

**NCO Leadership Center of Excellence and U. S. Army Sergeants Major Academy**  
**BASIC LEADER COURSE**  
**Form 1009W (SPECIAL) Writing Assessment**

<b>STUDENT'S NAME:</b>						
<b>ASSIGNMENT TITLE:</b> Informative Essay					<b>DATE:</b>	
<b>FACILITATOR'S NAME:</b>						
<b>RATING:</b>	<b>5-ADVANCED</b>	<b>4-PROFICIENT</b>	<b>3-COMPETENT</b>	<b>2-DEVELOPING</b>	<b>1-LEARNING</b>	<b>0-NONPERFORMER</b>
<b>RANGE:</b>						
<b>EARNED:</b>						
<b>REQUIRED WRITING STANDARDS</b>						
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	The specific reason explaining why the document, correspondence, or report is necessary.					
<b>ANALYSIS:</b>	Breaking down a situation, concept, or argument into its individual parts to examine how they relate to one another.					
<b>SYNTAX:</b>	Clear sentence structure using all parts of speech, especially the use of active voice constructions instead of passive voice.					
<b>CONCISION:</b>	The ability to infuse the greatest amount of information into the least amount of words.					
<b>ACCURACY:</b>	Using flawless spelling, punctuation, grammar, and mechanics. Also, fairly representing credible sources (citations) using course requirements.					
<b>WRITING ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION:</b>						
<b>Facilitator's Comments:</b>						
<b>Facilitator's Signature:</b>						
<b>Student's Comments:</b>						
<b>Student's Signature:</b>						

<b>Writing Standards – Assignment Scoring Sheet</b>						
<b>Required U.S. Army Standards and Techniques</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	Advanced	Proficient	Competent	Developing	Learning	Nonperformer
<b>Purpose:</b> The specific reason explaining why the document, correspondence, or report is necessary.						
<b>Analysis:</b> Breaking down a situation, concept, or argument into its individual parts to examine how they relate to one another.						
<b>Syntax:</b> Clear sentence structure using all parts of speech, especially the use of active voice constructions instead of passive voice.						
<b>Concision:</b> The ability to infuse the greatest amount of information into the least amount of words.						
<b>Accuracy:</b> 1) Using flawless spelling, punctuation, grammar, and mechanics; 2) fairly representing credible sources using course requirements.						
If similarity reports indicate 50 percent or more, the facilitator will review the assessment for possible plagiarism.						
<b>Total:</b>						
<b>Average:</b>						
<b>Facilitator Comments:</b>						

Criteria	5 – Advanced	4 - Proficient	3 – Competent	2 – Developing	1 - Learning	0-Nonperformer
<b>Purpose:</b> “Bottom Line Up Front”	Author places the main point within the top 2% of the document <b>and</b> frontloads within sections, paragraphs, bullet points and lists <sup>1</sup>	Author places the main point within the top 5% of the document <b>and</b> usually within subordinate units	Author places the main point within the top 10% of the document <b>and</b> mostly frontloads within subordinate units	Author’s main point not revealed until drawing conclusions <b>and/or</b> does not frontload (strongest points appear behind written units or conclusion)	Author places the main point in the middle of the document (11-89%) <b>and/or</b> does not frontload within written units <sup>2</sup>	Author does not indicate the main point or it is too broad/vague to recognize; written units lack priority organization (neither most/least important or vice versa)
<b>Analysis:</b> Evidence and Arguments	Argument is issue-focused and analyzes data/primary sources (roughly 80% analysis and 20% summary/paraphrase) <sup>3</sup>	Argument is issue-focused and analyzes data/primary sources (roughly 70% analysis and 30% summary/paraphrase)	Argument is issue-focused and analyzes data/primary sources; (roughly 60% analysis and 40% summary/paraphrase)	Argument is issue-focused and analyzes fact/primary sources; paper is roughly 50% analysis, 50% summary/paraphrase	No argument -- paper relies on opinion or speculation instead of analysis (75%); summarizes secondary sources (10-25%)	No argument -- nearly 100% of the paper is either opinion/speculation or a summary/paraphrase of secondary sources
<b>Syntax:</b> Effective Sentence Constructions	Uses active voice primarily; passive voice used rarely and logically. <sup>4</sup> No visible patterns of sentence construction errors	Uses active voice primarily; passive voice used rarely and logically. One pattern (2-3 similar sentence construction errors) identified	Uses active voice primarily; passive voice used rarely and logically. Two patterns (2-3 similar sentence construction errors per pattern identified)	Uses active voice primarily; passive voice used where active more logical. Three patterns (2-3 similar sentence construction errors per pattern) identified	Uses mix of active and passive voice; loss of subject (doer of action) loses meaning. Three patterns (2-3 similar errors per pattern) identified	Paper fluctuates between passive and active voice throughout without apparent reason or control; Four or more patterns (2-3 similar errors per pattern) identified
<b>Concision:</b> The Most Information in the Least Space	All written units (words, sentences, bullet points or paragraphs <sup>5</sup> ) are lean <sup>6</sup>	One written unit exceeds the proscribed length	Two written units exceed the proscribed length	Three written units exceed the proscribed length	Four written units exceed the proscribed length	Five or more written units exceed the proscribed length
<b>Accuracy:</b> Reducing Reader Distractions	<b>Facilitator Discretion:</b> Serious errors in formatting or citation may result in an automatic 0 for accuracy. Consult assignment requirements and policies.					
	Uses standard written English with correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, mechanics, formatting, and citations without visible mistakes	Uses standard written English with no individual errors; One pattern (2-3 similar errors) identified <sup>7</sup>	Uses standard written English with few individual errors in any area. Two patterns (2-3 similar errors per pattern) identified	Deviates from standard written English, formatting, or citations occasionally; Three patterns (2-3 similar errors per pattern) identified	Show multiple, repetitive errors in using standard written English, formatting, or citations; Four patterns (2-3 similar errors per pattern) identified	Shows multiple, repetitive errors in using standard written English, formatting, or citations; Five or more patterns (2-3 similar errors per pattern) identified

<sup>1</sup>Frontloading prioritizes information based on importance. For Army writing, the main point should appear as close to the front as conventions allow. Bottom Line up Front (BLUF)

<sup>2</sup>Developing writers typically draw conclusions near the end of a section, paragraph, bullet point, or list. Learning writers tend to reach the main point in the middle of the document.

<sup>3</sup> Analysis values based on AR 25-50 correspondence requirements; values may need adjusting for assignment specifics (content)

<sup>4</sup> The logical times to use passive voice are when the subject (doer) is unknown, the receiver of action takes priority, or when using a commonly passive phrase (e.g. “I was deployed in Afghanistan”).

<sup>5</sup> Not all assignments require paragraphs. For whatever written units are required, the student should keep the writing as lean as possible.

<sup>6</sup> Determine appropriate length (leanness) by convention; for example, paragraphs in correspondence should be no longer than 10 lines and 15 words (AR 25-50), whereas 15-20 lines and 24-30 words are usually acceptable for academic work.

<sup>7</sup> Count the number of errors by patterns, not instances. For example, misusing commas ten times still counts as a single error, because the multiple instances show a single pattern.

<p><b>5 – Advanced</b></p>	<p>In addition to the “Proficient” criteria, “Advanced” writing shows clear and consistent mastery of the standards and techniques. Work product is high quality, completely error-free, and exceeds all requirements.</p> <p><i>Behavioral indicators include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80 – 100% of the document reflects the overall purpose, minus minimal deviations to display data.</li> <li>• Title incorporates the argument or report issue, using key words defined in the paper.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4 – Proficient</b></p>	<p>Demonstrates the Army writing standard or technique accurately and efficiently. Work product is high quality, nearly error-free except for minor or debatable stylistic mistakes. Addresses the issues of the assignment.</p> <p><i>Behavioral indicators include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong analytical reasoning or organization; for arguments, this demonstrates a thorough understanding of all sides of an issue without losing focus of the paper’s argument.</li> <li>• Varied word choice, grammatical constructions, and sentence structure (as appropriate).</li> <li>• Vocabulary appropriate for audience and technical information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 – Competent</b></p>	<p>Fully qualified in the Army writing standard or technique with reliable execution. Work product achieves requirements suitable for the training environment with few patterns of error.</p> <p><i>Behavioral indicators include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes a single, sustained focus throughout with logical flow and transitions.</li> <li>• All of the information supports the main idea</li> <li>• Vocabulary appropriate for audience and technical information</li> </ul>
<p><b>2 – Developing</b></p>	<p>Demonstrates the Army writing standard or technique, though performance may be inconsistent throughout the document. Has several, repeated patterns of error that would be unacceptable in the field.</p> <p><i>Behavioral indicators include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commits several stylistic, rather than grammatical errors (e.g. sentences are grammatically correct, but could be more concise; author uses passive voice correctly, but could rewrite the sentence more clearly in active voice).</li> <li>• A pattern of sloppy execution – usually no more than 2-3 errors executed correctly in parts of the assignment and incorrectly in others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1 – Learning</b></p>	<p>Attempts, but does not correctly demonstrate the Army writing standard or technique. Work product shows deviation from the assignment requirements or inability to achieve them between 50-75% of the paper content.</p> <p><i>Behavioral indicators include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excessive -- but consistent -- errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, formatting or citation.</li> <li>• Missing or does not execute key concepts; for example, relying on opinion and summary rather than analysis in an argument.</li> </ul>
<p><b>0 – Nonperformer</b></p>	<p>Beginner-level writing struggles to demonstrate the Army writing standards and techniques. Writing may show serious deviations in standard formatting, frequent patterns of error in sentence construction, spelling, grammar, and mechanics consistent with a raw draft.</p> <p><i>Behavioral indicators include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disorganized, erratic errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, formatting or citation.</li> <li>• Internal paragraph or sentence structures lack coherence (for example, switching topics or interjecting new information mid-paragraph, or changing from plural to singular subjects in a sentence)</li> </ul>