

Paragraph Evaluation Key (Steven Engler)

Numbers in circles are comments not marks. Not all strengths and weaknesses are noted. There is no direct correlation between tick marks and grades. Note that even-numbered comments highlight strengths and odd-numbered ones issues to work on. Issues of grammar, syntax, etc. affect your grade only insofar as they contribute to lack of clarity.

1. Work on topic sentence (t.s.). (Give clearer m.p. for the paragraph (¶)here)
2. Good t.s. (Clearly stated m.p. for the ¶.)
3. The t.s. is too general or vague.
4. This sentence might make a better t.s. than the one you have.
5. The t.s. states one point on the topic rather than a m.p. (In that sense, it is not really a topic sentence; it just launches into the topic without setting it up.)
6. Excellent paragraph. (Effective t.s., contributing to m.p.; stays focused)
7. Vague: work on wording or focus sentence. (Overly general point; vague or unclear word choice; point needs to be made explicit; term should be defined)
8. ¶ stays well focused on the topic *as expressed in the t.s.*
9. This point off track, not directly relevant to the topic of the ¶.
10. Good work linking point explicitly to the t.s.
11. This point should be tied in more explicitly to the t.s.
12. Covers key points well.
13. Missing key points. Important parts of a solid answer are left out.
14. Good work stating religious significance, i.e., using details in a way that helps make your point clear.
15. Draw out the religious significance of this point more (e.g., how is it related to a basic idea? What does it mean in the context of this passage/example?) Use example more effectively. (Draw out its significance, especially in terms of t.s.)
16. Excellent progression of points, with each sentence contributing a distinct point
17. This material repeats what you said above, probably a reason to reorganize.
18. Good work supporting central points and key terms with specific examples.
19. Example(s) needed to support/illustrate central points and key terms
20. Good work offering a clear definition or example of a key term.
21. Define this point in other terms
22. Well-focused; well-put. / Very clear sentence.
23. This sentence has grammatical problems (incomplete, run-on, etc.)
25. Grammar/syntax/word choice get(s) in the way of understanding this point.
27. No need for concluding sentence to “wrap up” the paragraph
29. This point is wrong or misinterprets the material.
31. At this point you seem to express an insider view rather than the sort of outsider, comparative view of Religious Studies.
33. Avoid making points with questions; *make* the point; don't hint at it.
35. Avoid structuring the ¶ as a narrative: make the m.p. in the t.s. then develop it.

Abbreviations: ¶ – paragraph; t.s. – topic sentence; m.p. – main point/issue