



Essay Grading Guide

In both CAA's workbook and online programs, most grading is concrete (using workbook answer keys) or even automatic (Ignitia online). However, grading short answers and essays is more subjective, and you may have questions about how to evaluate work and assign points.

Following a consistent and measurable standard gives you a better understanding of your student's progress and enables you to provide constructive feedback that will guide and motivate improvement on future assignments. Having a concrete system will also make the grading process less stressful for you.

Here are some suggestions and resources to get you started.

1

First, **establish a general grading rubric**. Determine what to look for in your student's writing and how many points each aspect is worth. For example, you might evaluate the following:



- **Content** - Is it on topic? Are all parts of the prompt addressed? Does it meet length requirements? *(25 points out of 100)*
- **Clarity** - Is it readable? Does it make sense? Does it have structure and follow a clear line of reasoning? *(25 points out of 100)*
- **Accuracy** - Are spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure correct? *(15 points out of 100)*
- **Sources** - Is it supported by credible sources? Are sources cited? Are direct quotes used effectively without replacing your student's own work? (15 points out of 100) **See "What is Plagiarism" (CAA handbook) for more information. Keep in mind that using AI (artificial intelligence) to generate content is a form of plagiarism.** *(15 points out of 100)*
- **Style** - Does it fit assignment guidelines? (Is it informative, persuasive, anecdotal, poetic, etc.?) If style was not specified, is the style chosen effective? Is it used consistently? *(10 points out of 100)*
- **Format** - Does it meet assignment requirements? (Is it a chart, list, paragraph, outline, recorded speech, graph, etc.?) If no format was specified, is the format chosen effective? Is it used consistently? *(10 points out of 100)*

Your rubric may vary depending on the subject. For example, spelling and grammar should be worth more points in English assignments, while social studies assignments might focus more on sources. The total number of points possible will also be different depending on the type of assignment (e.g. short answer question or longer essay).

After your rubric is established, **read the assignment instructions and your student's response**. If you have an immediate impression, use it to provide individualized feedback. "This makes me want to learn more about lightning patterns!" or "Your story expressed emotions so vividly I almost cried," or "I'm confused..."

2

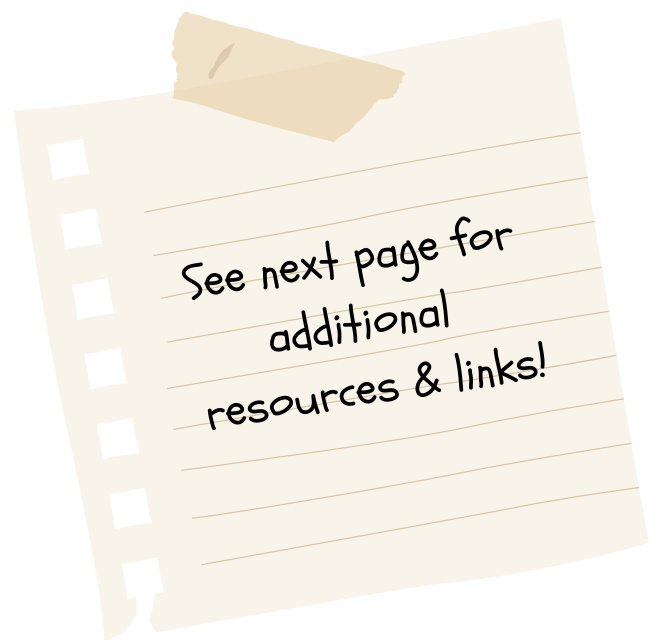
3

After noting your initial reaction, **evaluate your student's work using the categories on your rubric, and deduct points in each area as needed**.

Be sure to **consider your student's attitude and effort**. Your understanding of their strengths, weaknesses, and potential is invaluable.

4

Remember, these are ideas to get you started, but they are not comprehensive or an exact formula. Your methods and standards will vary based on your student's level, skills, and the specific assignment.



Additional Resources

CAA does not endorse these sites and realizes they may not adhere to the same philosophies of education and Biblical standards as CAA or its families. We recommend reviewing them before use to make sure they are appropriate for your student's grade level and your family's standards.

Help for teaching essay writing. <https://education.yourdictionary.com/for-teachers/teaching-essay-writing-in-secondary-schools.html>

Basic essay formats and parts of an essay.

<https://www.deanza.edu/faculty/cruzmayra/basicessayformat.pdf>

<https://www.evansville.edu/writingcenter/downloads/parts.pdf>

Essay writing guide with examples.

https://www.bedfordps.org/sites/g/files/vyhliif2786/f/uploads/guide_to_high_school_writing_and_analysis.pdf

Templates for different types of essays. <https://www.kibin.com/essay-writing-blog/7-essay-outline-templates-get-essay-going/>

Online writing lab - excellent source for overall writing help.

<https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/index.html>

This specific page covers quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, and more.

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/avoiding_plagiarism/index.html

Citing sources to avoid plagiarism. <http://www.plagiarism.org/article/how-do-i-cite-sources>

Free plagiarism checker. <https://www.check-plagiarism.com/>

Paid plagiarism checker (available with subscription). This page also discusses types of plagiarism. <https://www.quetext.com/plagiarism-checker>

Free dictionary and thesaurus. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>

Free online encyclopedia for research. <http://www.encyclopedia.com/>

Help for upper-level English courses. <https://wts.indiana.edu/writing-guides/index.html#original>