

COMPOSITION MASTERY EXAM
SCORING GUIDELINES

Readers are asked to put aside personal standards and refer to the scoring guide for assistance. Readers should not think in terms of pass or fail in evaluating essays, but rather where the essay ranks according to the scoring guide. Refer to the scoring guide and score each essay based on the total impression (holistically). Focus on what the examinee does well. Do not repeatedly reread an essay, count errors or score for potential.

NOTE: Each exam receives two grades which are added together for the final score.

- 6 **SUPERIOR:** A superior paper will take a complex approach and handle it skillfully. Typically it will
- display originality and depth of thought and reveal a thorough understanding of the issue(s) of the reading passage
 - demonstrate the ability to critique and use the ideas of others with fluent and graceful expression, using varied sentence structure and transitions
 - reveal a clearly identifiable purpose for writing and an awareness of audience
 - be fully developed and effectively organized—thesis may be implied
 - show superior command of written English.

- 5 **STRONG:** A strong paper will take a substantial approach and handle it successfully. Typically it will
- reveal competent use of the issue(s) of the reading passage
 - display clear, substantive thinking and the ability to critique and use the ideas of others clearly and with some complexity and originality
 - show a strong sense of the use of varied sentence structure and transition
 - reveal a clear and identifiable purpose for writing, and an awareness of audience
 - show a strong and clear focus, organization, and be well-developed—thesis may be implied
 - show a good vocabulary and effective command of written English.

- 4 **ADEQUATE:** An adequate paper will take a meaningful approach and handle it satisfactorily. Typically it will
- reveal adequate engagement with the issue(s) of the reading passage
 - demonstrate some ability to critique and use the ideas of others
 - not show a clear awareness of audience and lack sophistication but will be adequately developed—thesis may be implied
 - use varied sentence structure with logical coordination & subordination with few errors
 - show a thoughtful development and organization
 - show satisfactory control of written English (occasional awkwardness does not slow the reader).

- 3 **FLAWED:** A flawed paper may take a simplistic approach & demonstrate developing skills. It may
- ignore or show minimum engagement with the issue(s) of the reading passage
 - be generally clear in expression of basic ideas and relationships
 - have a weak thesis and support that is general but relevant
 - attempt development but lack detail and specificity, repeat or labor the obvious
 - demonstrate weak, inappropriate, or overly formulaic organization & development
 - display inconsistent control of diction, grammar, and mechanics, faults slow the reader but do not totally hinder meaning.

- 2 **SERIOUSLY FLAWED:** A seriously flawed paper will reveal serious and persistent problems on the developmental and/or organizational levels. It may
- trivialize or misunderstand the reading / writing task and reveal confusion or take an extremely simplistic approach to the prompt
 - show a thesis that is confused or incomplete
 - seem rambling and / or unfocused, illogical
 - reveal persistent problems in diction, syntax, grammar and mechanics that impede understanding.

- 1 **INCOMPETENT:** An incompetent paper will fail to communicate. It may
- be illogical or lack an understanding of the reading / writing task
 - may demonstrate confusion or the inability to respond to the prompt
 - show an unclear or nonexistent thesis
 - be seriously underdeveloped or rambling
 - lack sentence level coherence
 - display pervasive errors in diction, syntax, grammar and mechanics that impede understanding.

- 0 **OFF TOPIC OR NO RESPONSE.** Refer to group leader.

PASS

4

CAREFUL WITH THIS almost 23

NO PASS