

The essay portion measures the student’s ability to:

- Develop a “thesis”, point of view or position, on an issue or a subject presented in an excerpt.
- Apply reasoning and evidence from observations, experience or studies to support that view.
- Observe the conventions of standard written English.

SAT readers recognize that students are writing under limited amount of time and the essays will appear more like first drafts. However, there are certain qualities that the readers are looking for as they score the essays with the Scoring Guide (refer to <http://www.collegeboard.com> for details). Note that an off-topic essay will receive a score of 0. The essay must be written on the lines provided on the answer sheet, therefore keep handwriting and margins to a reasonable size.

Scoring Guide

Score	Overall Substance	Organization	Diction	Sentence structure & Syntax
6 Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insightful point of view on the subject • outstanding critical thinking, relevant examples, reasons and evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly focused and coherent • smooth transition of ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concise and varied use of vocabulary • solid command over words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meaningful variety of sentence structure • free of most errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
5 Effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective development of viewpoint • strong critical thinking, generally appropriate examples, reasons and evidence to support its position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well focused • demonstrates coherence and progression of ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exhibits facility in use of language • appropriate use of vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presence of variety in sentence structure • little error in grammar, usage, and mechanics
4 Competent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develops a point of view • competent critical thinking, adequate reasoning, examples and evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally organized and focused • some coherence and progression of ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adequate yet inconsistent mastery of language • generally appropriate use of vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some variety in sentence structure • some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
3 Inadequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develops a point of view with some critical thinking • inadequate examples or reasons to support view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited focus or organization • some lapses in coherence or progression of ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing facility in the use of language • weak vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lacks variety or demonstrates problems in sentence structure • considerable amount of errors in grammar, usage and mechanics
2 Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vague development of point of view and weak critical thinking • inappropriate or insufficient examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poorly organized, lack of focus • problematic progression of ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little facility in use of language • limited vocabulary or incorrect word choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frequent problems in sentence structure • serious errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
1 Fundamentally flawed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no viable point of view on the issue • little or no evidence to support position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unorganized, unfocused • no coherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor use of language • errors in vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flaws in sentence structure • pervasive errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics