# ILA BIOLOGY ESSAY RUBRIC

## I. BIOLOGY CONTENT

*To demonstrate understanding of biological processes and applications*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Score Point</th>
<th>CRITERIA FOR SCORING</th>
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| 4 | The response demonstrates a WELL-DEVELOPED understanding and knowledge of the target biology content. This may be evidenced in the following ways:  
  - The response addresses **all** parts of the essay question.  
  - The response incorporates relevant information from **at least** 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 | The response demonstrates ADEQUATE understanding and knowledge of the target biology content. This may be evidenced in the following ways:  
  - 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 | The response demonstrates LOW understanding of the target biology content. This may be evidenced in the following ways:  
  - 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 | The response represents VERY LOW or NO grasp of the target biology content. This may be evidenced in the following ways:  
  - 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*

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>The response is an EXCELLENT scientific explanation with very good academic language use. This may be evidenced in the following ways:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- 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**       | The response is an ADEQUATE scientific explanation with good academic language use. This may be evidenced in the following ways: |

- 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**       | The response is a WEAK scientific explanation with only some academic language. This may be evidenced in the following ways: |

- 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**       | The response is a POOR scientific explanation with minimal to no academic language use. This may be evidenced in the following ways: |

- 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.

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