

The Official My Marianas Writing Contest Scoring Rubric

| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---|--|--|
| Form | The essay is three full pages minimum and five full pages maximum. It is double-spaced. Font is size 12 in Times New Roman or similar. The submitted work is a personal narrative essay that features an implied thesis, informal tone, and personal journey of the author. The student writes about an event or experience that demonstrates the characteristics of what it means to be from the CNMI. The student also discusses how this experience makes them feel "a part of" or "apart from" the United States. The student used the essay to discuss the relationship he or she wants to see developed between the CNMI and America over the next 50 years. | The essay goes slightly past 5 pages but not by more than half a page. It is centered around defining the CNMI and American identities. The submitted work features an implied thesis and is informal in tone. The work features a story of the student's personal journey but the analysis of the journey's importance/meaning feels incomplete or rushed | The essay goes significantly past 5 pages. And/or the work does not talk about a personal journey, rather, focuses on a logical, step-by-step recounting of a time the student cooked a dish with a family member | The essay is barely three pages | The essay is two pages or less. Essays as such will not be read. |
| Cohesion of Structure | The essay is organized under a precise, unifying main idea and has kept introductory, body, and conclusion paragraphs relevant to this main idea. All supporting details are relevant to the main idea, refraining from details that are gratuitous. Additionally, paragraphs smoothly transition from one supporting detail to the next. | The essay has a precise main idea that unifies the rest of the work and also smoothly transitions between supporting details on a paragraph to paragraph basis. However, certain supporting details are somewhat irrelevant to the overall main idea, or could be relevant to the main idea yet lack meaningful tie ins. | A sincere attempt is made at cohesion, however, the main idea is imprecise. Or the essay occasionally has details that are not relevant at all. Paragraphs satisfactorily transition between supporting details. | The cohesion and organization of the essay is sloppy or feels rushed, as if the student waited until the last minute to begin writing. Rather than creating an essay that collects one idea at a time, there seem to be several ideas competing for space. | The essay is too incoherent to understand. Ideas and supporting details are irrelevant to each other |
| Imagery | The essay deploys a variety of figurative language, concrete details, AND sensory details to create an aesthetic read. Complex ideas are made more approachable through the use of literary devices | The essay features skilled use of two of the three literary devices but severely lacks skill in the third or does not use one of the devices with ample frequency. The essay features enjoyable aesthetics. Complex ideas are made more approachable, but occasionally the essay could have benefitted from more literary devices. | The essay uses one literary device with the most frequency yet ignores the remaining devices, or uses all three but their total use is sparse throughout the essay. The essay sparingly uses imagery to make complex ideas approachable | The essay lacks language that contributes to aesthetics. There is a serious lack of imagery | No effort to include literary devices or complex ideas. |
| Interest | The essays features bold language, expressiveness, and/or storytelling. Diction is precise and impactful. The essay comes from the heart or the content is clearly important to the author. The essay holds the interest of the reader. | The essay features talented storytelling and skilled expression, however, sometimes the author uses words merely to sound smart or interesting, with little regard to their impact or precision. The issues being represented mean a lot to the student. | It is unclear if the student particularly enjoys speaking about the topic represented in the essay. Storytelling and expressiveness techniques are half-hearted, yet attempted. | Storytelling and expressiveness shows up sparingly, but overall the student has no passion for the story in the essay. | The student is dry and expressionless in his/her representation of life in the essay. |
| Originality and honesty | The essay reflects the individual personality and honest thoughts of the author, while also speaking truthfully about the content it presents. The essay is nuanced about the side of life it represents and fair with any criticism or comment. The author has seemingly represented an event that he/she is authentically connected to. | The essay captures the individual personality of the author and represents the truth of the side of life it is written about. However the connection to the essay content is superficial. There seems to be a slight gap between what the author is writing and what his/her life experiences are. | The essay carries some level of truth, but also is influenced to a degree by ideology, and the bias is clear. Or, the essay is cliched in its language or dispassionate about the content it is representing. | The essay mostly is biased or its language shows heavy influence from some outside source. | The essay was written as an attack piece against another ideology. |