

Guide to Holistic Scoring

1. Know what you're looking for; have in mind the criteria for judging the papers. (It also helps if the students know those criteria before they write.)
2. Read quickly for an impression of the whole paper and score immediately; do not reread or analyze.
3. Read the entire paper; the writing sometimes improves dramatically as the writer continues, and it sometimes falls apart after the opening paragraph.
4. Read supportively; try to reward what is done well, rather than search for small errors or omissions.
5. Take everything in the paper into account: content, organization, diction, sentence structure, spelling—everything.
6. Do not judge a paper for its length; some short papers are good, and some long papers are poor.