

## DIALECTIC ESSAY SCALE

CRITERIA: MECHANICS:	LOW										HIGH	SCORE
Punctuation, Capitalization, Spelling	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	0 mistakes	_____
Grammar, <sup>1</sup> Sentences <sup>2</sup>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	0 mistakes	_____
Following Directions (word count, font, double-spaced, submitting entry, using MLA style for references, <sup>3</sup> etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	entry follows ALL directions	_____
<b>COMPOSITION</b>												
Reflects a dialectic approach <sup>4</sup>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	strongly evident	_____
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>												
Structure in introduction, body, conclusion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	logical connections strongly evident	_____
Paragraph development <sup>5</sup>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	thoroughly developed	_____
<b>STYLE</b>												
Vocabulary Choice & level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	effective & appropriate language	_____

<sup>1</sup> Grammar-level mistakes include subject/verb agreement, noun/pronoun agreement, incorrect pronoun case (who/whom, he/him, etc.), etc.

<sup>2</sup> Sentence-level mistakes include failure to write in complete sentences (fragment), running sentences together with no punctuation or conjunction (run-on), linking what could be two independent sentences with a comma (comma-splice).

<sup>3</sup> References include footnotes, bibliography, quotations, etc., when used.

<sup>4</sup> Uses logic and formal or informal reasoning, develops an argument, establishes a train of thought that leads to truth.

<sup>5</sup> Paragraphs are on distinct topics and are effectively developed with examples, illustrations, analysis, reasons, applications, etc.

Author's voice <sup>6</sup>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	_____
	Lacks voice, depersonalized										clear, vivid voice
Complexity of thoughts, insights	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	_____
	simplistic thoughts or insights										insightful, original
<b>CONTENT</b>											
Lutheran theological Understanding <sup>7</sup>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	_____
	no doctrinal or theological spiritual discussion										sound and appropriate support for entry's content
Response to prompt	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	_____
	does not address the prompt										content addresses the prompt through organization & content

**BONUS POINTS:**

**+** \_\_\_\_\_

The classical rhetorician Longinus, responding to the fact that Homer, despite his undeniable greatness, has some minor mistakes, said that "one sublimity compensates for a multitude of faults." On that principle, essays that have elements that can be described as "sublime"—that is, awe-inspiring qualities of insight or artistic excellence—may be awarded up to 5 bonus points, which can thus compensate for 5 points worth of faults. These bonus points should NOT be awarded unless deserved at the judge's discretion.

**TOTAL SCORE = CRITERIA SCORES (+ BONUS, if any):** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>6</sup> Voice is the individual's writing style which includes but is not limited to syntax, semantics, diction, tone, pacing, and concept development. The author's voice reflects the author's own thoughts and words and makes the essay a unique work of creation.

<sup>7</sup> Lutheran theological understanding: any doctrine or spiritual discussion supports and/or conforms to the Bible as reflected in Luther's *Small and Large Catechisms* and the rest of the *Book of Concord*.