Response Scoring Guide

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|  | **Excellent** | **Good** | **Satisfactory** | **Needs improvement** |
| **Topic sentence/claim** | Begins with a thesis statement as the topic sentence  Polished, in-depth and sophisticated  Precise language  Clearly addresses the prompt | Begins with a thesis statement as the topic sentence  Contains good ideas, but may be awkwardly worded; fairly in-depth and somewhat sophisticated  Language could be more precise  Addresses the prompt | Begins with a thesis statement as the topic sentence, but is unclear or awkwardly worded; needs more depth.  May not address the assigned question | Response may not begin with a topic sentence as the thesis.  Unclear/missing thesis/topic sentence  Does not address prompt |
| **Focus** | Paragraph explores one specific idea (coming from the prompt) and comes to a strong, clear conclusion  Begins with a topic sentence and ends with a concluding sentence  Good transitioning between sentences | Paragraph explores one idea (coming from the prompt) and comes to a clear conclusion  Begins with a topic sentence and ends with a concluding sentence  Decent transitioning between sentences | Paragraph may explore more than one idea (coming from the prompt); conclusion may need to be clearer  May not begin with a topic sentence or end with a clear concluding sentence  Weak transitioning between sentences | Paragraph may explore more than one idea (coming from the prompt); conclusion is unclear.  Does not begin with a topic sentence or end with a clear concluding sentence  Weak transitioning between sentences |
| **Selection of evidence** | Chooses evidence of appropriate length that supports the topic  sentence/ contention and is a strong quotation choice  Uses two pieces of textual evidence | Chooses evidence of appropriate length that supports the topic sentence/contention somewhat, but choice could be stronger  Uses one piece of textual evidence | Uses evidence  but it does not support the topic sentence; is not an appropriate choice or is too long or too short | Evidence is not present or is not relevant |
| **Setting up context** | Provides concise (specific, brief, and to the point) context to introduce the quotation | Provides some context to introduce the quotation such as speaker and setting | Does not provide appropriate or relevant context | Does not provide context or simply lists the source |
| **Use of signal phrase** | Transition from the context to the evidence is accurate and precise and makes use of a strong signal phrase | The transition from context to evidence is present and uses a signal phrase but it could be more precise | Transition is awkward or incomplete; signal phrase is present. | Lacks transition; signal phrase is missing |
| **Analysis/**  **understanding** | Strong analysis that demonstrates a deep understanding of the larger ideas  Clearly and logically explains how the quotations prove the claim | Analysis demonstrates a decent understanding of the larger ideas  Analysis supports the claim, but could be more developed; partially explains how the quotations prove the claim | Analysis demonstrates a some understanding of the larger ideas  Analysis needs more depth; may summarize more than argue; does not logically explain how the quotations support the claim | Little to no analysis of ideas  Basic ideas need to be developed |
| **Mechanics** | Minimal to no mechanical errors (grammar, spelling, usage); correct citations | Minimal mechanical errors (grammar, spelling, usage); citations have a minor error | Some distracting mechanical errors; citation is present but form is not | Many distracting mechanical errors; missing citations |