

# T. O. W. & R.

## Composition Rubric

S.S. # \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

Category	3 Excellent Performance	2 Adequate Performance	1 Weak Performance	Score
<b>Grammar and Punctuation</b> <i>sentence construction</i> <i>verb endings</i> <i>pronoun use</i> <i>run-ons/fragments</i>	The composition is nearly free of grammar and punctuation errors.	Errors in grammar and punctuation do not fall into patterns and are not excessive.	The composition exhibits patterns of errors in the areas of grammar and/or punctuation.	
<b>Spelling and Vocabulary Use</b> <i>correct spelling</i> <i>homonym usage</i> <i>word choice</i>	The composition is nearly free of spelling and word choice errors.	Errors in spelling and word choice are not repetitive or excessive. Errors do not inhibit meaning.	The composition exhibits patterns of errors in the areas of spelling and word choice. The errors are excessive and/or inhibit meaning.	
Student must receive a score of 2 (Adequate) or better in both categories. A weak score in either of the above categories is a failing paper.				<b>P / F</b>
<b>Introduction and Conclusion</b>	Composition includes strong introduction and conclusion	Composition shows an adequate attempt to create an introduction and conclusion although one or both may be weak.	Composition does not include either an introduction or conclusion.	
<b>Responsiveness to Question and Comprehension Accuracy</b> <i>use of quotations</i> <i>references to text</i> <i>critical perspectives</i>	The composition responds to the question and works specifically to accurately integrate an analysis of the author's ideas with personal ideas.	The composition responds to the question but does not specifically or accurately integrate an analysis of the author's ideas with personal ideas.	The composition does not respond to the question and does not integrate an analysis of the author's ideas with personal ideas.	
<b>Overall Focus and Development</b> <i>cohesive</i> <i>adequate development</i> <i>use of examples</i>	The composition is cohesively focused and developed logically.	The composition generally maintains focus, but may occasionally lose focus and/or lack logical and full development.	The composition frequently loses focus, lacks logical organization, and/or lacks overall development.	
<b>Quality of Writing</b> <i>adequate</i> <i>paragraphing</i> <i>use of transitions</i>	The composition is exceptionally well-written, using careful and logical transitions between and within paragraphs to aid the reader in understanding the composition.	Most ideas are clearly stated and contribute to the clarity of the composition, but the links between and within paragraphs may be stilted or incomplete.	The composition is not well-written, and the essay jumps without explanation from one idea to the next, often losing focus and providing little guidance for the reader.	
<b>Notes (use back of sheet, if necessary):</b>			<b>Mechanics Score</b> Score of 2 or more in each category needed to pass.	<b>P / F</b>
			<b>Content Score</b>	
			<b>Total Score</b> (Possible Score: 18)	

▪ Student must receive a score of 12 (with 2 points minimum awarded in each area of the mechanics portion) or better to receive a passing score on the composition. No partial points are to be awarded.



NEW JERSEY CITY UNIVERSITY

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## Test of Writing & Reading

### QUESTIONS:

Using the notes you made in the article you just read, write an essay responding to one of the questions below. Remember that you have two hours (120 minutes) to complete this test.

- A. Malcolm X envied one of the other inmates, Bimbi, who could take charge of any conversation because of his "stock of knowledge." Explain how knowledge and the ability to use it could lead to power in relation to others. Describe a situation from your own experience in which the possession of a "stock of knowledge" enabled someone (perhaps yourself) to wield power over another. Compare your own ideas with those of the author. Use examples from the article and from your own experience to articulate your point of view.
- B. Malcolm X taught himself how to read and write in prison. He described his experiences with copying the first page of the dictionary as "slow and painstaking." The following morning he reflected proudly on what he had accomplished. Describe a time you challenged yourself to learn something that was very difficult for you. Compare your experiences and feelings with that of the author. Use examples from the article and from your own experience to articulate your point of view.
- C. In the conclusion of this selection, Malcolm X writes that "up to then, I never had been so truly free in my life." Explain why you think the ability to read and write "opened" a "new world" for Malcolm X. How is the ability to communicate effectively related to the concept of personal freedom? Does this statement have any relevance to your life? Compare your own ideas with those of the author. Use examples from the article and from your own experience to articulate your point of view.

**From The Autobiography of Malcolm X**  
**By Malcolm X with Alex Haley**

**SAMPLE TEST**

1           I became increasingly frustrated at not being able to  
2 express what I wanted to convey in letters that I wrote, especially  
3 those to Mr. Elijah Muhammad. In the street, I had been the most  
4 articulate hustler out there — I had commanded attention when I  
5 said something. But now, trying to write simple English, I not  
6 only wasn't articulate, I wasn't even functional.

7           Many who today hear me somewhere in person, or on  
8 television, or those who read something I've said, will think I went  
9 to school far beyond the eighth grade. This impression is due  
10 entirely to my prison studies.

11           It had really begun back in the Charlestown Prison, when  
12 Bimbi first made me feel envy of his stock of knowledge. Bimbi  
13 had always taken charge of any conversation he was in, and I had  
14 tried to emulate him. But every book I picked up had few  
15 sentences which didn't contain anywhere from one to nearly all of  
16 the words that might as well have been in Chinese. When I just  
17 skipped those words, of course, I really ended up with little idea of  
18 what the book said. So I had come to the Norfolk Prison Colony  
19 still going through only book-reading motions. Pretty soon, I  
20 would have quit even these motions, unless I had received the  
21 motivation that I did.

22           I saw that the best thing I could do was get hold of a  
23 dictionary — to study, to learn some words. I was lucky enough to  
24 reason also that I should try to improve my penmanship. It was  
25 sad. I couldn't even write in a straight line. It was both ideas  
26 together that moved me to request a dictionary along with some  
27 tablets and pencils from the Norfolk Prison Colony School.

28 I spent two days just riffling uncertainly through the  
29 dictionary's pages. I'd never realized so many words existed! I  
30 didn't know *which* words I needed to learn. Finally, just to start  
31 some kind of action, I began copying.

32 In my slow, painstaking, ragged handwriting, I copied into  
33 my tablet everything printed on that first page, down to the  
34 punctuation marks.

35 I believe it took me a day. Then, aloud, I read back, to  
36 myself, everything I'd written on the tablet. Over and over, aloud  
37 to myself, I read my own handwriting.

38 I woke up the next morning, thinking about those words —  
39 immensely proud to realize that not only had I written so much at  
40 one time, but I'd written words that I never knew were in the  
41 world. Moreover, with a little effort, I also could remember what  
42 many of these words meant. I reviewed the words whose  
43 meanings I didn't remember. Funny thing, from the dictionary  
44 first page right now, that "aardvark" springs to my mind. The  
45 dictionary had a picture of it, a long-tailed, long-eared, burrowing  
46 African mammal, which lives off termites caught by sticking out  
47 its tongue as an anteater does for ants.

48 I was so fascinated that I went on — I copied the  
49 dictionary's next page. And the same experience came when I  
50 studied that. With every succeeding page, I also learned of people  
51 and places and events from history. Actually the dictionary is like  
52 a miniature encyclopedia. Finally the dictionary's A section had  
53 filled a whole tablet — and I went on into the B's. That was the  
54 way I started copying what eventually became the entire  
55 dictionary. It went a lot faster after so much practice helped me to  
56 pick up handwriting speed. Between what I wrote in my tablet,  
57 and writing letters, during the rest of my time in prison I would  
58 guess I wrote a million words.

59 I suppose it was inevitable that as my word-base  
60 broadened, I could for the first time pick up a book and read and  
61 now begin to understand what the book was saying. Anyone who  
62 has read a great deal can imagine the new world that opened. Let  
63 me tell you something: from then until I left that prison, in every  
64 free moment I had, if I was not reading in the library, I was reading  
65 on my bunk. You couldn't have gotten me out of books with a  
66 wedge. Between Mr. Muhammad's teachings, my correspondence,  
67 my visitors — usually Ella and Reginald— and my reading of  
68 books, months passed without my even thinking about being  
69 imprisoned. In fact, up to then, I never had been so truly free in  
70 my life.