

Short essay #1 grading rubric: *Interview with a Poem*

A—achievement of outstanding quality

all of B and beyond in impressing your reader with a committed, creative and insightful reading of the poem; contains no errors (perhaps with a minor exception) in asking/answering little and big questions; provides reasonable and enlightening explanations that are helpful to your reader in gaining an appreciation of the poem as a work of art; clearly expresses a voice/style of individual writer; these essays prove the successful culmination of reading, thinking, and writing skills developed during 101, 102, and 210; contains one or two minor surface errors

B—achievement of high quality

all of C and beyond in clearly showing relationship between little questions/answers and big questions/answers; asks little and big questions that complement each other;; heading towards A in a creative and participatory reading of the poem; explanations show how this poem is a work of art concerned with what it says and how it says it; can see the voice/style of individual writer emerging that separates this paper from others; may contain a few (as in two or three) minor surface errors, ones that can be easily fixed in a revision

C—achievement of acceptable quality

meets minimal requirements by asking little questions and providing adequate explanations about their significance to the poem; offers an adequate answer to a big question; tends to offer limited or spotty explanation and evidence; provides quotes and some explanation, though occasionally includes incorrect or irrelevant quote or explanation; tends to lack distinct voice/style of author; while C essays certainly indicate writing of acceptable quality at the college level, they tend to merge with other essays; may have a few errors in punctuation, spelling, and grammar that detract from author's ethos

D—minimally passing, but at less than acceptable quality

offers inadequate or no serious answer to a big question; manages to ask little questions but offers no adequate explanation of their significance to the poem; or manages to offer an interpretation by asking and answering a big question with little or no substantial evidence; tends to make little attempt to write with distinct voice/style of author; provides few, incorrect or irrelevant quotes as evidence; tends to lose focus on the poem and its theme; may have numerous errors in punctuation, spelling, and grammar that seriously hurt author's ethos

F—unacceptable academic work

fails to do any of the above; reveals lack of preparation and reading or misunderstanding of the essay question

Further questions about your essay and grades?

Please remember, as I have said in the classroom, you are all more than welcome to come see me during office hours with any questions you have about work already done, being done, and about to be done. My experience tells me that one-on-one discussions can be helpful for individual concerns that might not be covered in class.

As for questions about your Short Essay #1 after it has been graded and returned, I ask only that you wait at least one full day before coming in with questions about grades. This ensures that you have time to reread your essay carefully along with my comments and this grading sheet. I will ask you to be specific as possible so I can help you as much as possible.