

Essay Grading Rubric

- **Has an intriguing, creative, clear thesis statement or theme that expresses intellectual thought and challenges conventional ideas**
- **Thesis or theme is supported by well developed paragraphs structured with strong topic sentences, textual evidence and/or references to prior discussions, lectures or individual and group reflection**
- **Writing and language used throughout paper displays proper usage of grammar, spelling and mechanics with very few (if any at all) errors**
- **Original and captivating opening and closing paragraphs that incorporate all of the above elements**
- **Paper engages the reader and also reflects critical thinking and analysis**

Essay Assignment Requirements: Paper must be 3-5 pages in length, double spaced, 12 point font, Times New Roman or similar font. The topic is of your choosing, but must include a critical analysis of at least one author's text we have read this semester (if opting for the academic essay). Do not include any secondary sources in your paper. Primary sources (the assigned readings) are allowed and it is required you include textual evidence within your paper to strengthen your discussion/argument . Students may choose to write in whatever style they are comfortable with, although MLA is encouraged. Proper grammar and spelling will be considered when calculating the grade so be sure to edit and proof read.

First draft of the essay.

With the United States' entry in the 20th century, African Americans encountered new landscapes that were new to them, and more so challenging. Nevertheless, with the slavery abolition in the United States, by this time, African Americans had become literate, and others had gone up to colleges for the continuation of their studies (Freixas et al. (2019). The Paris exposition in the year 1900 that was brought to existence by W.E.B. Dubois outlined the privileges that African Americans had gained since the emancipation. However, with the fact that the freedom that was achieved during the time of reconstruction was beginning to evade, it, therefore, became a bit difficult for African Americans to vote. This paper aims to outline how Booker T. Washington urges African Americans to acquire strength from the bottom to the top and urges both blacks and whites to come together and assist each other in the future.

With the help of other contributors, Booker T. Washington advocated for acquiring and doing advancements in African Americans' rights. In this speech, Booker T. Washington suggests that the equality of the African Americans both socially and politically should not be troubled in exchange for them to be allowed to gain access to the knowledge offered in the vocational training, as well as participating in the development of the economy of the new south. "There is no defense or security for any of us except in the highest intelligence and development of all. If efforts are to curtail the fullest growth of the Negro, let these efforts be turned into stimulating, encouraging, and making him the most useful and intelligent citizen. Effort or means so invested will pay a thousand percent interest. These efforts will be twice blessed—blessing him that gives and him that takes' ". Page-4. He had a belief that through effort and hard-attained respect, African Americans would be held in great esteem by the white society and consequently obtain full citizenship.

ACADEMIC ESSAY ABSTRACT ASSIGNMENT

Directions: Answer the following questions. Responses *MUST* be typed, following the format and instructions outlined below.

- 1.) Identify the author(s) and text(s) you plan to explore—**Note:** the author(s) and text(s) must be selected from the assigned readings for the course (reference syllabus). Limit is two.

- **Author:** Booker T. Washington
- **Title of text:** Atlanta Compromise speech by Booker T. Washington
- **Author** (write N/A if none): N/A
- **Title of text** (write N/A if none): N/A

- 2.) Write your proposed thesis:

This paper aims to outline how Booker T. Washington urges African Americans to acquire strength from the bottom to the top and urges both blacks and whites to come together and assist each other in the future.

- 3.) Provide at least one critical analysis you plan to include in your essay. Ex. Identify a point or idea you have that relates to the thesis above that incorporates textual evidence to support the claim. Be sure to reference the direct quote or give a summary of the part/scene in the text (with page number):

- “Cast down your bucket where you are.” Cast it down among the eight millions of Negroes whose habits you know, whose fidelity and love you have tested in days when to have proved treacherous meant the ruin of your fireside. Cast down your bucket among these people who have without strikes and labor wars tilled your fields, cleared your forests, builded your railroads and cities, brought forth treasures from the bowels of the earth, just to make possible this magnificent representation of the progress of the South. Page-2
- we shall stand by you with a devotion that no foreigner can approach, ready to lay down our lives, if need be, in defense of yours, interlacing our industrial, commercial, civil, and religious life with yours in a way that shall make the interests of both races one. In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress. Page-4
- Cast it down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions. And in this connection it is well to bear in mind that whatever other sins the South may be called to bear, when it comes to business, pure and simple, it is in the South that the Negro is given a man’s chance in the commercial world, and in nothing is this Exposition more eloquent than in emphasizing this chance. Page-2
- There is no defense or security for any of us except in the highest intelligence and development of all. If anywhere there are efforts tending to curtail the fullest growth of the Negro, let these efforts be turned into stimulating, encouraging, and making him the most useful and intelligent citizen. Effort or means so invested will pay a thousand percent interest. These efforts will be twice blessed—blessing him that gives and him that takes. Page-4

Sample thesis statements

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT:

African American poets in the early 20th century wrote about their struggles and experiences in America post slavery.

WELL DEVELOPED:

During the Harlem Renaissance many writers highlighted the strength of the black community overcoming obstacles as exemplified in the poems “Life Every Voice and Sing” by James Weldon Johnson and “From Mother to Son” by Langston Hughes.