

Watchmen Open Essay Rubric

Your essay will be scored by Mr. Benton virtually the same way it would be by an AP grader. You have the benefit of planning and revising the essay outside of the 40-minute window that would be given if this were an in-class essay. You're strongly *encouraged* to include at least one consciously constructed **A-TEAM sentence** to make your paper's claim undeniably clear, and your essay *must* be in **full MLA format*** (including citation and integration of quotations). Your essay should be similar in structure to one of your in-class essays and be **no longer than two pages** of MLA-formatted text: any writing extending beyond a second page will be disregarded. It is due both as a classroom hardcopy *and* to Turnitin.com. Be sure to write to a **specific prompt that you've signed up for** in class and remember to tie your response into the **meaning of the work as a whole**.

This essay is a **200-point** task intended to evaluate your ability to support a complex claim as well as your studied comprehension of the literary work as a whole. The score you earn will reflect the quality of the essay as a whole: its content, its style, its mechanics. You will be **rewarded for what you do well**. In no case will a poorly written essay be scored higher than a 3.

- 9-8** These essays offer a **well-focused and persuasive analysis**. Using **apt and specific textual support**, these essays fully explore the intent of the prompt and demonstrate what it contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. Although not without flaws, these essays make a strong case for their interpretation and discuss the literary work with **significant insight and understanding**. Generally, essays scored a 9 reveal more **sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language** than do essays scored an 8.
- 7-6** These essays offer a **reasonable analysis**. The essays explore the prompt and demonstrate what it contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. These works have insight and understanding, but the analysis is **less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of the 9-8 essays**. Generally, essays scored a 7 **present better-developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition** than those scored a 6.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading, but they **tend to be superficial or underdeveloped in analysis**. They often rely upon plot summary that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Although the students **attempt to discuss the prompt** and how it contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole, they may demonstrate a rather **simplistic understanding of the work**. Typically, these essays reveal **unsophisticated thinking and/or immature writing**. The students demonstrate **adequate control of language, but their essays may lack effective organization** and may be marred by surface errors.
- 4-3** These lower-half essays offer a **less than thorough understanding of the task** or a less than adequate treatment of it. They reflect an **incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the work, or they may fail to establish the nature of the prompt's intent**. They may not address or develop a response to how the response contributes to the work as a whole, or they **may rely on plot summary** alone. Their **assertions may be unsupported or even irrelevant**. Often wordy, elliptical, or repetitious, these essays may **lack control over the elements of college-level composition**. Essays scored a 3 **may contain significant misreadings and demonstrate inept writing**.
- 2-1** Although these essays **make some attempt to respond to the prompt**, they compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 4-3 range. Often, they are **unacceptably brief or are incoherent** in presenting their ideas. They may be **poorly written** on several counts and contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. The remarks are presented with **little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence**. **Particularly inept, vacuous, derpy, and/or incoherent essays will be scored a 1**.

* *If the submitted essay is not in full MLA format, 25% will be deducted from your overall score.*