

SMARTHINKING'S

Online Grading Assistance

Human Graders vs. Computer Graders

SMARTHINKING uses highly qualified e-structors, not computerized writing assessment programs, to provide grade guidance. Our e-structors read essays carefully, evaluating students' critical thinking skills, such as conveying meaning, thesis development and argument construction. Computerized assessments cannot evaluate writing at this level. Human graders are simply better.

SMARTHINKING's Online Grading Assistance program uses experienced e-structors® to help grade and critique students' writing, giving your instructors more time to work with more students.

Help Your Instructors Improve Student Success in Writing

Research shows that students improve as writers when they write frequently and receive timely feedback and assessment. Writing instructors, however, are already stretched thin.

SMARTHINKING's Online Grading Assistance program gives students the opportunity to practice their writing skills without increasing instructor workload. Our e-structors review student essays, provide a suggested grade, and include comments addressing each essay's strengths as well as areas for improvement. Faculty can easily view a student's essay and e-structor feedback. Instructors, of course, retain ultimate grading authority.

Expand Your Ability to Grade Course Placement Exams

Increasingly, schools are requiring students to write essays to determine course placement. But grading those essays places an additional responsibility on faculty. Assessment methods and grading may also vary dramatically among instructors.

SMARTHINKING's Online Grading Assistance program provides a corps of e-structors, available day and night, to score essays. Using a rubric to evaluate your students' writing, our e-structors ensure consistent assessments and eliminate potential conflicts. Student essays are scored promptly and completely, facilitating the course placement process.

Online Grading Assistance Options

Writing Assessment* and Critique.

E-structors will provide a numerical score based on 7 elements (noted below) AND provide comments, focusing on specific elements needing improvement.

Course Placement Assessment*.

E-structors will assign a numerical score based on 7 elements:

- Main idea/thesis
- Introduction/conclusion
- Content development
- Organization
- Word choice
- Sentence structure
- Grammar/mechanics

*Up to 1250 words.

SMARTHINKING runs the world's largest online writing lab.

In 2006, SMARTHINKING'S e-structors will critique more than 150,000 essays from students across the country. Over 90% of our writing e-structors have an MA or PhD in a writing-related discipline. In fact, SMARTHINKING's staff wrote the leading book on online writing support—**Preparing Educators for Online Writing Instruction: Principles and Processes**—published by NCTE in 2004.



How Does SMARTHINKING'S Online Grading Assistance Work?

Writing Assessment and Critique. Students access SMARTHINKING's Online Grading Assistance program from their SMARTHINKING home page and submit their essays simply by pasting them into a form. SMARTHINKING's e-structors evaluate the essays, typically within 24 hours, and assign a score and provide recommendations for revision. Instructors may use scores and comments to shape course assignments and feedback for student writers.

Course Placement Assessment. Students log in to individualized accounts and paste writing assessments into a form. E-structors assess student work promptly, using a rubric (see right). Instructors may use scores to determine student placement, as well as to help set course curricula.



I teach seven, three-credit writing courses every semester, both on-line and on-campus, at a community college in Wisconsin. With 150-160 students every semester, I am overwhelmed by all the grading and paperwork and couldn't survive without SMARTHINKING: I love SMARTHINKING's feedback for students.

*JoAnn Martin
Communication Instructor
WITC*

SMARTHINKING'S Essay Assessment

Your SMARTHINKING online grading e-structor has reviewed the essay and assigned a score to each Area of Interest listed below. The scores are:

- 1 Needs Improvement
- 2 Acceptable
- 3 Strong

Links to relevant information in our Online Writing Handbooks are included in each Area of Interest. A total score, ranging from 7 (most in need of improvement) to 21 (strongest), is found at the bottom of the rubric.

Areas of Interest	Score
Main Idea/Thesis. A main idea is the central idea around which an essay focuses. A thesis is a sentence or group of sentences in which you state or make a claim about that main idea. For more information about main idea and thesis, click here .	3
Introduction/Conclusion. Your essay should have an introduction that presents your main idea and a conclusion that wraps up ideas presented in the body of your essay. For more information about introductions and conclusions, click here .	2
Content Development. In the body of an essay, you develop your main idea and thesis by using details, examples, anecdotes, statistics, facts, etc. For more information about developing your ideas, visit the Process chapter in our online handbook, or read more about developing your ideas here .	2
Organization. An effective essay should be logically organized, and individual paragraphs should be ordered and unified. For more information about paragraph development and organization, click here .	1
Word Choice. The words you use must be suited to your audience. Additionally, you must use the appropriate words for each occasion. For more information about word choice, click here .	3
Sentence Structure. Your sentences should be complete and grammatically correct. For more information about sentence structure, visit Lessons 4-7 of Chapter 5 in our online handbook.	2
Grammar/Mechanics. Your essay should be grammatically and technically correct. For more information about grammar and mechanics, click here .	3
OVERALL SCORE	16