

Descriptive Essay Rubric

| CATEGORY | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
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| Title | Title is creative, sparks interest and is related to the topic. | Title is related to the topic but needs to be more creative. | Title is present. | No title present. |
| Introduction (Organization) | The introduction is inviting, states the main topic, previews the structure of the paper, and includes a well-written, clever lead that is related to the essay's topic which attracts the reader's attention. | The introduction clearly states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper, but is not particularly inviting to the reader. A well-written lead is used to attract the reader's attention. | The introduction states the main topic, but does not adequately preview the structure of the paper nor is it particularly inviting to the reader. A lead is used but is not particularly attractive to the reader or does not relate to the topic. | There is no clear introduction of the main topic or structure of the paper. No lead is used. |
| Focus on Topic (Content) | There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main idea stands out and is supported by detailed information. Well-written topic sentences are used in each 5-7 sentence paragraph. | Main idea is clear but the supporting information is general. Topic sentences are used in each paragraph. | Main idea is somewhat clear but there is a need for more supporting information. Topic sentences are used in most paragraphs. | The main idea is not clear. There is a seemingly random collection of information. Topic sentences appear in few or none of the paragraphs. |
| Supporting Information/ Details | Several relevant, telling, quality details give the reader important information that allow the reader to picture, smell, feel, hear or imagine tasting things described. | Supporting details and information are relevant, but one key issue or part of the description is unsupported. There are a few vivid details in the essay. | Supporting details and information are relevant, but several key issues or are unsupported. There are details but they do not help the reader imagine they are involved. | Supporting details and information are typically unclear or not related to the topic. There are no or barely any vivid details in the essay. |
| Adding Personality (Voice) | The writer seems to be writing from knowledge or experience. The author has taken the ideas and made them "his/her own." | The writer seems to be drawing on knowledge or experience, but there is some lack of ownership of the topic. | The writer relates some of his own knowledge or experience, but it adds nothing to the discussion of the topic. | The writer has not tried to transform the information in a personal way. |
| Sentence Structure | All sentences are well-constructed without using repetitive ideas throughout. | Most sentences are well-constructed with complete thoughts. | Most sentences are well-constructed but some are run-ons or are not descriptive. | Sentences do not have structure and are incomplete or rambling. |
| Sequencing (Organization) | Details and transition words and phrases are placed in a logical order and the way they are presented effectively keeps the interest of the reader. | Details and transition words and phrases are placed in a logical order, but the way in which they are presented makes the writing less interesting. | Some details and transition words and phrases are not in a logical or expected order, and this distracts the reader. | Many details are not in a logical or expected order. There is little sense that the writing is organized. The transitions between ideas are unclear or non-existent. |
| Conclusion (Organization) | The conclusion is strong and leaves the reader with a feeling that he/she understands the writer's point of view. | The conclusion is recognizable and ties up almost all the loose ends. | The conclusion is recognizable, but does not tie up several loose ends. | There is no clear conclusion, the paper just ends. |

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| Grammar & Spelling | Writer makes no errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling. | Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling. | Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling. | Writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling. |
| Revision | Writer has revised thoughtfully with multiple changes that add to the ideas or clarity of the writing. | Writer has revised thoughtfully but 1 or 2 issues remain. | Writer has revised but several issues remain. | Writer has only revised spelling and grammar issues, there was no revision, or original copy was not submitted. |
| Form/Neatness | Essay is appropriate length and is neatly handwritten in blue or black ink with few or no cross-outs or excessive use of white-out, or is neatly typed in black ink in Times New Roman Font size 12. | Essay is neatly handwritten in blue or black ink, or is neatly typed in black ink in Times New Roman Font size 12. | Essay is not particularly neatly handwritten in blue or black ink, or is neatly typed in black ink in a non-requested font or font size. | Essay is not neatly handwritten in blue or black ink, or is not neatly typed, with a number of cross-outs, messy use of white-out, or is written/typed in ink that is hard to read. |