

Free Researched Essay Samples as per Rubric

In the order of...

An Essay Rubric

A Sample Essay as per Rubric

A sample Essay Prompt along with its Directions

3 ACT

Essay Rubric:

Papers at each level exhibit all or most of the characteristics described at each score point.

Score = 6

Essays within this score range demonstrate effective skill in responding to the task. The essay shows a clear understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue and may offer a critical context for discussion. The essay addresses complexity by examining different perspectives on the issue, or by evaluating the implications and/or complications of the issue, or by fully responding to counterarguments to the writer's position. Development of ideas is ample, specific, and logical. Most ideas are fully elaborated. A clear focus on the specific issue in the prompt is maintained. The organization of the essay is clear: the organization may be somewhat predictable or it may grow from the writer's purpose. Ideas are logically sequenced. Most transitions reflect the writer's logic and are usually integrated into the essay. The introduction and conclusion are effective, clear, and well developed. The essay shows a good command of language. Sentences are varied and word choice is varied and precise. There are few, if any, errors to distract the reader.

Score = 5

Essays within this score range demonstrate competent skill in responding to the task. The essay shows a clear understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue and may offer a broad context for discussion. The essay shows recognition of complexity by partially evaluating the implications and/or complications of the issue, or

by responding to counterarguments to the writer's position. Development of ideas is specific and logical. Most ideas are elaborated, with clear movement between general statements and specific reasons, examples, and details. Focus on the specific issue in the prompt is maintained. The organization of the essay is clear, although it may be predictable. Ideas are logically sequenced, although simple and obvious transitions may be used. The introduction and conclusion are clear and generally well developed. Language is competent. Sentences are somewhat varied and word choice is sometimes varied and precise. There may be a few errors, but they are rarely distracting.

Score = 4

Essays within this score range demonstrate adequate skill in responding to the task. The essay shows an understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue and may offer some context for discussion. The essay may show some recognition of complexity by providing some response to counterarguments to the writer's position. Development of ideas is adequate, with some movement between general statements and specific reasons, examples, and details. Focus on the specific issue in the prompt is maintained throughout most of the essay. The organization of the essay is apparent but predictable. Some evidence of logical sequencing of ideas is apparent, although most transitions are simple and obvious. The introduction and conclusion are clear and somewhat developed. Language is adequate, with some sentence variety and appropriate word choice. There may be some distracting errors, but they do not impede understanding.

Score = 3

Essays within this score range demonstrate some developing skill in responding to the task. The essay shows some understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue but does not offer a context for discussion. The essay may acknowledge a counterargument to the writer's position, but its development is brief or unclear.

Development of ideas is limited and may be repetitious, with little, if any, movement between general statements and specific reasons, examples, and details. Focus on the general topic is maintained, but focus on the specific issue in the prompt may not be maintained. The organization of the essay is simple. Ideas are logically grouped within parts of the essay, but there is little or no evidence of logical sequencing of ideas. Transitions, if used, are simple and obvious. An introduction and conclusion are clearly discernible but underdeveloped. Language shows a basic control. Sentences show a little variety and word choice is appropriate. Errors may be distracting and may occasionally impede understanding.

Score = 2

Essays within this score range demonstrate inconsistent or weak skill in responding to the task. The essay shows a weak understanding of the task. The essay may not take a position on the issue, or the essay may take a position but fail to convey reasons to support that position, or the essay may take a position but fail to maintain a stance. There is little or no recognition of a counterargument to the writer's position. The essay is thinly developed. If examples are given, they are general and may not be clearly relevant. The essay may include extensive repetition of the writer's ideas or of ideas in the prompt. Focus on the general topic is maintained, but focus on the specific issue in the prompt may not be maintained. There is some indication of an organizational structure, and some logical grouping of ideas within parts of the essay is apparent. Transitions, if used, are simple and obvious, and they may be inappropriate or misleading. An introduction and conclusion are discernible but minimal. Sentence structure and word choice are usually simple. Errors may be frequently distracting and may sometimes impede understanding.

Score = 1

Essays within this score range show little or no skill in responding to the task. The essay shows little or no understanding of the task. If the essay takes a position, it fails to

convey reasons to support that position. The essay is minimally developed. The essay may include excessive repetition of the writer's ideas or of ideas in the prompt. Focus on the general topic is usually maintained, but focus on the specific issue in the prompt may not be maintained. There is little or no evidence of an organizational structure or of the logical grouping of ideas. Transitions are rarely used. If present, an introduction and conclusion are minimal. Sentence structure and word choice are simple. Errors may be frequently distracting and may significantly impede understanding.

No Score

Blank, Off-Topic, or Illegible

ACT Essay Sample as per Rubric:

In some high schools, many teachers and parents have encouraged the school to adopt a dress code. Some teachers and parents support a dress code because they think it will improve the learning environment in the school. Other teachers and parents do not support a dress code because they believe it inhibits a student's individual expression. In your opinion, should high schools adopt dress codes for students?

In your essay, take a position on this question. You may write about either one of the two points of view given, or you may present a different point of view on this question. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

Directions:

Write a unified, coherent essay about the increasing presence of intelligent machines. In your essay, be sure to:

- clearly state your own perspective on the issue and analyze the relationship between your perspective and at least one other perspective*
- develop and support your ideas with reasoning and examples*
- organize your ideas clearly and logically*
- communicate your ideas effectively in standard written English*

Your perspective may be in full agreement with any of those given, in partial agreement, or completely different.

Strengths and weaknesses of different perspectives on the issue

- What insights do they offer, and what do they fail to consider?*

- *Why might they be persuasive to others, or why might they fail to persuade?*

Your own knowledge, experience, and values

- *What is your perspective on this issue, and what are its strengths and weaknesses?*
- *How will you support your perspective in your essay?*

Sample Essay begins here...

Score 1

Well I don't think they should have a dress code because it takes away from the kids. We shouldn't be mindless drones. I thought this is America where you can express yourself. The government should stay out of it. Next they will be telling us what we should eat and think. I think if they look good they should be able to wear what they want to. If they start to control how we dress. Next, they will control everything. I for one want to think and dress for myself. If we let them tell us what to do slowly our freedoms will be reduced to nothing.

Score 2

I agree with parents and teachers who say dress codes are needed. Dress codes set guidelines for what students wear and help the learning environment.

Uniforms encourage equality. They set guidelines for what students wear so everyone looks the same. Uniforms encourage people to be equal by setting what all students wear at school.

Uniforms help stop rivalry between groups and "clicks." Uniforms put an end to groups at school because everyone looks the same. If everyone looks the same then groups

won't divide people by how they look because uniforms make everyone equal. All students would be the same if they wear uniforms.

These are just a few of the many benefits to wearing a uniform. A dress code is only one way of creating a good school environment, but it is a good one.

Score 3

In my opinion, teenagers should not have to have a dress code, because it restricts them and takes away the freedom they should have. I'm not talking about clothes that are tight or reveal a student's body, that kind of clothes should be restricted. But to enforce a code that tells them they can't wear khakis or jeans, T-shirts or dress shirts, would clearly infringe upon their rights.

One of our rights is the right to express ourselves. Teenagers wear hats and T-shirts with sayings on them, and they wear clothes that show what group they belong to at school or to show they know what's trendy.

If we are restricted in what clothes we can wear, it is a clear violation of the basic rights America was built upon. If these rights are removed, who knows where it could lead next. Will schools start telling students what music they can listen to or what they have to eat for lunch?

Dress codes are unfair because some families can't afford uniforms or proper clothes. If we had a dress code, some kids would need a whole new wardrobe— you would need regular clothes for outside of school, plus your uniform or better clothes for school. This is unfair to poorer students.

A dress code is a poor idea because it infringes on our right of freedom of expression and it can be a financial burden put upon students. It would be better if there was no dress code.

Score 4

I believe that it would be beneficial for our schools to adopt dress codes. Although some may argue that this action would restrict the individual student's freedom of expression, I do not agree. Our right to express ourselves is important, but in our society none of us has unrestricted freedom to do as we like at all times. We must all learn discipline, respect the feelings of others, and learn how to operate in the real world to be successful. Dress codes would not only create a better learning environment, but would also help prepare students for their futures.

Perhaps the most important benefit of adopting dress codes would be creating a better learning environment. Inappropriate clothing can be distracting to fellow students who are trying to concentrate. Short skirts, skimpy tops, and low pants are fine for after school, but not for the classroom. T-shirts with risky images or profanity may be offensive to certain groups. Students should express themselves through art or creative writing, not clothing. With fewer distractions, students can concentrate on getting a good education which can help them later on.

Another benefit of having a dress code is that it will prepare students to dress properly for different places. When you go to a party you do not wear the same clothes you wear to church. Likewise, when you dress for work you do not wear the same clothes you wear at the beach. Many professions even require uniforms. Having a dress code in high school will help students adjust to the real world.

Lastly, with all the peer pressure in school, many students worry about fitting in. If a dress code (or even uniforms) were required, there would be less emphasis on how you look, and more emphasis on learning.

In conclusion, there are many important reasons our schools should adopt dress codes. Getting an education is hard enough without being distracted by inappropriate t-shirts or tight pants. Learning to dress for particular occasions prepares us for the real world. And teens have enough pressure already without having to worry about what they are wearing.

Score 5

Many teachers and parents are now debating whether or not a dress code should be adopted. They think that it will improve the learning environment in our schools, and I agree. I think that if we had a dress code, it would substantially improve the quality of our education. First, it would allow students to focus on academics rather than the social aspect of school. Second, it would improve the appearance of school, and third, it will prepare students for the working world.

First, and most importantly, implementing a dress code will substantially reduce distractions in the classroom. It is important for our future success to be able to concentrate on what we are being taught, but it is difficult to do this when some students are whispering about what others are wearing, and others are admiring someone's Air Jordans. Too many young people today are more interested in style than substance. Plus, lots of kids think of school as a social club instead of a place to get an education.

Secondly, I believe that when students and faculty are well groomed, it improves the school esthetically. It is not necessary to dress formally to accomplish this. Requiring long pants (and an option of skirts for girls) and a collared shirt would be enough. Not only would the school and its student body look more professional, I believe it would change the tone of the school. If a person is required to hold themselves to a certain standard, they will. Having to dress more maturely can make students act more maturely as well.

My final reason for supporting a standard of dress in high school is that it would prepare the youth of today for the workforce of tomorrow. The vast majority of jobs require some type of dress code or standard. Therefore I think that it is important to prepare students not only academically but also in conduct and grooming. Someone might have impressive qualifications, but if they look like a bum off the street, it is highly doubtful that they would be hired. Letting students dress anyway they want might actually be hurting them in the long run.

Even though some teachers and parents think that establishing a dress code would restrict the individual student's freedom of expression, I still think having one is a good idea. Students aren't really trying to exercise their rights when they wear skimpy clothing, they just want to show off and be trendy. We have to look at what is most important. When students wear t-shirts with political slogans that might offend others or dress in skimpy outfits it can distract other students and detract from our learning environment. At this time in our lives the most important thing we have to do is get a good education so we can succeed in college and later life.

In conclusion, I am highly in favor of a dress code. Not only will it improve our learning environment by keeping classroom distractions to a minimum, it will also improve the tone of the school and prepare students to be successful in their future careers.

Score 6

Parents and educators are increasingly concerned about the trend toward inappropriate dress in our schools. They feel that clothing that is too tight or too revealing may distract students and interfere with learning. They believe that a dress code should be adopted which would set guidelines for what students should wear in the school building. Others feel that a dress code should not be enacted because it would restrict individual students' freedom of expression.

Freedom of expression is important, but when inappropriate attire begins to interfere with the educational process, something needs to be done. Allowing students to wear whatever they want is clearly not working. Too many teens today seek to emulate rock stars and pick up fashion tips from MTV. In a culture that is inundated with sexual innuendo or worse, it is not surprising that kids show up at school in suggestive clothing. The educators are right. Short skirts and spandex tops can be extremely distracting to a population group driven largely by hormones. Establishing a dress code could help improve the learning environment in the school; unfortunately, dress codes can be

extremely arbitrary and difficult to enforce. What is the solution? I think the answer is school uniforms. This option would be far easier to enforce and has several advantages.

From a financial perspective, school uniforms could even help the playing field between poor and rich students. We live in a materialistic world and, for some, it is all about the label. They think that if it's not Tommy, Levi, Gap, etc. that it is not good enough. Students can be cruel, and make fun of those who do not dress the same as they do. Wearing jeans with holes may be one student's form of expression but another's necessity. Mandating uniforms would dispense with this kind of discrimination. Purchasing a uniform would be far less expensive than a complete school wardrobe, and if there were some families that couldn't afford it, perhaps the school could provide one for them, or at least help defray the expense.

Another benefit of school uniforms is that they could help curb some of the gang-related violence in our schools. Gangs are associated with certain colors and members often hassle students who wear an opposing gang's color. Sporting the innocent-looking sweater Aunt Rose gave you for your birthday could be like waving a red flag in front of an angry bull. With uniforms, this problem would disappear.

From a personal perspective, I would enjoy the sheer effortless of not having to rummage through my closet each morning trying to decide what to wear. Some may enjoy selecting their outfit for the day, but not me! Having a school uniform would make my morning routine go much faster, and maybe even leave a little extra time to finish up yesterday's homework.

While uniforms in high schools promise many benefits, we should not expect that they are a cure-all. Uniforms alone will not raise student grades, confer equality, or make schools entirely safe for all students. Uniforms cannot learn math or earn high scores on state tests. Students must do these things for themselves. However, I do believe that uniforms in high schools can go a long way toward helping students succeed by providing a learning environment that supports achievement rather than one that is distracting, discriminating, and dangerous.

So, in conclusion, I strongly support not just a dress code, which would be difficult to enforce, but a resolution to adopt school uniforms for our entire district. Uniforms would not only solve the problems associated with inappropriate dress and create a better learning environment, but could also serve to end inequality, help curb gang violence, and make our mornings a little less hectic.

Practice prompts for ACT:

Intelligent Machines

Many of the goods and services we depend on daily are now supplied by intelligent, automated machines rather than human beings. Robots build cars and other goods on assembly lines, where once there were human workers. Many of our phone conversations are now conducted not with people but with sophisticated technologies. We can now buy goods at a variety of stores without the help of a human cashier. Automation is generally seen as a sign of progress, but what is lost when we replace humans with machines? Given the accelerating variety and prevalence of intelligent machines, it is worth examining the implications and meaning of their presence in our lives.

Perspective One: What we lose with the replacement of people by machines is some part of our own humanity. Even our mundane daily encounters no longer require from us basic courtesy, respect, and tolerance for other people.

Perspective Two: Machines are good at low-skill, repetitive jobs, and at high-speed, extremely precise jobs. In both cases they work better than humans. This efficiency leads to a more prosperous and progressive world for everyone.

Perspective Three: Intelligent machines challenge our long-standing ideas about what humans are or can be. This is good because it pushes both humans and machines toward new, unimagined possibilities.

Write a unified, coherent essay about the increasing presence of intelligent machines