

STUDENT WRITING ABILITY PROFILE (ESSAY)

Date: _____ Writer: _____

Title: _____

Rating Scale: 0-1=very weak/weak, 2-3=average/good, 4-5=very good/excellent

CONTENT RELEVANCE & INTEREST	0-1,9	The essay has no clear sense of purpose or central theme. To extract meaning from the text, inferences must be made based on sketchy details. This essay reflects more than one of these problems:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The student has not even begun to define the topic in a meaningful and personal way. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information provided is very limited or unclear. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The essay tends to be repetitious. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The essay reads like a series of disconnected, random thoughts. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Every sentence and every paragraph seems to be as important as everything else; it is difficult to sift out what is really important or critical in this text. 	
	2-3,9	The student is beginning to define the topic, even though development is still basic or general. This essay shows more than one of the following characteristics:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> It is not difficult to see where the student is headed, though more information is needed to "fill in the blanks." <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The student seems to be drawing on knowledge or experience, but has difficulty going from general observations to specific information or detail. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ideas in the text are fairly clear, though perhaps not detailed, personalized, or expanded enough to show in-depth understanding or a strong sense of purpose. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support is attempted, but doesn't go far enough yet in fleshing out the main point(s). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Details often blend the original with the predictable. 	
15%	4-5	This paper is clear and focused. It holds the reader's attention. Relevant anecdotes and details enrich the central theme. The essay shows more than one of the following features:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ideas are fresh and original. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The student seems to write from knowledge or experience and shows insight and a knack for picking out what is significant. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relevant, telling, quality details provide important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The topic is developed in an enlightening, purposeful way that makes a point. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Every piece adds something to the whole. 	
ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS	0-1,9	The essay lacks a clear sense of direction. Ideas, details or events seem strung together in a loose or random fashion —or else there is no identifiable internal structure. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sequencing needs work. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There is no real lead to set up what follows, no real conclusion to wrap everything up. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pacing feels awkward; the student slows to a crawl when the reader wants to get on with it, and vice versa. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connections between ideas are confusing or missing. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Problems with organization make it difficult to really get a grip on the main point(s). 	
	2-3,9	The organizational structure is strong enough to move the reader through the text without undue confusion. The essay shows more than one of the following characteristics:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The essay has a recognizable introduction and conclusion. The introduction may not create a strong sense of anticipation; the conclusion may not tie up all loose ends. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sequencing is usually logical, but may sometimes be so predictable that the structure takes attention away from the content. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pacing is fairly well controlled, though the writer sometimes spurts ahead too quickly or spends too much time on details that are not really necessary or important. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transitions often work well; at other times, connections between ideas are fuzzy. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The organization sometimes supports the main point(s); at other times, it may seem necessary to add a transition or move things around. 	
20%	4-5	The organization enhances and showcases the central idea. The order, structure or presentation of information is compelling and moves to read through. The text shows more than one of the following characteristics:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Details fit where they are placed; sequencing is in general logical and effective. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The introduction is attractive and invites to read on; the conclusion is satisfying and provides a sense of resolution. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pacing is well controlled; the student knows when to slow down and elaborate, and when to pick up the pace and move on. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thoughtful transitions clearly show how ideas connect. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organization flows smoothly and unobtrusively. 	

FLUENCY	0-1,9	It is really hard to give this essay a fair interpretive reading. The writing reflects more than one of the following problems:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Sentences are choppy, incomplete, rambling or awkward; they need work. ☑ Phrasing does not sound natural, the way someone might speak. It is sometimes necessary to pause or read over to get the meaning. ☑ Many sentences begin the same way —and may follow the same patterns (e.g., subject-verb-object) in a monotonous manner. ☑ Endless connectives (and, and so, but then, because, and then, etc.) create such a massive jumble of language that it is hard or impossible to identify sentence beginnings and endings.
	2-3,9	The essay progresses with a more or less steady rhythm, but it is in general more mechanical than fluid. It shows more than one of the following problems:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Sentences are not artfully crafted or musical, but they are grammatical, hang together, and get the job done. ☑ There is at least some variation in sentence length and structure. Sentence beginnings are NOT all alike. ☑ It is sometimes necessary to look for clues (e.g., connecting words and phrases like <i>however, therefore, after a while, on the other hand, for example, next, first of all, later, although, etc.</i>) that show how sentences interrelate. ☑ Parts of the text invite expressive oral reading; others may be stiff, awkward, choppy or gangly. Overall though, it is pretty easy to read the paper aloud with a little practice.
	4-5	The writing has an easy flow and rhythm when read aloud. Sentences are well built, with strong and varied structure.
20%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Sentences construction helps make meaning clear. ☑ Purposeful sentence beginnings show how each sentence relates to and builds upon the one before it. ☑ The essay has cadence, as if the student had thought about the sound of the words as well as the meaning. ☑ Sentences vary in length as well as structure.
VOCABULARY CHOICE	0-1,9	The student struggles with a limited vocabulary, searching for words to convey meaning. The essay reflects more than one of these problems:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Language is so vague that only the most general message comes through. ☑ Persistent redundancy distracts the reader. ☑ The student uses jargon or clichés as a crutch. ☑ Words are used incorrectly, sometimes making the message hard to interpret. ☑ Problems with language make it hard to find out what the student is trying to say.
	2-3,9	The language is functional, even if it lacks punch; it is easy to figure out the student's meaning on a general level. The essay shows more than one of these characteristics:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Words are almost always correct and adequate; they simply lack flair. ☑ Familiar words and phrases communicate, but rarely capture the reader's imagination. Still, the essay may have one or two fine moments. ☑ Attempts at colorful language come close to the mark, but sometimes seem unnatural or inappropriate. ☑ Energetic verbs or picturesque phrases liven things up now and then; more of that would be desirable.
	4-5	Words convey the intended message in a precise, interesting and natural way. The essay shows more than one of the following features:
15%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Words are specific and accurate; it is easy to understand exactly what the writer means. ☑ The language is natural and never overdone; phrasing is highly individual. ☑ Lively verbs energize the writing. Precise nouns and modifiers create pictures in the reader's mind. ☑ Striking words and phrases often catch the reader's eye —and linger in the reader's mind. ☑ Clichés and jargon are used sparingly, only for effect.
MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX (GRAMMAR)	0-1,9	Grammar errors are so frequent that comprehension of the text can only be achieved through interpretation or so frequent and severe that comprehension is virtually impossible. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Word order is frequently wrong or inadequate. ☑ Grammatical structures and syntax are either too basic, corresponding to a lower level of proficiency (e.g., incorrect use of the article, wrong use of prepositions, overuse of simple sentences, scarce or inappropriate use of compound or complex sentences, coordinated and subordinated sentences, etc.) or faulty. ☑ Word classes (verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs...) are wrongly used on a too frequent basis and, in general, the student shows lack or insufficient knowledge of word formation conventions (morphology) and the relationship between word class and sentence function (syntax).
	2-3,9	Grammar errors are frequent and sometimes interpretation or re-reading of parts of the essay is necessary in order to understand it. The writing reflects more than one of the following characteristics:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Word order is sometimes wrong or inadequate, but not so often as to totally impede comprehension. ☑ A more ambitious use of grammatical structures and syntax would be desirable, would give the text a greater appeal and would also make it easier to read (i.e., would call for less

	<p>reader re-reading).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Word classes (nouns, adverbs, prepositions...) are only sometimes wrongly or inadequately used; other times, the student shows or suggests some knowledge of word formation conventions and of the relationship between word class and sentence function.
	<p>4-5 There are few (if any) grammar errors in this essay, which are usually unnoticeable and do not at all interfere with comprehension. The essays shows more than one of the following features:</p>
15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Word order is always or almost always correct and adequate. The student shows awareness of the fact that word order choice can affect comprehension and so uses the word order to both convey exactly the meaning he/she want to convey and to make the reading task easier to the reader. ✔ Word classes (verbs, articles, nouns...) are used correctly and adequately. The student shows an awareness of word families and how words can be formed from other word forms and uses different words from the same family for variety and stylistic purposes. ✔ Excellent use of grammar and syntax in general. Not only there are few (if any) errors in this sense, but also the student uses different types of sentences (simple, complex, compound; coordinate, subordinate) with awareness of their stylistic impact.
MECHANICS	<p>0-1,9 Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Paragraphing is missing, irregular, or so frequent (e.g., every sentence) that it has no relationship to the organizational structure of the text. ✔ Punctuation (including terminal punctuation) is often missing or incorrect. ✔ Spelling errors are frequent, even on common words. ✔ The reader must read once to decode, then again for meaning.
	<p>2-3,9 The student shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. Conventions are sometimes handled well and enhance readability; at other times, errors are distracting and impair readability.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Paragraphing is attempted. Paragraphs sometimes run together or begin in the wrong places. ✔ Terminal (end-of sentence) punctuation is usually correct; internal punctuation (commas, apostrophes, semicolons, dashes, colons, parentheses) is sometimes missing or wrong. ✔ Spelling is usually correct or reasonably phonetic on common words.
	<p>4-5 The student demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions and uses them effectively to enhance readability. Errors are few, minor, and almost unnoticeable. The essays shows more than one of the following features:</p>
15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Paragraphing is sound and tends to reinforce the organizational structure. ✔ Punctuation is accurate and guides the reader through the text. ✔ Spelling is generally correct, even on difficult words. ✔ The essay is sufficiently long and complex to allow the student to show skill in using a wide range of conventions.