers all parts of the writing task. Focuses on the main ideas throughout. Understands the purpose. Speaks to the topic. Shows awareness of the audience. Successfully includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a graceful introduction, well-made thesis, fully supported body, and satisfying conclusion • a logical sequence of ideas • effective balance between examples and the writer's explanation (commentary) • a conclusion which reaches beyond summary 	Covers all parts of the writing task. Mostly understands the purpose. Speaks to the topic. Shows awareness of the audience. Successfully includes an introduction, thesis, body, and conclusion, but sections may be out of balance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • important examples and/or events may be missing or need detail • (or) may give too much detail • (or) may let examples "speak for themselves" without connecting them to claims and message 	Covers only <i>parts</i> of the writing task. May understand the purpose but does not successfully achieve it. Speaks to the topic. May not show awareness of the audience. Organization is lax or too mechanical: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thesis may be missing • may seem more like an outline or advance organizer than an essay • if brief, may offer lists or summarize without enough detail • if long, may ramble on and on, lose focus, and include unimportant details • sequence may be illogical • may lack an ending or end hurriedly 	Covers only one part of the writing task. Shows no understanding of the purpose. May not speak to the topic. Shows no awareness of the audience. Shows no understanding of how to create an essay with a clear beginning, middle and end. Ideas are not well organized, or there is too little to organize.
Style	Immediately "hooks" the reader with vivid, descriptive language. Creates a pleasing whole with varied sentences and purposeful transitions.	Uses a variety of sentence types and <i>some</i> transitions but mostly commonplace language. Few surprises or delights for the reader.	Uses little sentence variety and elementary language.	Uses no sentence variety and little descriptive language.
Correctness	Contains few or no errors. Errors present do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writer's meaning.	Contains some errors which do not confuse the reader.	Contains several errors which may confuse the reader.	Contains serious errors which confuse the reader.