Grading Rubric for Illustration Essays

Use this template to understand instructor priorities and self-assess your work before submission.

Criteria & Weighting

Category	Exemplary (A Range)	Proficient (B Range)	Developing (C Range)	Needs Work (D/F Range)	Your Self-Score
THESIS & FOCUS (20%) Clarity, specificity, and argument strength	**18-20 pts:** Thesis is clear, specific, and arguable. Perfectly previews the essay's direction. Entire essay remains tightly focused on proving this claim.	**16-17 pts:** Thesis is clear and arguable but could be more precise. Essay generally stays on topic.	**14-15 pts:** Thesis is vague, overly broad, or somewhat obvious. Essay may drift from the central claim at times.	**≤13 pts:** Thesis is missing, confusing, or purely factual. Essay lacks a clear central point.	____ _ / 20
USE OF ILLUSTRATION (30%) Quality, relevance, and explanation of examples	**27-30 pts:** Examples are vivid, specific, and perfectly chosen to prove the thesis. They are varied (e.g., personal, historical, data). Each is thoroughly explained and connected to the thesis with	**24-26 pts:** Examples are relevant and clear. Analysis explains the connection to the thesis, though it may lack depth in places. May rely heavily on one type of example.	**21-23 pts:** Examples are generic, vague, or only loosely connected to the thesis. Analysis is minimal, simply restating the example without showing *how* it proves the point.	**≤20 pts:** Examples are missing, irrelevant, or inaccurate. No meaningful analysis is present.	____ _ / 30

	insightful analysis.				
ORGANIZATION & FLOW (20%) Structure, paragraphing, and transitions	**18-20 pts:** Logical, easy-to-follow structure. Each body paragraph begins with a strong topic sentence. Transitions between ideas are seamless. Introduction sets up, and conclusion effectively synthesizes.	**16-17 pts:** Clear structure. Paragraphs are mostly focused. Transitions are present but may be routine. Introduction and conclusion are adequate.	**14-15 pts:** Structure is unclear or formulaic. Paragraphs may lack focus or contain multiple ideas. Transitions are weak or missing. Intro/conclusion are underdeveloped.	**≤13 pts:** Disorganized or confusing structure. Paragraphing is arbitrary. No effective intro or conclusion.	____ _/ **20**
STYLE & CLARITY (15%) Word choice, sentence variety, and tone	**14-15 pts:** Writing is engaging, precise, and appropriate for the audience. Sentences are varied and fluent. Tone is confident and consistent.	**12-13 pts:** Writing is clear and functional. Sentences are mostly correct but may lack variety. Tone is appropriate.	**10-11 pts:** Writing is vague, repetitive, or simplistic. Word choice is imprecise. Tone may be inconsistent or inappropriate.	**≤9 pts:** Writing is confusing, overly informal, or filled with jargon. Hard to follow.	____ _/ **15**
MECHANICS (15%) Grammar, punctuation, spelling, formatting	**14-15 pts:** Essentially error-free. Adheres to all formatting guidelines (MLA/APA/etc.). Demonstrates excellent command of conventions.	**12-13 pts:** Occasional minor errors that do not obscure meaning. Formatting is mostly correct.	**10-11 pts:** Noticeable errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation that occasionally distract the reader. Formatting issues present.	**≤9 pts:** Pervasive errors that significantly interfere with readability. Does not follow formatting guidelines.	____ _/ **15**

Total Score _____ **/ 100**

Grade Equivalent:

- **90-100: A Range** – Exceptional, publishable work. Exceeds all core requirements.

- **80-89: B Range** – Solid, proficient work. Meets all requirements effectively.

- **70-79: C Range** – Adequate work. Meets basic requirements but lacks development or polish.

- **60-69: D Range** – Underdeveloped work. Fails to meet several key requirements.

- **≤59: F Range** – Incomplete or does not fulfill the assignment.

Instructor's Overall Comments:

Strengths:

Areas for Improvement / Revision Notes:

Student Self-Assessment & Revision Plan

(Complete this section after using the rubric)

1. **Based on my self-score, my essay's greatest strength is in:** _____

2. **The category where I can most improve is:** _____

3. **Before submitting, I will make these 2-3 specific changes:**

   - _____

   - _____

   - _____

(Save this rubric as a checklist. Use it to evaluate your draft during the revision process, not just before submission.)