

# ACCUPLACER TEST PREPARATION: WRITING

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***Bedford:** Library, 7/7A. Tel: 781-280-3727*

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*The **Writing Center** also offers free two-hour **Writing Refresher Workshops**. Dates and times are posted for both campuses at: [www.middlesex.mass.edu/admissions/vpt/writerefresh.aspx](http://www.middlesex.mass.edu/admissions/vpt/writerefresh.aspx)*

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## Welcome and Introduction

**Welcome** to Middlesex Community College! Whether you are entering directly from high-school or after being out of the academic world for some time, the required courses at Middlesex are an excellent opportunity for you to hone your abilities, experience an interactive college environment, learn critical skills, and, ultimately, earn college credit for your hard work. The Writing Placement Test you are about to take is designed to determine which English course is best suited for your current skills. There are four options for placement: ENG 092: Reading, Writing, and Reasoning (6 credits); ENG 099 + ENG 101: ALP (Accelerated Learning Program – 6 credits combining Writing Skills Seminar and English Composition I); ENG 101: English Composition I (ENG101); and Honors English Composition I (H-ENG101).

It is our goal to work with you to ensure that you are placed in an environment where you can thrive and succeed. In Composition I, you will earn college credit for your coursework immediately, so this should be your goal while reviewing for the placement test. Do the best you can to familiarize yourself with the set-up and expectations of the test: Your placement will be based on a composite of your reading and writing score.

If you are placed into ENG 092, a 6-credit integrated reading, writing, and critical thinking course that deepens and solidifies literacy skills, you will not earn college credit right away, but you will have the opportunity to learn or refresh all the skills you need to transition successfully to college level work.

If you are placed into ENG 099, a Writing Skills Seminar taken concurrently with ENG 101, you will learn to develop college level reading and writing skills and other strategies for success that will enable you to be effective in your linked Composition 101 and other college level courses.

ENG 101 focuses on developing academic writing, with the expected outcome of essays with arguable thesis statements and appropriate use of standard English. Passing ENG 101 requires a C- or higher; therefore, being placed in a course without being ready for academic expectations would not be beneficial. This is why we are working as a team to place you where you belong and where you can best succeed long-term.

If you demonstrate a sophisticated level of writing and critical thinking, using a solid thesis statement and backing it up with clear topic sentences and examples throughout the essay, your score may qualify you for Honors Composition I, which would gain you entrance to the Commonwealth Honors Program. Learn more about this program at <https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/Honors/>

Please do not hesitate to ask us questions about any of these different options, and understand that we are working with you to ensure that your placement reflects your current skills, so you can be well positioned to succeed at Middlesex Community College and beyond. Again, welcome and good luck!

## Instructions, Essay Elements, and Scoring for the Writing Placement Test

### Instructions

Prepare a multiple-paragraph writing sample of about 300-700 words on the provided topic. You should use the 60 minutes provided to plan, write, review and edit what you have written. Read the assignment carefully before you begin to write. You will write your essay on the computer, but you will be given pencil and paper to create and outline if you choose and/or to make any notes that might be helpful along the way.

Do not use inappropriate words, such as profanity or threats. You may not utilize any books, notes, or other reference materials during the test. Remember to review your writing and make any changes you think will improve what you have written. *Note: To leave a blank line between paragraphs, press the Enter key. Do not use the Tab key.*

A prompt can either consist of a reflective question with no “correct” answer, that can be responded to in a variety of ways, or a short passage adapted from some authentic text with a corresponding assignment. Prompts within the ACCUPLACER System have been carefully designed to be free of technical or specific literary references and do not require specialized knowledge. The prompts are designed to stimulate critical thinking and are relevant to any number of fields and interests. You will be asked to draw on a broad range of experiences, learning, ideas, and literary or historical examples to support your point of view on the issue in question.

### Essay Elements

The essay test you will take mimics the type of academic writing you are likely to experience as part of your college coursework; it will also draw on much of your own experience, so for this type of “test,” you already know the answers. The challenge comes with conveying them in the best way you know how. The essay is looking for how effectively you can develop and express your ideas in writing. After you read the prompt, you will write an essay in which you develop your own point of view on the issue. *You should organize your answer in five clearly differentiated paragraphs organized around a main thesis statement. Support your position with appropriate reasoning and detailed examples, including concrete examples from literature, history, current events, etc.*

*The position you take will not influence your score.* Your essay will be given a comprehensive score based on the components below:

- ❖ **Purpose and Focus (Thesis):** The clarity with which you maintain your main idea. Address the issue clearly by restating the question in the first line, developing a strong thesis statement that can be illustrated three ways, and supporting it with examples throughout the essay.
- ❖ **Sentence Structure and Organization:** The clarity with which you structure your response and present a logical sequence of ideas. Connect your ideas in an orderly fashion throughout the essay with clear, reasonable transitions and a strong sense of introduction and conclusion. Be sure to break your essay into five paragraphs, including an introduction and a conclusion.
- ❖ **Critical Thinking:** The extent to which you communicate a point of view and demonstrate reasoned relationships among ideas. The thesis statement you have created will help keep you focused throughout the essay.

- ❖ **Development and Support:** The extent to which you elaborate upon your ideas and present supporting details. Use concrete details throughout the essay to support the topic sentences, which will provide the main idea of each paragraph. Length is a critical component of the essay, so aim to create a 550-word essay, but be sure to avoid repetitiveness.
- ❖ **Language and Vocabulary:** The extent to which you craft sentences and paragraphs, demonstrating control of vocabulary, voice, and structure. Use multisyllabic words and varied language rather than relying on redundancy or simple words. While you will be working on a computer, you will not have Spell Check at your disposal, so proofread for spelling and grammar.
- ❖ **Grammar and Mechanical Conventions:** The extent to which your writing is free of errors in usage and mechanics. Focus on grammar and include quotations, semicolons, commas, and colons where appropriate. Avoid run-on sentences.

### Scoring and Placement

You will receive your score immediately via computer print-out. Your writing sample will be scored on a **scale of 1-8**, with 8 being the highest, on the basis of how effectively it communicates a clear and comprehensive message to the readers in response to the stated purpose. Your score will be based on your ability to express, organize, and support your opinions and ideas, not the position you take on the topic. An essay that is too short to be evaluated, written on a topic other than the one presented, or written in a language other than English will be given a score of zero. **Your English course placement is based on a combination of scores from your Writing and Reading tests, and include the following cut offs:**

- Students who score between 33-67 on the Reading test are placed into ENG 092, our Reading, Writing and Reasoning Course. This is a six-credit developmental Reading and Writing Course.

For students who score 68 or above on their Reading test, a formula is applied to the Reading and Writing scores. The formula ( $3 \times \text{Writing Score} + .4 \times \text{Reading Score}$ ) results in a composite score which determines English course eligibility.

- Students who received less than a composite score of 48 are placed into ENG 099, our Writing Skills Seminar taken with ENG 101 as a co-requisite. In this six credit English course, the three credits for ENG 099 are developmental, and the three for ENG 101 count for college credit.
- Students who receive a composite score of 48-59 are placed into ENG 101, our English Composition I course, which is the first college level English course. The following are some examples of Reading and Writing test score combinations that will result in a composite score of 48: 68 in Reading and 7 in Writing, 75 in Reading and 6 in Writing, 83 in Reading and 5 in Writing.
- Students who receive a composite score of 60 or above are invited to enroll in Honors English 101.

English Language Learners (ELL) Students are assessed at the time of their placement testing to determine if they would be better suited to take the ELL version of the test. If so, their test scores will be used to place them into ELL specific courses, which are considered developmental level courses.

## Top Five Tips for Writing a Successful Essay for the Accuplacer Test

1. **Write a clear thesis statement that can be proven three ways.**  
 In response to a question that asks what students need to succeed in school, you could write:  
*Students who work hard, complete all assignments, and revise their work are likely to succeed in school.*  
 Or,  
*Students who take their school work seriously are likely to succeed in school.*  
 Body paragraph 1 is about students who work hard.  
 Body paragraph 2 is about students to complete all assignments.  
 Body paragraph 3 is about students who revise their work.
2. **Write a 5-paragraph essay that is at least 550 words.** (You have one hour to complete the exam, so keep writing and editing – avoiding redundancy - until you reach 5 solid paragraphs: introduction, body paragraph 1, body paragraph 2, body paragraph 3, conclusion.)
3. **Use strong vocabulary.** Make sure you have several words that are at least three syllables and be aware of your spelling and word-usage.
4. **Use concrete examples that draw from history, literature, current events, and your own life.** Prior to taking the test, think of and jot down important figures from history about whom you've learned, books you've read, key events in the news, and memorable events in your life; all of these can be creatively adapted to almost any writing prompt.
5. **Use good time management.**
  - a. Before jumping into writing your essay, take the time to create an **outline**, as this will keep you organized as you type. You will be given scrap paper so you can jot down your thesis and the topics for your body paragraphs and stay on track.
  - b. **Proofread** your work. You are allowed to edit your essay, so please take the time to read over your work and revise your final version.

~ Relax, stay focused, & remember one hour is more than enough time to write a good essay! ~

**GOOD LUCK!**

## Sample Essays with Scorer's Commentary

### Sample Question

#### **Passage**

*An actor, when his cue came, was unable to move onto the stage. He said, "I can't get in, the chair is in the way." And the producer said, "Use the difficulty. If it's a drama, pick the chair up and smash it. If it's comedy, fall over it." From this experience the actor concluded that in any situation in life that is negative, there is something positive you can do with it. Adapted from Lawrence Eisenberg, "Caine Scrutiny."*

#### **Assignment**

*Can any obstacle or disadvantage be turned into something good?*

### **Sample Essay #1 – Score of 2**

I live in a house that every body in it came from acting. I remember my mom telling me this it you infind your self bad situation, don't forget your smile with "you". I think she ment that what ever is thedifficulty think always positive. For an example, I grow up in place that full with bad poeple and onetime some body try to convinse me to smoke. And smoking it very bad thing. So I started to telljoukes on people that canser and after 2 minutes I change the subject. Or that every time I am gettingsick and fill not so good. I am trying to see comedy movies as much as I can. Because I have been toldthat comedy is the best cure. I think that as an actor on the stage you need to be always ready forsomething rong, and if you ready and preparad. It will be good and life for your self in you all life andnot only there. This experiance important for your benfits, always a positive person and people willlove you and get along with you. This mark it the best.

#### **Scorer's Commentary**

- This essay is not clearly written.
- The sentences are confusing.
- Words are misspelled and used improperly.
- The thesis statement is unclear.
- The essay is only one big paragraph instead of 5 paragraphs.
- The essay needs the following:
  - a clear introductory paragraph;
  - strong supporting paragraphs with topic sentences with transitions and concrete details; and
  - a solid conclusion.
- This essay falls short in every category and receives a score of 2.

### **Sample Essay #2 – Score of 4**

I think that most of life's obstacles or disadvantages can be turned into something good. The way you look at situations determines the outcome of a situation because if you look at the situation negatively you don't have any hope that the outcome would be positive; but if you look at the situation positively you would have a better chance at being successful at what you do. The writer in the passage saw the chair in his way as an obstruction to his performance but the producer had a broader perspective saying that he could use the chair according to what the genre of the play was. For bad things to work out we need to stop being so narrow minded and broaden our perspective on life. If you committed a crime and got caught don't just concentrate on the bad that happened in your life, use that experience to share with others showing them the hardship that goes with that type of lifestyle discouraging them not to do it. The outcome of a situation is determined by how you look at it.

### Scorer's Commentary

- The thesis statement is clear.
- The essay is only one big paragraph instead of 5 paragraphs.
- The essay needs the following:
  - a clear introductory paragraph;
  - strong supporting paragraphs with topic sentences with transitions and concrete details; and
  - a solid conclusion.
- This essay is on the right track, but there is not enough concrete evidence to support the student's point.
- Overall, the essay has a few strengths but misses key marks and earns a score of a 4.

### Sample Essay #3 – Score of 6

Obstacles and disadvantages are in our lives every second of the day. Whether it is a big test in school in an important subject or a traffic jam keeping us from getting to work on time, we can always count on something going a wry. However, even the biggest obstacles can be turned into something good if enough work is put into it.

Small obstacles, like the big test in school, can be overcome with hard work and determination. If you spend enough time studying beforehand, and doing practice questions to build your confidence, chances are you will do very well. On the other hand, if you procrastinate and do not prepare for the test until the night before it, chances are you will do poorly.

Large obstacles can be overcome with hard work and determination as well, but depending on the size of the obstacle, carefully planning, organization, and coordination are needed as well. For example, in World War II the Allied powers were fighting the Axis powers in battle after battle. The Allies needed to get into Western Europe through France and through a heavily fortified enemy. With careful planning, organization, and coordination, they launched the largest amphibious invasion in history and took the beaches of Normandy in what would be called D-day, and liberate France soon thereafter.

In conclusion, any obstacle can be overcome into something good. Tests can be studied for, traffic jams can be overtaken by detours, and wars can be won against impossible odds. Since obstacles confront us everyday of our lives, we need to be able to overcome them. If we could not, then life would not be enjoyable.

### Scorer's Commentary

- The thesis statement is clear.
- The essay is 4 paragraphs (5 would be better).
- The essay has the following:
  - a clear introductory paragraph;
  - solid supporting paragraphs with topic sentences and concrete details; and
  - a solid conclusion.
- The essay includes a few typos/grammar errors.
- The essay includes transitions.
- Overall, the essay is pretty strong and receives a score of 6.



### Sample Essay #4: Score of 8

In times of desperation, it is often difficult to see the positives in a situation. More often than not, our survival instinct demands that we obliterate any obstacles in our path, without heeding the potential consequences. However, using examples from Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* and early American history one can see it is indeed possible to use these apparent disadvantages as a means to improve yourself.

The hero of *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff, was by any account, a man of humble origins. Not only was he an orphan without a last name, but he was also abused and tormented by other children in his new household. Constantly frustrated at every turn in life, Heathcliff as a boy could not marry Catherine, whom he loved, partially because of his lowly social status. After Catherine left to marry her new husband, Heathcliff undertook a journey in which he amasses a good deal of money and seemingly elevates his place in society.

Although these changes are superficial, Heathcliff used the adversity facing him as a boy as motivation to improve himself, to marry Catherine; thus his early obstacles were turned into something good (at least for him). From Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, it is evident that obstacles can be transformed into motivation, a very positive emotion.

In the early 1770s, America was under the rule of a tyrant in England. Legislation, such as those that were called the "Intolerable Acts" that forbid such practices as forming a militia in Massachusetts, and the infamous "Stamp Act," which was essentially a tax forced on Americans to gain revenue for the British Empire, was passed continuously against Great Britain's colonies in America. The Quartering Act forced Americans to allow British soldiers to live in their homes, which resulted in many fights and the situation was not good. However, the early American political leaders used these dire times to rally the American people.

The country, incensed by British practices, joined those rebellious leaders, such as Patrick Henry, George Washington, and John Adams, to fight in the Revolutionary War against a corrupt monarchy. If the American people had not suffered through these indignities leading up to the Revolutionary War, the United States of America probably would not exist today.

Clearly, when one is faced by obstacles at every turn, it is extremely difficult to try to twist negative experiences into positive ones. However, if one takes the model shown by Heathcliff of *Wuthering Heights* and America's early political leaders, one can use these bad experiences to significantly change one's life for the better.

### Scorer's Commentary

- The thesis statement is clear and effective.
- The essay is 6 paragraphs (paragraphs 1, 3 and 5 could be expanded).
- The essay has the following:
  - a clear introductory paragraph (but it is too brief);
  - solid supporting paragraphs with topic sentences and strong concrete details; and
  - a solid conclusion.
- The essay includes very few typos/grammar errors.
- The essay includes a few transitions. Paragraphs 4 and 5 need stronger transitions but are otherwise well executed.
- The essay demonstrates sharp critical thinking skills.
- Overall, the essay fulfills the majority of criteria and receives a score of 8.

## Appendix: Tip Sheets

### A. Writing a Thesis Statement

*A thesis is the roadmap for the paper, representing the path of your argument to the reader. It is a **direct statement** that explains the topic of your essay, what you believe about that topic, and why you believe it. It is an arguable assertion that can be proven with evidence and opinions.*

#### WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

- A thesis lets the reader know what to expect or look for in the essay.
- A thesis helps you narrow down a more general topic and express your opinion.

#### WHAT DOES IT CONSIST OF?

A thesis statement is made up of three different parts:

- Identification (What is the topic you are talking about?)
- Claim (What do you believe about the topic?)
- Support (What are the main reasons that support your claim? This will basically outline the body paragraphs of your essay.)

**You will need to form these three parts into a *complete arguable sentence*:**

**Identification of Topic + Claim** (belief about topic) + **Support** (reason 1, reason 2, and reason 3)

**Example:** The drinking age should be lowered to 18 because people of that age already receive other adult responsibilities, including the right to vote, the ability to join the armed forces, and the potential to go to jail.

#### WHAT DO EFFECTIVE THESIS STATEMENTS LOOK LIKE?

An effective thesis should:

- *avoid merely announcing the topic.*

**Too much statement:** In this paper, I will discuss the relationship between fairy tales and early childhood.

**Revised:** Not just empty stories for kids, fairy tales shed light on the psychology of young children.

- *be an argument, not a fact.*

**Too Factual:** The first polygraph was developed by Dr. John A. Larson in 1921.

**Revised:** Because the polygraph has not been proved reliable, even under controlled conditions, its use by private employers should be banned.

- *be sharply focused, not too vague or general.*

**Too Vague:** Many of the hip-hop songs are disgusting.

**Revised:** Many hip-hop songs are sexist because they objectify women, focus on their body parts, and reduce their role in society to a sexual one.

- *when possible, use an "although . . . actually" format.*

This format gives readers something new to consider. It is an efficient way to present the **counterargument** to your claim, acknowledging that another side to the issue exists.

**Example:** *Although* many people believe that extraterrestrials and crop circles are a figment of the imagination, *actually* there is strong evidence that alien encounters are real.

**Note:** "actually" isn't always necessary. It is often implied with the clause "although."

## B. Using Transitional Words and Phrases

Transition words and sentences **develop a relationship between ideas, connecting topics and helping the thoughts flow smoothly.** They make the reader feel that the concepts are not isolated but tied together. Transition words make reference both to the idea that precedes and the idea that follows.

**The following transition words are categorized for specific needs and places in essays.** It is important to show relationships between ideas within a paragraph, and also to connect the topics as the reader progresses from paragraph to paragraph.

Location - Among, Throughout, Alongside

Time - About, First, Second, Until, Then, Next, Prior to, Finally

Comparison and Contrast - In the same way, Also, Similarly, But, On the other hand, Although, However, Counter to, Even so, Nevertheless, As opposed to, Yet

Emphasis - For this reason, In fact

Summarize - As a result, In conclusion, Therefore, Consequently,

Add information - Also, Additionally, As well, For example, Along with

Clarification - That is, In other words, For instance

## C. The Basic Five Paragraph Essay

Paragraph 1: **Introduction** – If possible, open with an attention-getting device to interest the reader (perhaps a quote or a question). Introduce the topic of your essay in general, and present some context for this topic, getting more specific in the next few sentences. End with your **thesis statement**, which is the road map for the paper, presenting your argument or story to the reader.

Paragraph 2: **First Supporting Point** – It’s time to support your thesis with specifics. Begin the paragraph with a **topic sentence** that introduces your first support point. Then explain in more detail what you mean. Include examples that illustrate the supporting point and add an explanation of how these connect to the thesis. Finish the paragraph with a **concluding sentence**.

Paragraph 3: **Second Supporting Point** – Continue “backing up” or supporting your thesis with a second supporting point. Begin the paragraph with a **transition** from the previous paragraph and introduce your point in a topic sentence, explain it with more details, give an example, and link the example and reason back to your thesis.

Paragraph 4: **Third supporting point** – Again, begin with a transition from the previous paragraph. Finish making the case for your thesis statement with a third supporting point. Follow the “say it, explain it, give an example, tie the reason/example back to your thesis” format of your paragraphs above.

Paragraph 5: **Conclusion** – It’s time to tie up your essay and bring it all together. **Restate your thesis** statement. Summarize your supporting points. Finish with a wrap up sentence. **REMEMBER:** This is not the time to introduce new ideas.

## D. Essay Outline Worksheet

(see Five Paragraph Format Description above)

**Introduction:** (Attention grabber) \_\_\_\_\_

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(Thesis) \_\_\_\_\_

**Body Paragraph One:** (Topic Sentence) \_\_\_\_\_

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A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

**Body Paragraph Two:** (Topic Sentence/Transition) \_\_\_\_\_

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A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

**Body Paragraph Three:** (Topic Sentence/Transition) \_\_\_\_\_

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A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

**Conclusion:** (Restate your thesis) \_\_\_\_\_

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(Summarize supporting points) \_\_\_\_\_

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(Wrap up sentence) \_\_\_\_\_

## E. Sample Reflective Essay Prompts

*Below are some sample prompts for you to practice with at home. You should set a timer for 60 minutes to give yourself a better sense of how long it takes you to create an outline, to write the essay, and to proofread at the end. The more you practice, the easier it will be, and the more prepared you will feel for the Accuplacer Writing Placement Test.*

1. *Passage:* I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.  
Michael Jordan

*Assignment:* Michael Jordan claims that having failed over and over has led to his success. Why would repeated failure lead to success?

2. *Statement:* Parents are the best teachers.

*Assignment:* Do you agree with this statement? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

3. *Statement:* People should sometimes do things that they do not enjoy doing.

*Assignment:* Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

4. *Statement:* Love is Blind.

*Assignment:* Do you agree that love blinds us to the faults of others? Use specific examples to support your answer.

## F. Concrete Examples from Outside Sources

One element that will strengthen and add depth to your essay, and therefore improve your score, is the use of **concrete examples that draw from history, literature, and current events**, in addition to your own life, to support your thesis. Prior to taking the test, think of and jot down details about important historical figures and occurrences that you've studied, books you've read, key events in the news, and memorable moments in your life; all of which can be creatively adapted to back up almost any writing prompt.

Here are some of our favorites as samples, but it is important to pick something with which you are familiar so that you will be able to articulately develop the example in your body paragraphs:

### Literary Characters

- Atticus Finch, *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- Katniss, *The Hunger Games*
- Holden Caulfield, *The Catcher in the Rye*
- Jay Gatsby, *The Great Gatsby*
- Winston Smith, *1984*
- Anne of Green Gables
- Gandalf
- Harry Potter
- Anyone from Shakespeare

### Political Figures

- Barack Obama
- Hillary Clinton
- John McCain
- Robert Mugabe
- Ashraf Ghani
- Xi Jinping

### Sports

- Muhammad Ali
- Michael Jordan
- Lance Armstrong
- Alex Rodriguez
- David Ortiz
- Lionel Messi

### Historical Figures

- Abraham Lincoln
- Nelson Mandela

- Helen Keller
- Martin Luther King
- Mahatma Gandhi
- Winston Churchill
- Fidel Castro
- Mao Zedong

### Current Events, Movements, Social Activists

- Black Lives Matter
- Women coming together to expose sexual harassment (#MeToo)
- Elections
- Government Corruption
- Malala Yosefzai

### History

- Slavery
- Civil Rights Movement
- World Wars/Civil War/American Revolutionary War
- Resistance during Nazi Germany
- Apartheid
- Inventions/Scientific Discoveries
- Nationalist Movements
- "Age of Exploration"
- Communist Movements
- Industrial Revolution
- Labor Issues/Movements
- Diseases/Advances in Medicine

## G. Accuplacer Writing Section Scoring Rubric Guide

*\*\* This is not an official rubric, just a guide based on the scoring criteria given by the College Board \*\**

Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Thesis	❖ No Thesis → Weak Thesis			❖ Topic + Opinion ❖ No Reasons → Reasons unclear/incomplete			❖ Topic + Opinion + Clear Reasons/Roadmap	
Organization/ Sentence Structure	❖ Only 1 paragraph ❖ No “5-paragraph” separation → Unclear “5-paragraph” separation ❖ Sentence Structure: Simple & Fragmented with short & same length sentence			❖ 1 -4 paragraphs ❖ Some “5-Paragraph” separation ❖ Sentence Structure: Most short (less fragmented) but some complex & some sentence length variation			❖ 4-5 or more paragraphs ❖ Clear “5-Paragraph” separation ❖ Sentence Structure: Mostly complex, very few short & varied sentence lengths	
Development/ Support	❖ Did not clearly answer the question ❖ No examples → 1 personal story example ❖ No → Little connection between thesis statement and reason/example			❖ Answered the question ❖ Personal Story + Current Events/News <b>OR</b> Literature example(s) ❖ Some connection between thesis statement and reasons/example but they are not spelled out in a sentence in each body paragraph			❖ Answered the question ❖ Personal Story + Current Events/News <b>OR</b> Literature example(s) ❖ Clear connection between thesis statement and reason/example for each body paragraphs	
Language/ Vocabulary	❖ Simple (less than 3 syllables) ❖ No → Few transition words			❖ Developing: mix of simple and some complex ❖ Use of transition words but could be better placed and more complex			❖ Complex (more than 3 syllables) ❖ Appropriate & well-placed transition words	
Grammar/ Mechanical Conventions	❖ Many spelling and grammar errors, runs-on, and fragments ❖ Interferes with understanding			❖ Some spelling and grammar errors, and a few run-ons or fragments ❖ Less interference with understanding			❖ Very few spelling errors and grammar issues, no run-ons or fragments ❖ No interference with understanding	