Culver City High School – Research Paper Rubric

Score of 6: Superior (95-100 points)
A 6 essay is superior in writing, though it may have minor flaws.
An essay in this category:
- Addresses the topic clearly and responds effectively to all aspects of the task
- Insightful thesis; paper explores the issues with thoughtful and developed commentary that clearly links to evidence
- Has excellent organization, with ideas supported by appropriate concrete details and textual citations
- Has an effective, fluent style marked by different ways of writing and a clear command of the language
- Is generally free from errors in mechanics, usage and sentence structure.

Score of 5: Excellent (90-94 points)
A 5 essay demonstrates clear competence in writing.
An essay in this category:
- Clearly addresses the topic, but may respond to some aspects of the task more effectively than others
- Has an insightful thesis; paper shows some in depth and complex commentary that clearly links to evidence
- Is well organized and developed with strong evidence and examples
- Displays some sentence variety and ease in writing; does implement proper use of the active voice
- May have a few errors in mechanics, usage and sentence structure, but they are not serious enough to distract or confuse the reader.

Score of 4: Proficient (80-89 points)
A 4 essay demonstrates above average writing, though it lacks the sophistication of a 5 or 6 essay.
An essay in this category:
- Addresses the topic, but may slight some aspects of the task
- Has a solid thesis, though there may be sections of commentary that are not as well developed or completely supported by textual evidence
- Is well organized, though there may be some aspects that are treated repetitively or simplistically
- Writes comfortably with a good control of language, sentence structure and word choice; primarily uses the active voice
- It may have some errors that distract the reader, but they do not obscure the overall meaning.

Score of 3: Average (70-79 points)
A 3 essay demonstrates an average ability, though it may have one or more significant flaws
An essay in this category:
- May distort some aspects of the task
- Has a clear thesis, though it is often times not fully supported by the concrete details or the text
- Has adequate organization, though ideas tend to be simplistic or repetitive; commentary may not directly link to evidence.
- May have some problems with syntax variety; writes in the active voice, though this may be inconsistent
- May have some obvious errors in mechanics, usage and sentence structure; may switch between present and past tense

Score of 2: Below Average (60-69 points)
A 2 essay is flawed. An essay in this category shows one or more of the following weaknesses:
- Indicates confusion about the topic or neglects important aspects of the task
- Has an unclear or underdeveloped thesis; lacks focus or clarity, and/or fails to communicate ideas
- Has weak organization or little development; tends to rely on unsupported and/or general observations
- May have serious problems with sentence control and limited vocabulary; uses primarily the passive voice
- May be flawed by numerous errors in mechanics, usage and sentence structure

Score of 1: Insufficient (59 points and below)
A 1 essay demonstrates fundamental deficiencies in writing skills. Tutoring or meeting with teacher is needed.
An essay in this category shows one or more of the following weaknesses:
- Suggests that the topic/assignment was not fully understood
- Lacking a clear thesis; is unfocused, illogical, incoherent, or disorganized; does not make sense
- Is underdeveloped
- Provides little or no relevant support
- Has serious and persistent errors in word choice, mechanics, usage and sentence structure; not in literary present