

## MCC Challenge Essay-style Response

### Requirements and Writing Directions

#### Word Count Values:

>200 words – not scored, no value

201-250 words – excellent responses can score no higher than a “C” or 75%

251-300 words – excellent responses can score no higher than a “B” or 85%

301-350 words – excellent responses can score no higher than an “A” or 95%

350+ words – excellent responses may score in the high “A” to “A+” range or 96% to 100%

**Excellent responses** will *skillfully* demonstrate the following attributes:

- Coherent and effective summary of the article
- Clear thesis statement (identifying author’s argument and student writer’s perspective on that argument)
- Understanding of the article
- Good textual evidence from the reading to back up the main idea
- Clear essay structure with paragraphs, transitions, and a logical argument
- Clear analysis, refers to several parts of the article
- Few or no errors in grammar and punctuation
- Sense of authentic engagement in the writing

#### Format:

- Summarize the article
- Identify the author’s argument in your thesis statement which agrees or disagrees with the author’s argument
- Explain your thinking (prove your point) with relevant, *embedded* textual evidence from the article

## **MCC Rubric for Assessing Placement Challenge Essays**

### **Placement of 1 – English 003**

- No attempt to summarize the reading
- Lack of thesis or central focus
- No (or very little) evidence of understanding the reading or prompt
- Does not quote (directly or indirectly) from text
- Complete lack of supporting detail
- Lack of awareness of paragraph structure
- Short response; lack of development (no idea fully developed)
- Lack of comfort with language
- Incoherent: Student can't fully express ideas to be understandable to audience (very few or no sentences make clear sense)
- No engagement

### **Placement of 2 – English 066**

- No (or very little) attempt to summarize the reading
- Lacks or has weak thesis or central focus
- Does not reveal understanding of reading beyond an overly generalized idea (superficial engagement of text)
- Attempted to address the topic-- Sense of having read the essay but perhaps not completely understood it
- Some evidence of understanding the reading or prompt
- Does not quote (directly or indirectly) from text
- Has some of the problems of a 1 but may have some paragraph structure or development and/or essay structure, albeit weak
- Show some familiarity with language (albeit weak), but may have some garbled, incoherent sentences and grammatical, syntactic errors
- Weak or limited engagement

### **Placement of 3 – English 093**

- Attempts to summarize the text
- Some sense of thesis, central focus
- Demonstrates partial understanding of reading but may have some gaps
- Formal sense of essay even if not perfectly related to what prompt asks student to do
- Some explicit references to the text, but might be weak in some areas
- Some sense of basic structure with paragraphs, but may have weak development in places or lack strong transitions
- May use personal narrative to illustrate the concept of the reading
- May have some associative thinking (vs. purposeful thinking)
- Generally comprehensible, though may use oversimplification, clichés or ineffective/inappropriate/informal language
- Some sentences may be ambiguous or unclear; frequent, if patterned, grammatical errors
- Some evidence of engagement or original thought: may be willing to contest the author or to authentically agree

### **Placement of 4 or 5 – English 101 (credit-class)**

- Coherent and effective summary of article
- Clear thesis or central focus
- Definitely understands the essay
- Clear, explicit integration of evidence or examples from reading, another text, or life experiences that appropriately backs up main idea
- Demonstrates competence in and familiarity with (considering one hour constraint) essay structure using paragraphs and transitions that form a logical thread -- even if a very few ideas lack logical flow
- A sustained and coherent analysis; references to specific ideas from several different places in the reading, not just the overall argument
- May not be consistent throughout in tone, purpose, sense of audience, or syntax, but overall, few ambiguous sentences; few or no errors in grammar and punctuation
- Sense of authentic engagement