



Middle School Sally Donze Essay Contest Judging Rubric

Essay Number: _____

For each criterion listed, score the essay on the scale provided. Use a separate form for each essay.

Criteria	Above average	Average	Below average	Poor	Score
Understanding of the topic: To what extent did the writer demonstrate a clear understanding of the question and respond with details	16	12	8	4	
	Key ideas related to the question are adequately identified and defined; average use of literary techniques to describe viewpoints	Key ideas are partially identified and defined; statement that viewpoints exist but little use of supporting details	Some ideas are identified but not defined; lack of reference to any viewpoints	Complete lack of reference to the question; irrelevant information; unsupported statements, incomplete details	
Effectiveness in expressing a point-of-view: To what extent did the writer present his/her point of view?	8	6	4	2	
	The student connects personal feelings, experiences, hopes, fears, reflections or beliefs with the text. The personal response refers to the text, conveys a sense of understanding the text.	The student explores personal feelings, experiences, hopes, fears, reflections or beliefs and makes a superficial or concrete connection to the text.	The student retells or paraphrases the text making only a superficial reference to personal feelings or experiences. Or the student writes about personal feelings, etc., without connecting to or referring to the text.	The student response shows little or no interaction with or understanding of the text.	
Original thinking relative to the topic: To what extent was the original thinking relative to the subject?	8	8	4	2	
	Mostly relative to the topic without errors	Partially relative with minor errors	Somewhat relative with significant errors	Not relative to the topic at all.	
Literary style, grammar and spelling	4	3	2	1	
	Literary style partially clear and effective, good grammar & spelling Sentence structure somewhat varied; essay well developed and cohesive.	Use of literary technique to convey main ideas but lacking clarity Sentence structure lacks variety but essay mostly developed.	Lacks use of literary technique Many errors in grammar and spelling	Irrelevant and/or erroneous information, main ideas unclear, illegible, grammar and spelling errors consistent throughout essay	
Total Score:					

****Please assign a quality points score (100-25 pts.) which will be used to break any ties. Quality points _____****

Judge's Signature: _____