

ILA BIOLOGY ESSAY RUBRIC

I. BIOLOGY CONTENT

To demonstrate understanding of biological processes and applications

Score Point	CRITERIA FOR SCORING
4	<p>The response demonstrates a WELL-DEVELOPED understanding and knowledge of the target biology content. This may be evidenced in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response addresses all parts of the essay question.• The response incorporates relevant information from <i>at least</i> two document sections.• The response includes significant prior knowledge.• The content is exceptionally clear, focused, and thoroughly explained.• The response includes strong supportive evidence.• The response relies very little on simple (word-for-word) repetition of text.
3	<p>The response demonstrates ADEQUATE understanding and knowledge of the target biology content. This may be evidenced in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response addresses most of the question.• The response incorporates mostly relevant information from two document sections.• The response includes adequate prior knowledge.• The content is mostly clear and focused.• The response includes some supportive evidence.• The response relies little on simple (word-for-word) repetition of text.
2	<p>The response demonstrates LOW understanding of the target biology content. This may be evidenced in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response addresses some of the question.• The response includes limited information from the document sections.• The response includes limited prior knowledge.• The main idea of the essay is understandable, but may be overly broad or simplistic.• The response includes insufficient supportive evidence.• The response may include some inaccuracies that detract from the overall essay.• The response may somewhat rely on simple (word-for-word) repetition of text.
1	<p>The response represents VERY LOW or NO grasp of the target biology content. This may be evidenced in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response may address the question minimally, or not at all.• The response includes little to no information from the document sections.• The response does not include any prior knowledge.• The main idea is not understandable.• The response includes little or no supportive evidence to support the main ideas.• The response includes frequent inaccuracies that detract from the overall essay.• The response excessively relies on simple (word-for-word) repetition of document text.

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II. LANGUAGE

To communicate ideas clearly with a scholarly scientific writing style

Score Point	CRITERIA FOR SCORING
4	<p>The response is an EXCELLENT scientific explanation with very good academic language use. This may be evidenced in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most or all of the essay's organizational components are strong.• The response demonstrates very good text cohesion through the regular use of varied sentence structures and strong links between sentences.• The response demonstrates consistent use of precise and varied words, including frequent specific biology terms and expanded noun phrases to describe biology concepts.• The tone is impersonal and authoritative with no or minimal speech markers.• The response relies very little on simple (word-for-word) repetition of text.
3	<p>The response is an ADEQUATE scientific explanation with good academic language use. This may be evidenced in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The content's organization is satisfactory, generally clear, and coherent.• The response demonstrates a good level of text cohesion through the use of sentence structure variety and some marked themes.• The response demonstrates an adequate use of precise and varied words, including some specific biology terms and expanded noun phrases to describe biology concepts.• The tone is often impersonal and authoritative, though the writing may contain some speech markers and personal references.• The response relies little on simple (word-for-word) repetition of text.
2	<p>The response is a WEAK scientific explanation with only some academic language. This may be evidenced in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The content's organization may be skeletal and/or loosely planned.• The response demonstrates some text cohesion, though the ideas are not linked well with appropriate language features.• The response occasionally demonstrates use of precise and varied words, but generally the vocabulary is ordinary and there is little expansion of noun phrases.• The tone may be somewhat informal with regular uses of speech markers and first or second person references.• The response may somewhat rely on simple (word-for-word) repetition of text.
1	<p>The response is a POOR scientific explanation with minimal to no academic language use. This may be evidenced in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The writing may be haphazard and disjointed, with weak organization.• The response demonstrates minimal to no text cohesion.• The word usage is simplistic, repetitive, inappropriate, or overused with little to no evidence of expanded noun phrases.• The tone is usually informal and personal with an overuse of speech markers.• The response excessively relies on simple (word-for-word) repetition of document text.