



Prompts within the ACCUPLACER® System have been carefully designed so that the student can respond quickly and in a variety of ways. Prompts are 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. Students will be asked to draw on a broad range of experiences, learning and ideas to support their point of view on the issue in question.

Scores on WritePlacer range from 1 to 8. 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.

A prompt consists of a short passage adapted from some authentic text. Following the passage is an assignment that requires the student to focus on the issue addressed in the passage.

The essay gives you an opportunity to show how effectively you can develop and express your ideas in writing. You will first read a short passage and an assignment question that are focused on an important issue. You will then write an essay in which you develop your own point of view on the issue. You should support your position with appropriate reasoning and examples. The position you take will not influence your score.

Your essay will be given a holistic score that represents how clearly and effectively you expressed your position. The following six characteristics of writing will be considered:

Unity – The extent to which you present information in a unified and coherent manner, clearly addressing the issue.

Organization – The extent to which you order and connect ideas.

Support – The extent to which you develop and support ideas.

Language Use – The extent to which you craft sentences and paragraphs demonstrating control of vocabulary, voice and structure.

Conventions – The extent to which you express ideas using Standard Written English.

Analysis – The extent to which you communicate a point of view and demonstrate reasoned relationships among ideas.



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.”



Can any obstacle or disadvantage be turned into something good?



On the pages that follow there are descriptions of each of the eight WritePlacer score points followed by two sample essays that were assigned the indicated score. Annotations are provided for each essay explaining why the essay was given the score it received. Studying these sample essays and the accompanying annotations will point out the elements considered during the scoring process.

Description of Score of 1

A response in this category demonstrates **no mastery** of on-demand essay writing; the response is severely flawed by **many or most** of the following weaknesses:

- Lacks a viable point of view on the issue
- Demonstrates no awareness of audience
- Fails to present a main idea
- Demonstrates flawed reasoning
- Demonstrates no complexity of thought
- Is disorganized and/or disjointed
- Displays fundamental errors in word choice, usage and sentence structure
- Contains pervasive spelling, grammar, punctuation and mechanical errors

Shown below are sample essays that received a score of 1. The annotations explain why the essay received the indicated score.

Sample Essay #1 – Score of 1

Annotations

Yes it can....But when you think about it, if a girl was guilty and was pleading to say on how she was inocent and they catch her in a lie its practically the same thing

But that's not the point but you can change...

essay

Sample Essay #2 – Score of 1

Annotations

Yes, obstacles and disadvantages can be turned into something good

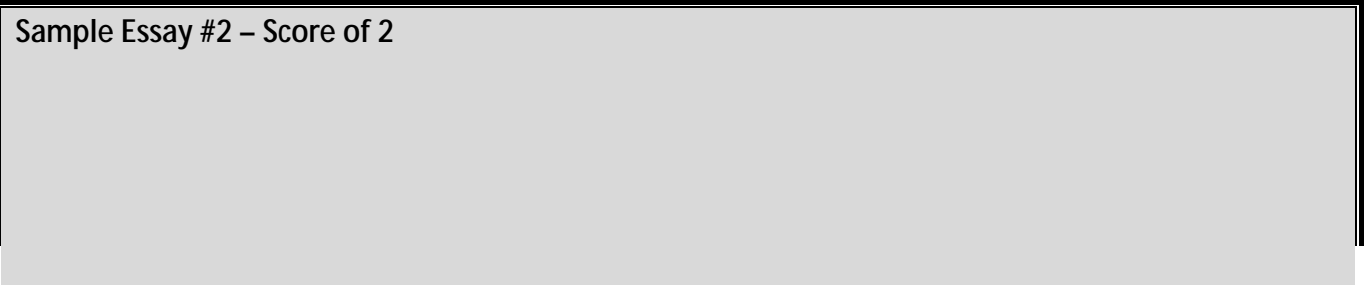
You can help other people with obstacles and disadvantages because you have been in the situation, that needs help



Description of Score of 2

A response in this category demonstrates *very little mastery*

Sample Essay #2 – Score of 2





Description of Score of 3

A response in this category demonstrates *little mastery* of on-demand essay writing; the response is flawed by *one or more* of the following weaknesses:

- Presents a vague or limited point of view on the issue
- Demonstrates little awareness of audience
- Attempts to develop the main idea though that attempt is inadequate
- Demonstrates weak critical thinking with little complexity of thought or with flawed reasoning
- Provides inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons, or other evidence to support its position
- Is poorly organized and/or focused or demonstrates serious problems with coherence or progression of ideas
- Displays limited word choice and little sentence variety
- Contains many errors in mechanical conventions of usage, sentence structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation

Shown below are sample essays that received a score of 3. The annotations explain why the essay received the indicated score.

Sample Essay #1 – Score of 3

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Description of Score of 4

An essay in this category demonstrates *developing mastery* of on-demand essay writing. A typical essay

- Develops a viable point of view on the issue
- May stray from audience and purpose
- Demonstrates some critical thinking but may do so inconsistently or use inadequate examples, reasons, or other evidence to support its position



Description of Score of 5

An essay in this category demonstrates *adequate mastery* of on-demand essay writing although it will have lapses in quality. A typical essay

- Develops a viable point of view on the issue
- May stray from the audience and purpose but is able to refocus
- Demonstrates competent critical thinking, using adequate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position
- Is generally organized and focused but could lack coherence and logical progression of ideas
- Exhibits adequate but inconsistent control of language
- Demonstrates some variety in sentence structure
- Contains some minor errors in sentence structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation

Shown below are sample essays that received a score of 5. The annotations explain why the essay received the indicated score.

Sample Essay #1 – Score of 5

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Annotations

... if a person gets a serious burn ... If someone is on crutches ... The best comedians always turn an obstacle or disadvantage into a good thing

If the audience is not laughing ... This obstacle about the audience not laughing he could make a joke about, then making the obstacle into a good thing

Sample Essay #2 – Score of 5

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Description of Score of 7

An essay in this category demonstrates *consistent mastery* of on-demand essay writing, although it may have occasional minor errors. A typical essay

- Effectively and insightfully develops a point of view on the issue
- Addresses an appropriate audience and demonstrates a clear purpose for writing in the thesis statement
- Demonstrates outstanding critical thinking, us

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————— **Annotations** —————

Louis was born to a single mother. They were poverty stricken He formed a jazz group when he was released from prison On one fateful day, a record company representative heard the group and immediately wanted to sign them

Within a year, Lance was back on the bike. He went on to win seven Tour de Frances in a row and he remains one of the greatest cyclists, if not the greatest cyclist of all time

Sample Essay #2 – Score of 7

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Description of Score of 8

An essay in this category demonstrates *clear and consistent mastery* of on-demand essay writing with a few minor errors. A typical essay

- Effectively and insightfully develops a point of view on the issue
- Addresses an appropriate audience and demonstrates a clear purpose for writing in the thesis statement
- Demonstrates outstanding critical thinking, using effective examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position
- Is well organized and clearly focused, demonstrating clear coherence and smooth progression of ideas
- Exhibits skillful use of language, using a varied, accurate, and apt vocabulary
- Demonstrates varied and effective sentence structure
- Is free of major errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation

Shown below are sample essays that received a score of 8. The annotations explain why the essay received the indicated score.

Sample Essay #1 – Score of 8

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