

Holistic Marking Guide

English 9

Levels	Descriptors
6	<p>Style and Content: Exceptionally thoughtful, original and engaging work. Demonstrates significant depth of thought and/or analysis. Clear, well-developed thesis. Effective and varied use of figurative/rhetorical devices <i>where appropriate</i> (e.g. simile, metaphor, allusion, imagery, rhetorical question, irony, parallel structure).</p> <p>Paragraph(s) and Sentences: Effective use of both standard and “echo” transitions at the beginning of—and within—paragraphs. Extensive variety of complex, compound and simple sentences; syntax frequently manipulated for effect.</p> <p>Vocabulary: Mature and precise diction. No spelling errors.</p> <p>Punctuation: Correct and effective use of commas, semi-colons, colons, dashes and/or parentheses.</p> <p>Mechanics: No run-ons (RO), comma splices (CS), sentence fragments (SF) or usage errors (WW).</p>
5	<p>Style and Content: Interesting and thoughtful work. Demonstrates good depth of thought and/or analysis. Clear, well-developed thesis. Some use of figurative/rhetorical devices <i>where appropriate</i> (e.g. simile, metaphor, allusion, imagery, rhetorical question, irony, parallel structure).</p> <p>Paragraph(s) and Sentences: Effective use of both standard and “echo” transitions at the beginning of—and within—paragraphs. Good variety of complex, compound and simple sentences; syntax may be manipulated for effect.</p> <p>Vocabulary: Effective and varied diction. May have 1-2 spelling errors.</p> <p>Punctuation: Correct and effective use of commas and semi-colons, colons, dashes, and/or parentheses.</p> <p>Mechanics: No run-ons (RO), comma splices (CS), sentence fragments (SF) or usage errors (WW).</p>
4	<p>Style and Content: Somewhat interesting and engaging work. Demonstrates decent depth of thought and/or analysis. Clear thesis, but simple development. Support for ideas is logical but basic.</p> <p>Paragraph(s) and Sentences: Uses mostly standard transitions at the beginning of—and within—paragraphs. Predominantly simple sentences; some complex or compound sentences.</p> <p>Vocabulary: Decent diction. May have 1-2 spelling errors.</p> <p>Punctuation: Correct use of commas and semi-colons; may attempt use of colons, dashes and parentheses.</p> <p>Mechanics: No run-ons (RO), comma splices (CS), sentence fragments (SF) or usage errors (WW).</p>
3	<p>Style and Content: Very dull, with little attempt to engage the reader. Demonstrates simplistic levels of thought and/or analysis. Vague thesis with simple development. Support for ideas is logical but <i>very</i> basic. Some informal language. Despite errors, message is understood.</p> <p>Paragraph(s) and Sentences: Uses mostly standard transitions at the beginning of—and within—paragraphs. Predominantly simple sentences.</p> <p>Vocabulary: Basic diction. May have 3 or more spelling errors.</p> <p>Punctuation: May have some misplaced commas.</p> <p>Mechanics: No run-ons (RO), comma splices (CS), sentence fragments (SF) or usage errors (WW).</p>
2	<p>Style and Content: Very dull and awkward. Excessive errors make comprehension difficult. No clear thesis; lack of support for—and development of—topic. Informal language and/or tone.</p> <p>Paragraph(s) and Sentences: Little or no use of transitions. Predominantly simple sentences with frequent errors.</p> <p>Vocabulary: Simplistic diction. May have 3 or more spelling errors.</p> <p>Punctuation: Errors in basic punctuation (mostly misplaced commas).</p> <p>Mechanics: One or more of the following: run-ons (RO), comma splices (CS), sentence fragments (SF) or usage errors (WW).</p>
1	Too short or error-ridden to earn a level-2 mark. No apparent effort. Does not address topic.

Holistic Marking Guide Companion

;
stronger than a comma

links short sentences

separates clauses in compound sentences

the next closest thing to full stop (period)

⋮
used to introduce a series

Used to set off explanatory words & phrases that need a break greater than a comma, but less than a dash

,
used to show a slight pause in a sentence

Separates a date & a year, & a city & state

Separates multiple adjectives in a sentences

—Do not use dashes to set apart material when commas would do the work for you. Use dashes as a super-comma

()
enclose words, phrases, clauses or sentences that are placed within the sentence mainly for explanation or commentary.

Echo transition: words or phrases echo a previously mentioned idea

Comma splice: A comma splice is the use of a comma to join two independent clauses. For example:

It is nearly half past five, we cannot reach town before dark.

Complex sentence: A complex sentence is made from an independent clause and a dependent clause joined together. Some examples: After I came home, I made dinner.

Compound sentence: A sentence that contains at least two independent clauses.

Parallel structure: Parallel structure means using the same pattern of words to show that two or more words or ideas are of equal importance and to help the reader comprehend what is being written. For example: Ashley likes to ski, to swim and to jump. This is correct and uses parallel structure. An incorrect version of this sentence would read: Ashley likes to ski, to swim and jumping.

Diction: Your diction is simply your choice of words.

Syntax: Syntax in literature is simply how a sentence is worded and placed together