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| Scoring Guide: Literary Paragraph | 6  Superior | 5  Proficient | 4  Competent | | 3  Barely Adequate | 2  Inadequate | 1  Unacceptable |
| Writing | Exhibits an effective writing style and a sophisticated use of language. | Demonstrates a strong command of the conventions of language. | Writing is straight-forward. Conventions of language are usually followed. | | The essay shows a sense of purpose. Writing may be awkward. | May be misunderstanding of task, or writing lacks control. | May be too brief to address the topic. Serious lack of control in the writing. |
| Mechanics | Despite its clarity and precision, the response need not be error-free. | Errors may be present, but are not distracting. | Some errors are evident. | | Errors may be distracting. | Errors are recurring, distracting, and impede meaning. | Paper is, at times, unintelligible or may be too brief to assess accurately. |
| Comprehension | Superiority may draw upon any number of factors (like depth of discussion, effectiveness of argument, or level of insight). | Strong grasp of both topic and text. | The assertions in the essay tend to be simplistic or literal; no significant errors in understanding. | | Understanding of topic or text may be partially flawed, or little evidence to show understanding. | Understanding of topic or text may be seriously flawed. | Response does not meet the purpose of the task. May be too brief. |
| Organization/References to text | Thesis clearly states central idea. References insightfully expand on this idea, are incorporated smoothly, and convincingly support the thesis. | Writing is well-organized. References to text convincingly support the thesis. Quotations are incorporated smoothly. |  | Writing is organized. References are present and appropriate, but may be limited. May be incorporated awkwardly. | Support may consist of long references to the text which are not clearly connected to the central idea, or may be meager or repetitive. | Little support No support for  given for ideas, or  ideas. support  that is off-topic  (i.e. does not  come from  text). | |

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