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# Guidelines for Scoring

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CASAS

Functional Writing Assessment  
Written Prompt

Form 900, 901, 902, 903, 904

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## CASAS FWA Written Prompt Training Guidelines for Scoring

Holistic scoring is a method of evaluating a piece of writing as a whole. Unlike analytical scoring, where single scoring categories, or elements each receive a score (e.g., content, organization, punctuation), criteria for holistic evaluation is considered in combination, resulting in an overall score based on a descriptive score point.

The CASAS holistic rubric is based on a 5-point scoring scale (1–5). The criteria used for scoring are content, organization, word choice, grammar and sentence structure, and mechanics. When scoring, it is important to review a paper rather quickly to get an overall sense or impression of it to determine the score. One should not dwell on individual score criteria.

Anchor papers are provided at all score points. Review them carefully before scoring. Scoring guidelines and other training materials should also be referred to before and during scoring, as needed.

# CASAS FWA Written Prompt Training Guidelines for Scoring

## Task

The task is to write an extended response generated by the essay topic. A score of **1** must demonstrate some attempt at writing an essay.

## Un-scorable responses

The following are considered un-scorable:

- response has no relationship to topic
- response fewer than 75 words
- response not written in English

## Minimal response to task

Score **Minimal response to task** (75 words or more) for:

- short responses where not enough is written considering the task and length of time allowed to complete the task
- responses written as a list of sentences

## Partial response to topic

Score 1 or 2 for partial responses (i.e., only addresses one part of a two-part question, only addresses one aspect of a topic when comment on several aspects is requested.) To receive a **3**, a sample must adequately address the topic question (s).

## Word Choice

Circumlocutions (e.g., *the lady who take the money for the food* (cashier)), idiomatic phrases (e.g., *put out with* for *put up with*) and words or phrases in another language are considered under word choice. (If it's unclear whether or not a word or phrase is from another language, it is considered under spelling.) Richness of expression (e.g., come to the realization; lack of commitment; incentive; debilitating).

## Grammar and Sentence Structure

Run-ons, sentence fragments and prepositions are considered under Grammar and Sentence Structure. *Woman/women, man/men* are considered under Grammar and Sentence Structure when misused; if clearly misspelled, consider under Spelling.

## Mechanics

Spelling, Capitalization, Punctuation and typos are considered under Mechanics. Homophones (e.g., there/their/they're) are considered under Spelling. Score **1** for a sample if there is no evidence of beginning sentence capitalization, or if there is no evidence of end punctuation.