

**History essay rubric** (adapted from work by The SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro)

CRITERIA	4	3	2	1
<b>Historical Knowledge: Knowledge outside of text</b>	Essay includes substantial information (more than 4 facts or concepts) not found in the text.	Essay includes three or four facts or concepts not found in the text.	Essay includes one or two facts or concepts not found in the text.	Facts and concepts in essay come only from text
<b>Historical Knowledge: Accuracy and Importance</b>	The most important historical concepts or information necessary to answer the question are included. Concepts and facts included are accurate and used appropriately in the essay.	The writer includes some of the most important historical concepts or information, although one or two key ideas are missing. Any misconceptions/factual errors are minor and do not affect the overall accuracy of the argument.	The writer is missing most of the important historical concepts or information necessary to answer the questions. Specific details included may be accurate but could be seen as insignificant. Alternately, there are no misconceptions but factual errors are prevalent enough to negatively impact accuracy.	Information included is either irrelevant or insignificant to the question. The writer does not include any of the most significant historical concepts or terms. Key statements reveal misconceptions; details and examples contain many factual errors.
<b>Historical Thinking: Interpreting texts</b>	Essay presents a valid and defensible interpretation of the text. In the interpretation, the writer clearly describes how the text and the author are products of the specific time period.	Essay presents a valid and defensible interpretation of the text. There is a limited attempt to place the text or author in the context of the time period.	Essay presents a somewhat questionable interpretation of the text. There is little attempt to connect the text or the author to the time period.	Writer demonstrates little understanding of the text. There is no attempt to describe how the document or author is related to the time period.
<b>Historical Thinking: Connection to today</b>	The essay clearly describes how the events of today have their roots in historical experiences.	The essay articulates a connection between events today and historical events.	The essay discusses events of today, making a superficial or loose connection to historical events.	Writer discusses only events of today without making any link to historical events.
<b>Historical Communication</b>	The essay's organization is logical and appropriate to the topic; the organisational scheme may be chronological or thematic. The essay has a core argument that responds to the question. The writer includes key statements that contribute to the argument. Each key statement is supported by relevant specifics. The organisation and the focus of the essay make interpretation of the purpose/ thesis/main idea easy for the reader.	The essay's organization is generally logical and appropriate to the topic. The essay has a core argument that responds to the question. Key statements, and supporting details, are generally in support of the topic, although the connection may not be obvious at times. The organisational structure is strong enough to move the reader through the text and help the reader interpret the purpose/ thesis/main idea without too much confusion.	The writing addresses the topic, but contains many extraneous or loosely related ideas. The writing responds to the question, but rather thinly or unevenly. There may be a central argument but the key statements and supporting details do not always further that argument.	The essay responds to the topic but does so in either a very general or a very haphazard way. Ideas, details or events appear strung together in a loose or random fashion. There is no distinction between key statements and supporting details or the details do not support the statements.

