

RUBRIC – PERSONAL or CREATIVE WRITING

(for assessing personal narratives, descriptive pieces, persuasive essays, imaginative writing, or fiction)

CONTENT

- 5** The writing is clear, detailed, and well-supported.
- ❑ Details expand the main topic, giving the piece a strong focus.
 - ❑ The organization of the piece clearly guides the reader through the text and highlights its key points.
 - ❑ An intriguing lead hooks the reader; a satisfying conclusion answers all questions remaining.
 - ❑ Transitions are strong and natural.
 - ❑ The writing is of sufficient length and complexity.
- 3** The piece needs more details and support to define the topic or tell the story.
- ❑ General information needs to be supplemented with details.
 - ❑ Contains repetition and/or clichés.
 - ❑ The piece is fairly easy to follow, with a recognizable lead, transitions, and conclusion.
- 1** Sketchy information, ideas, and details make the paper unfocused. More than one of these is true:
- ❑ The main topic is unclear.
 - ❑ Details are limited or unrelated.
 - ❑ No sense of direction carries the reader from point to point.
 - ❑ No real lead sets up what follows and/or no real conclusion exists.
 - ❑ Missing transitions require the reader to “fill in the blanks.”

VOICE

- 5** The writing is lively and designed to hold the reader’s attention.
- ❑ Precise, vivid language makes the message as exciting to read as possible.
 - ❑ The writing sounds like this student.
 - ❑ Phrasing is original and creative—even memorable—but not overdone.
 - ❑ Strong verbs lend the writing power.
- 3** The writing is functional and seems sincere, but is not very expressive.
- ❑ The writing and the student are distanced; the writer’s personality is not evident.
 - ❑ The language communicates in a routine, workable manner, but is not striking.
 - ❑ A memorable phrase or vivid verb here or there strikes a spark, leaving the reader wishing for more.
- 1** The writing lacks life, spirit, and energy. More than one of these is true:
- ❑ The writer seems distanced from the topic, audience, or both.
 - ❑ A limited vocabulary weakens the piece.
 - ❑ The tone is inappropriate, perhaps too serious or too formal.
 - ❑ The writer takes no risks and does not engage or move the reader.
 - ❑ Vague words and phrases convey nothing. (She was *nice*. It was *interesting*.)
 - ❑ Vivid verbs are nonexistent.
 - ❑ Words are used incorrectly.

RULES

- 5** The writer uses the English language accurately.
- ❑ Errors are so few and so minor that a reader can easily overlook them.
 - ❑ The presentation is clean, edited, and polished.
 - ❑ The writing is easy to read; nothing is distracting or confusing.
 - ❑ Strong and varied sentences make the piece flow naturally.
 - ❑ Every sentence is complete; NO FRAGMENTS or RUN-ONS appear.
- 3** The writer knows and uses common writing rules to create text that is adequately readable.
- ❑ Errors are noticeable, but do not seriously impair readability or obscure meaning.
 - ❑ The writing clearly needs some editing and polishing.
 - ❑ Some variation in sentence length and structure exists, but not enough.
 - ❑ One fragment or run-on may be present.
- 1** One (or more) of the following exists:
- ❑ Errors are frequent and distracting.
 - ❑ Extensive editing is required.
 - ❑ Ideas are hooked together by numerous conjunctions (*and . . . but . . . so then*) to create gangly “sentences.”
 - ❑ Short, choppy sentences bump the reader through the text.
 - ❑ Fragments or run-ons occur more than once.
 - ❑ Repetitive sentence patterns are tedious.