



English II

Persuasive Scoring Guide

April 2019

English II

Persuasive Prompt

Read the information in the box below.

It is common for people to compete with one another. Competition can foster creativity, provide valuable lessons, and inspire people to challenge themselves and achieve things they never thought possible. On the other hand, competition can breed selfishness and promote the idea that the most successful people are those who have the most power and who will win no matter what the cost.

Think carefully about the following question.

Do people have to be competitive in order to succeed?

Write an essay stating your position on whether competition is necessary for success.

Be sure to —

- state your position clearly
- use appropriate organization
- provide specific support for your argument
- choose your words carefully
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling

Score Point 1

The essay represents a very limited writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is inappropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses organizational strategies that are only marginally suited to the persuasive task, or they are inappropriate or not evident at all. The absence of a functional organizational structure causes the essay to lack clarity and direction.
- ❑ Most ideas are generally related to the issue specified in the prompt, but the writer's position is missing, unclear, or illogical. The writer may fail to maintain focus on the issue, may include extraneous information, or may shift abruptly from idea to idea, weakening the coherence of the essay.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is weak. Repetition or wordiness sometimes causes serious disruptions in the flow of the essay. At other times the lack of transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections causes the writer to present ideas in a random or illogical way, making one or more parts of the essay unclear or difficult to follow.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is weak. The argument is ineffective and unconvincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are inappropriate, vague, or insufficient.
- ❑ The essay is insubstantial because the writer's response to the prompt is vague or confused. In some cases, the essay as a whole is only weakly linked to the prompt. In other cases, the writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a lack of understanding of the persuasive writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be vague or limited. It reflects little or no awareness of the persuasive purpose and does not establish a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice may impede the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are simplistic, awkward, or uncontrolled, significantly limiting the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer has little or no command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Serious and persistent errors create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and sometimes interfere with meaning.

Should the people always have to be competitive in order to succeed? It would always be necessary to be competitive in order to succeed.

The people actually have to be competitive in order to succeed because it would give a great background of you and could inspire other people.

People should always be competitive in order to succeed being a competitive such as having so much power in achieving your goals towards being successful in life for what you want.

The people would always be competitive in order to succeed because it's necessary, it would give a great background of the people and could inspire others, being a competitive such as having so much power in achieving your goals helps people succeed that's why being a competitive is necessary.

Score Point 1

The writer offers the position that “It would always be necessary to be competitive in order to succeed.” However, instead of specifying how being competitive can help people achieve success, the writer repeats vague assertions about competition (“... it would give a great background of you and could inspire other people”; “... having so much power in achieving your goals towards being successful in life for what you want”), which results in an ineffective argument. Furthermore, sentences are uncontrolled (“People should always be competitive in order to succeed being a competitive such as having so much power in achieving your goals towards being successful in life for what you want”), significantly limiting the effectiveness of this very limited writing performance.

life is a everyday competition
every one compete to get better
in life and dont care who
their hunting while getting
there. my view you dont need
to compete all you can do is
work hard at what your
good at and it will help
you from there destiny will
have a place for you if
you just be pastient with
it and dont rush into
anything that will set you
back and lose everything
what you work for. you
cant compete with other band
one of yall are gunn lose
and just lose every thing.

Score Point 1

Although this essay begins with the acknowledgment that “life is a everyday competition,” the writer takes the position that “you dont need to compete all you can do is work hard at what your good at.” However, instead of developing this idea, the writer makes several vague assertions that are only weakly linked to the position (“... destiny will have a place for you if you just be pastient . . .”; “. . . dont rush into anything . . .”; “. . . one of yall are gunn lose and just lose everything”). Furthermore, the writer has little command of sentence boundaries (there are several run-on sentences in the essay), and these errors disrupt the fluency and interfere with meaning in this very limited writing performance.

I truly know you have to compete others to succeed. There is other people that would like the same goals you want in life. It would help your self-esteem up if not it would help you become strong so you can take the lead next time. There will be people that would not want you to succeed and will make you competition for you and if you don't compete you will not succeed. You just have to do what you have to do to succeed in life.

Score Point 1

The writer offers the unclear position that “I truly know you have to compete others to succeed.” A lack of sentence-to-sentence connections causes the writer to present ideas in a random, illogical way, making the essay difficult to follow (“There is other people that would like the same goals you want in life. It would help your self-esteem up if not it would help you become strong so you can take the lead next time”). The argument is unconvincing because instead of clarifying and defending the position, the writer lists vague, insufficient reasons. For example, the writer asserts that other people share the same goals, but does not offer any proof to back up this claim. The assertion that competition helps your self-esteem and helps you “become strong” is similarly unsupported. Overall, this essay demonstrates a very limited writing performance.

For most people, they are into sports. They like to compete & win medals or trophies and move on to the next competition. In my opinion, it doesn't matter who wins and who loses.

Most competitors are in a tournament to win it all. Nothing more nothing less. There are a few who are lucky they win because they are having the time of their lives. They don't care about winning. All they want is to show off what they got even if they lose.

Score Point 1

The writer provides the unclear position that "... it doesn't matter who wins and who loses." However, the writer does not address the specific demands of the task because the position, while related to competition, is only tangentially linked to the issue specified in the prompt. Instead of addressing whether competition is necessary for success, the writer focuses on people who "like to compete & win medals or trophies" and those who just want "to show off what they got even if they lose." This lack of understanding of the persuasive task demonstrates a very limited writing performance.

Score Point 2

The essay represents a basic writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is evident but may not always be appropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is not always clear because the writer uses organizational strategies that are only somewhat suited to the persuasive task.
- ❑ Most ideas are generally related to the issue specified in the prompt, but the writer's position is weak or somewhat unclear. The lack of a clear, effective position or the writer's inclusion of irrelevant information interferes with the focus and coherence of the essay.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is not always logical and controlled. Sometimes repetition or wordiness causes minor disruptions in the flow of the essay. At other times transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections are too perfunctory or weak to support the flow of the essay or show the relationships among ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is minimal. The argument is superficial and largely unconvincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are not always appropriate or are too briefly or partially presented.
- ❑ The essay reflects little or no thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is sometimes formulaic. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates only a limited understanding of the persuasive writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be general or imprecise. It reflects a basic awareness of the persuasive purpose but does little to establish a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice may not contribute to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are awkward or only somewhat controlled, weakening the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates a partial command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Some distracting errors may be evident, at times creating minor disruptions in the fluency or meaning of the writing.

People need to be competitive in order to succeed.

Being competitive is very good. It shows you want to be the best and will do anything for win. Winning is always on the mind of the competitor. They want to be successful and they show it by being competitive and trying their best. That shows a lot from them.

Although there are some very competitive people out there, there are also those who are not competitive. It may be for some reasons. The reasons may be that they are afraid they will lose against other competitive people. You just have to try your best. Trying your best can even help you mentally, by showing yourself you can be competitive.

Competition can be better for you. It makes you try harder and bring out the best of you. Also, it can motivate you. You will also start to get better and better, all thanks to the competition.

You need competition to succeed, it motivates you to try your hardest and never give up.

Score Point 2

In this essay the writer claims that you need competition in order to succeed because “it motivates you to try your hardest and never give up.” However, repetition of the idea that people should try their best disrupts the flow of the essay and interferes with the writer’s ability to develop ideas with specificity. For example, the writer’s ideas that some people do not compete because they are afraid to lose and “Trying your best can even help you mentally” and will motivate you are too briefly presented to be convincing. Furthermore, the writer’s imprecise word choice (“be the best,” “trying their best,” “shows a lot,” “some reasons,” “Trying your best,” “be better for you,” “get better and better”) does not contribute to the quality or clarity of this basic writing performance.

If you are competitive it does not mean you will succeed. You do not need to be competitive in order to be successful.

People who are very competitive cannot become rude. If they only focus on winning every time they can lose friends by being selfish. If they don't win they will get very angry.

You're not always going to win at everything, but as long as you have tried your hardest you are successful. You are successful because you know that you did the best you could.

People need to stop being so competitive and just be glad that they did all they could do.

Competition can make you lose etc others and will not always bring you success.

Score Point 2

The writer's position, which appears at the end of the essay, is that "Competition can make you lose others and will not always bring you success." The development is superficial and unconvincing because the writer's ideas are too partially presented. The writer begins by arguing that "You do not need to be competitive in order to be successful," and that very competitive people "can become rude," "selfish," and "angry." This is contrasted with the writer's interpretation of success coming about from trying your hardest. However, the writer then warns that "People need to stop being so competitive," but does not develop these ideas with any specificity. Although the essay is free of errors in language and conventions, the minimal development demonstrates a basic writing performance.

Is competition necessary for success? Being competitive can help you succeed in many different ways.

Being Successful in sports takes a lot of competition. I will take myself as an example. Playing varsity baseball was my goal my sophomore year. But to get there I had to compete with other players to earn that varsity spot. If I would have never competed with the others my goal to succeed at making Varsity would have never happened. Having the advantage to always compete and by never giving up can make you better at what you are participating in.

Being competitive can make people achieve things they never thought were possible. Let's take athletes for an example. If they would have never competed in what sports they participated in they would have never gone pro. They inspire themselves to challenge their own selves to achieve their goals. If they never competed then why did they even try to make it into the pros? Competing helped the athlete be successful at making themselves a better athlete.

Competition is necessary for success. It can provide valuable lessons and help you succeed in your life.

Score Point 2

In this essay the writer's position, which appears in the final paragraph, is that "Competition is necessary for success." The organizing structure of the essay is evident but not always appropriate because the writer repeats ideas, many of which are taken directly from the prompt, throughout the response. Furthermore, the writer's anecdote about competing to play varsity baseball and the assertion that athletes "challenge their own selves" in order to become professionals are nearly identical, resulting in a superficial argument. Additionally, sentences are somewhat awkward ("Having the advantage to always compete and by never giving up can make you better at what you are participating in"; "They inspire themselves to challenge their own selves to achieve their goals"), weakening the effectiveness of this basic writing performance.

In order to succeed you must be competitive. You need to push yourself to get better then any-one. Don't be satisficed with good enough, push yourself to the extreme to become something big in life.

Everything you do you must compete. No one wants to live the life as "Good enough" people wants too be on top. But to be on top you have to want it bad. You have to be competitive so you won't be on the bottom be on top and be unstoppable so no one can bring you down. Your who life is basced on competition and if you fail on competing you fail at life. Push yourself don't let anyone tell you, your not good enough, show them you will succed to come out on top of them.

Competition is a everyday life routine you do it once you wake up in the morning. Never give up show everyone you can do it and you will succed no matter how hard it is to be number one.

Score Point 2

The writer offers the position that "In order to succeed you must be competitive." However, repetition of the ideas that you need to "push yourself" to "be on top" and not be "satisficed with good enough" disrupts the flow of the essay and interferes with the writer's ability to develop ideas with any specificity. Additionally, the development is minimal because instead of providing reasons that support how competition leads to success, the writer offers clichés that are not always appropriate ("But to be on top you have to want it bad"; "Your who life is basced on competition and if you fail on competing you fail at life"; "Never give up show everyone you can do it and you will succed no matter how hard it is to be number one"). Furthermore, the writer demonstrates a partial command of sentence boundaries ("You have to be competitive so you won't be on the bottom be on top and be unstoppable so no one can bring you down"; "Push yourself don't let anyone tell you, your not good enough, show them you will succed to come out on top of them"), at times creating minor disruptions in the fluency and meaning of this basic writing performance.

Score Point 3

The essay represents a satisfactory writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is, for the most part, appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is clear because the writer uses organizational strategies that are adequately suited to the persuasive task.
- ❑ The writer establishes a clear position. Most ideas are related to the position and are focused on the issue specified in the prompt. The essay is coherent, though it may not always be unified due to minor lapses in focus.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled. For the most part, transitions are meaningful, and sentence-to-sentence connections are sufficient to support the flow of the essay and show the relationships among ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is sufficient. The argument is largely convincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are specific and appropriate.
- ❑ The essay reflects some thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is original rather than formulaic. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a good understanding of the persuasive writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice is, for the most part, clear and specific. It reflects an awareness of the persuasive purpose and establishes a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice usually contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are reasonably varied and adequately controlled, contributing for the most part to the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although some errors may be evident, they create few (if any) disruptions in the fluency of the writing, and they do not affect the clarity of the essay.

Today's society provides competitions to determine the most successful person in a task, but success does not always have to be determined by a competition searching for the best.

Success comes in many different forms, some that do claim a person or team as the best and some can come from a personal goal achieved or someone's best effort put to good use. In my early college high school's Robotics, there were multiple problems faced in this year, such as not having in money, parts not coming in, and even not having an instructor ~~trying~~ to help us. As the months pressed on, ~~and~~ so did we to competition. Even though at the competition we placed fourth, we as a team went home with success. Our competition did not determine our success; it was our dedication and our love as a team that pushed us past our goal.

The best kind of success is the kind that is done purely from one's heart and knowledge. A doctor performs many miracles a day, from curing simple colds to performing life-saving surgeries, and many go home at the end of the day only being recognized by themselves for a job well done. The doctors were not in a competition, but that does not mean that they didn't succeed, ~~but really~~ they have enough self-motivation to push themselves. A person's success comes from their knowledge and self-motivation to reach their own goal set.

Competition is not necessary for success, but self-motivation and love for something is. If a person sets a personal goal and sprinkles it with motivation, then success will grow.

Score Point 3

The writer offers the position that "Competition is not necessary for success, but self-motivation and love for something is." The argument is largely convincing because the writer's evidence about the success of a high school robotics club that overcame "multiple problems," including "not having in money, parts not coming in, and even not having an instructor to help us" and a doctor who "performs many miracles a day" without competing against others sufficiently supports the idea that knowledge and self-motivation contribute more to success than does competition. Sentences are reasonably varied and adequately controlled ("Even though at the competition we placed fourth, we as a team went home with success"; "A doctor performs many miracles a day, from curing simple colds to performing life-saving surgeries, and many go home at the end of the day only being recognized by themselves for a job well done"), contributing for the most part to the effectiveness of this satisfactory writing performance.

In today's society many people debate whether competition is crucial for success or not. I believe that competition is mandatory for success because it pushes people and businesses to be better so they can be number one.

In today's current school system, many students strive to compete for the highest rank in schools, valedictorian. But if there is no competition, how can you be number one? You can't. Competition is crucial for kids to be top in their class and to point out the kids that are most likely to succeed. To get in most colleges today, people must be in the top ten percent of their class. Kids compete with their classmates in order to get in this percentile because they want to succeed in life and have a strong future career.

Another example why competition is necessary for success is because it keeps businesses fighting to be at the top. One of the biggest markets competing is the food market. Everyday these companies have to fight each other for the most business. They do this by changing the prices on their products. In order to succeed in the business world you have to compete with other businesses to gain the most profit. If companies do not reach a sufficient amount of profit they could go bankrupt and not succeed.

Competition is a big part of our society today. In order for people and businesses to succeed, they must compete with others and try to be number one.

Score Point 3

The writer offers the clear position that “competition is mandatory for success because it pushes people and businesses to be better. . . .” The progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled because the writer’s sentence-to-sentence connections (“One of the biggest markets competing is the food market. Everyday these companies have to fight each other for the most business. They do this by changing the prices on their products”) are sufficient to show how competition motivates businesses to improve. The writer supports the position with appropriate and specific reasons. First, the writer argues that high school students compete to be in the “top ten percent of their class” so they can get into college and “succeed in life and have a strong future career.” Next, the writer asserts that business, especially grocery stores, compete with each other by “changing the prices on their products,” which leads to bigger profits. According to the writer, “If companies do not reach a sufficient amount of profit they could go bankrupt and not succeed.” While these examples are somewhat similar, they are both linked to the position and include enough detail to sufficiently defend the writer’s argument. Overall, this essay demonstrates a satisfactory writing performance.

Everyone has a little competitiveness within them. It plays a major role in what motivates us to achieve what we want. I believe that people must be competitive in order to succeed.

By being competitive you are more aware of your surrounding opponents. This helps you evaluate where you must improve yourself. In order to succeed you must be the most qualified person for whatever position you are aiming. If someone excels more than you, then they are more likely to get your position, right? This is why competition is necessary.

Now, I understand that competition can foster selfishness and hostility but it should be used as a way to further improve yourself, not to bring others down. For example, when I was playing my flute I noticed that my tone sounded spitty and airy compared to my friend. I practiced constantly until my tone finally matched hers, but I didn't stop there. I kept practicing and my sound ended up being clearer than the whole flute section. This is a healthy form of competition where you are constantly improving yourself.

Overall, competition promotes people to challenge themselves and inspires them to keep on going. It is the key to success.

Score Point 3

The writer offers the position that “Overall, competition promotes people to challenge themselves and inspires them to keep on going. It is the key to success.” The progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled because the writer’s sentence-to-sentence connections (“... you must be the most qualified person for whatever position you are aiming. If someone excels more than you, then they are more likely to get your position, right? This is why ...”) are sufficient to show how competition leads to success. The development is largely convincing because the writer’s reasons are appropriate. For example, the writer first presents the philosophical argument that a competitive environment “helps you evaluate where you must improve yourself.” The writer then concedes that “competition can foster selfishness,” and provides a personal anecdote about how competing with a friend led to improved performance playing the flute. While the philosophical discussion lacks the specificity of the flute anecdote, holistically, this essay represents a satisfactory writing performance.

Competition has its pros and cons. Although in certain situations it may cause imperialism, sometimes friendly competition is just what is needed to take an accomplishment to the next step. Competition is highly necessary in order to be successful, because without it individuals will lack the drive to improve.

For example, when participating in sports, there is always going to be someone better or stronger to strive to beat. Without being considered selfish, it is natural for athletes to work hard in order to be more skilled than an opposing team or player. Being competitive in sports causes athletes to want to improve and want to win, which will greatly benefit them in the long run.

Competition does not only occur in sports, but it is common in the business world as well. Businessmen are constantly going against each other for who will get the promotion to a new position. By having someone else also fighting for the job, it makes them do their work their very best and go above and beyond to make a good impression on the boss. It is a win-win situation because they may get the job, but if they are turned down then they have still become better at their current position which opens up future opportunities.

Competition is about more than wanting to win; it is about how far someone is willing to push themselves in order to achieve success. All individuals should have a competitive mindset or they will risk remaining stagnant with their achievements.

Score Point 3

In this essay the writer provides the clear position that “Competition is highly necessary in order to be successful, because without it individuals will lack the drive to improve.” The progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled because sentence-to-sentence connections are, for the most part, sufficient to show how competition leads to improvement (“Businessmen are constantly going against each other for who will get the promotion to a new position. By having someone else also fighting for the job, it makes them do their work their very best and go above and beyond to make a good impression on the boss”). The development is largely convincing because the reasons the writer uses to support the position are specific and appropriate. For instance, the writer argues that “it is natural for athletes to work hard in order to be more skilled than an opposing team or player.” While the writer’s example about competition for promotions within an office is somewhat similar to the previous example, both examples are clearly linked to the position and include sufficient detail to support the argument. Furthermore, the writer’s clear and specific word choice (“strive to beat,” “greatly benefit,” “above and beyond,” “win-win situation,” “competitive mindset”) reinforces the idea that competition can yield great rewards. Overall, this essay demonstrates a satisfactory writing performance.

Score Point 4

The essay represents an accomplished writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is clearly appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is skillfully crafted because the writer uses organizational strategies that are particularly well suited to the persuasive task.
- ❑ The writer establishes a clear position. All ideas are strongly related to the position and are focused on the issue specified in the prompt. By sustaining this focus, the writer is able to create an essay that is unified and coherent.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is logical and well controlled. Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the flow of the essay by clearly showing the relationships among ideas, making the writer's train of thought easy to follow.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is highly effective. The argument is forceful and convincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are specific and well chosen.
- ❑ The essay is thoughtful and engaging. The writer may choose to recognize the complexities of the issue, consider opposing or alternate points of view, use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing, or connect ideas in interesting ways. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the persuasive writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice is purposeful and precise. It reflects a keen awareness of the persuasive purpose and maintains a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice strongly contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well controlled, enhancing the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates a consistent command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although minor errors may be evident, they do not detract from the fluency of the writing or the clarity of the essay. The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the essay.

Competition is like climbing the tallest mountain and running the longest race. They are all painful, but you're guaranteed a feeling of a accomplishment and success once you finish. Having a competitive spirit is absolutely necessary to be successful because it motivates people to become something better and it provides the mobility needed to get out of a situation and place yourself in a better one.

To be able to succeed economically one without a doubt needs to find their spirit for competition. Elon Musk, a world renown inventor and entrepreneur, has completely changed how we view the world thanks to his own personal drive for success. Musk has founded many booming companies such as Space X, Tesla, and the Boring Company. The best part of all his success is the fact that he practically started with nothing but an idea for greatness. Musk's companies are not uncontested; however, his companies are able to fully compete with huge names such as NASA and Ford. All thanks to his competitive spirit for success, we now have rockets that can go into orbit and land themselves, cars that can drive themselves, and hundreds of inventions that will impact our lives tremendously.

A competitive spirit allows individuals to change what is around them and make it into something better. One example of this is Kwame Nkrumah, a very popular civil rights leader from the Gold Coast of Africa that fought for Ghana's independence. Nkrumah grew up in Africa, but he competed for the opportunity to study in Europe. After successfully completing his studies, he returned to Africa with his new knowledge of law and education and helped with the effort to gain independence for Ghana. Following his success, he was appointed president-for-life. He would put in place many reforms that helped with education and healthcare to name a few. Nkrumah had an inner drive and competitiveness within that allowed him to mold his settings into what he saw as right for his people. His competitive spirit from his academics in his youth to his humanitarian reforms as an adult would shape Nkrumah's character and create a path for him that would lead to his major success as a leader of the Ghana people.

To live a successful life it is absolutely critical that you have a competitive spirit because it motivates you to improve yourself in whatever you do and allows you to change your setting to how you want.

Climb your mountains and sprint the longest miles because in the end it will all be worth the pain you push yourself through to achieve success.

Score Point 4

The writer establishes the clear position that “having a competitive spirit is absolutely necessary to be successful because it motivates people to become something better and it provides the mobility needed to get out of a situation and place yourself in a better one.” The writer maintains focus on the benefits of a “competitive spirit” by organizing the essay around two examples of people who have succeeded due to competition: entrepreneur Elon Musk and civil-rights activist Kwame Nkrumah. The opening analogy of “climbing the tallest mountain and running the longest race” is returned to in the final paragraph, enhancing the essay’s unity. Strong sentence-to-sentence connections (“Elon Musk, a world renown inventor and entrepreneur, has completely changed how we view the world thanks to his own personal drive for success. Musk has founded many booming companies . . . his companies are able to fully compete with huge names such as NASA and Ford. All thanks to his competitive spirit for success”; “A competitive spirit allows individuals to change what is around them and make it into something better. One example of this is Kwame Nkrumah. . . . Nkrumah had an inner drive and competitiveness within that allowed him to mold his settings into what he saw as right for his people”) clearly show how both figures owe their respective successes to their competitive spirits. The writer’s specific and well-chosen reasons and evidence (“Musk has founded many booming companies such as SpaceX, Tesla, and the Boring Company. . . . Musk’s companies are not uncontested; however, his companies are able to fully compete with huge names such as NASA and Ford”; “Nkrumah grew up in Africa, but he competed for the opportunity to study in Europe. After successfully completing his studies, he returned to Africa with his new knowledge of law and education and helped with the effort to gain independence for Ghana”) lead to a forceful and convincing argument that competition is the driving force that enables one to succeed. Purposeful, varied, and well-controlled sentences (“All thanks to his competitive spirit for success, we now have rockets that can go into orbit and land themselves, cars that can drive themselves, and hundreds of inventions that will impact our lives tremendously”; “His competitive spirit from his academics in his youth to his humanitarian reforms as an adult would shape Nkrumah’s character and create a path for him that would lead to his major success as a leader of the Ghana people”) enhance the effectiveness of this accomplished writing performance.

Competition has been an integral part of human life since the very advent of civilization. In the Neolithic period, which lasted until 8,000 BBE, numerous hunter-gatherer groups vied with each other for resources, the stronger, more successful people outliving the weaker groups. This, some success is what humans strive to achieve even today, whether it be in science, social life, or sports, and the past, did, present have both emphasized that competition is necessary for success.

Consider the case of the Space Race between the United States and Russia, which took place in the 1950s and 1960s. The two countries at this time were locked in the intense Cold War, in which each nation attempted to outdo the other in terms of arms production and political prominence, the Americans with their ideals of democracy and the Russians with their strong communist beliefs. Both countries also worked towards achievements in space. Finally, Russia launched the Sputnik I satellite into space in 1957; it was the first of its kind in the entire world. The communist nation then also launched Yuri Gagarin into space. The United States responded by landing Neil Armstrong on the moon, and the American was the first astronaut ever to do so. Clearly, the intense nationalistic and political rivalry between the U.S and Russia spurred on the unbelievable achievements that the two countries accomplished in outer space.

Also examine the cases of Apple and Microsoft, two American-originated companies which gained worldwide acclaim by the early twenty-first century. Both companies had humble origins: Steve Jobs began assembling computer parts in his own garage and Bill Gates worked with a friend to build a few electronic devices. Since then, Apple and Microsoft began vigorous output of electronics. When Apple released iPods, Microsoft subsequently produced the Zune music players, and Apple's Macintosh computers matched the Microsoft invention of the personal computer. In addition, both companies now release new operating systems to speed up internet access and to make the computer more user-friendly. As seen here, it is obvious that the competition in electronics output fed Apple and Microsoft to attempting great feats in the field of technology.

In short, it is unquestionably evident that competition is an invaluable necessity for success. As seen through the United States, Russia, Apple, and Microsoft, intense rivalry leads to numerous achievements that improve the quality of life and wealth of knowledge that people have, thus paving a way for a successful future for human beings.

Score Point 4

In this essay the writer establishes the clear position that “competition is necessary for success” in “science, social life, or sports.” The progression of ideas is logical and well controlled because strong sentence-to-sentence connections (“Both countries also worked towards achievements in space. Finally, Russia launched the Sputnik I satellite into space in 1957; it was the first of its kind in the entire world”) clearly show how competition between rivals can lead to great achievements. The development of ideas is highly effective because the writer uses specific and well-chosen evidence (competition between the United States and Russia during the Space Race led to “unbelievable achievements”; Apple and Microsoft compete with each other to accomplish “great feats in the field of technology”). The writer’s purposeful and precise word choice (“strive to achieve,” “locked in the intense Cold War,” “intense nationalistic and political rivalry,” “vigorous output,” “invaluable necessity”) emphasizes the emotional energy of competition. Holistically, this essay demonstrates an accomplished writing performance.

In such a modern world saturated with opportunities, we are inclined to strive for the best positions, and thanks to our natural competitiveness, we are driven to succeed in reaching our goals. However, as we climb our ladder to success, we are bound to shove anyone who is in our way. Although competition does inspire us to achieve our dreams, it drives us to be selfish, changes our definition of success, and stains our morality.

It is within human nature to want the best for ourselves, and due to this selfishness, we are inclined to do anything for success, including using our own friends, family, or even strangers. How many life-long relationships are you willing to break just so you can be successful? Instead of using others as our stepping stones, we should build our own steps to success. Achieving success is great, but using our friends out of selfishness is not.

Along with selfishness, competition gifts us with a changed definition of success. When we look at powerful people, do we even think twice about how they got to where they are? All we keep in our heads is that the person is successful, rich, and powerful. We begin to think that we, too, need to be all those things in order to be successful, but what is success really? By the dictionary, success is "a favorable or satisfactory outcome or result," but over time, society has changed the definition of success to "fame, wealth, and power." Do we really need these three things to be successful? Is that all we need to ^{really} be successful? Albert Einstein had none of those three things when he was alive. Instead, he was considered to be nothing, but he lived a normal life and proved to be a genius. Fame, wealth, and power are not all that amount to success.

Competition also challenges our morality. Though everyone knows that corruption is wrong, many businesses and political figures have used corruption to become successful. Why would we do something when we know it is wrong? We often forget that we can achieve success without the help of competition. It is only our ambition and determination that is our driving force, proving competition as an ~~unneeded~~ ^{unnecessary} component for success.

Score Point 4

The writer offers the complex position that "Although competition does inspire us to achieve our dreams, it drives us to be selfish, changes our definition of success, and stains our morality." The writer skillfully crafts the essay by organizing ideas around each claim within the position. The progression of these ideas is logical and well controlled because meaningful transitions ("It is within human nature to want the best for ourselves", "Along with selfishness, competition gifts us with a changed definition of success") clearly show the negative outcomes of competition. The argument is forceful and convincing because the writer's well-chosen reasons (when we compete, we will do anything to win, even if that includes using those closest to us as "stepping stones"; competition among business and politicians leads to corruption) fully support the position. Additionally, the writer's use of rhetorical questions throughout the essay ("How many life-long relationships are you willing to break just so you can be successful?"; "When we look at powerful people, do we even think twice about how they got to where they are?") demonstrates a thorough understanding of the persuasive writing task. Purposeful, precise word choice ("climb our ladder to success," "stains our morality," "using others as our stepping stones," "considered to be nothing," "competition as an unneeded component") emphasizes the harmful qualities of competition. For these reasons, this essay represents an accomplished writing performance.

When I was in middle school, we had to run around the track during gym class in order to improve our ~~endurance~~ skills. I was a mediocre runner, at best, but I had a friend who was exemplary. ~~Through trying to race her,~~ I pushed myself much harder than I would likely have done under normal circumstances. This, as well as other similar experiences, have helped me discover the power of competition in fostering success.

Competition can be a strong force for improvement in not only athletic endeavors but also every other field of life. Take academics, for example. The pressure to have the best makes has, despite being detrimental insofar as it stresses me out, made me work harder and feel prouder about my accomplishments. When I am low on motivation or energy, I need only think of how I stand in comparison to everyone else to feel a new drive to complete my homework. While this kind of competition can hurt relationships if it gets out of hand, having it at a small level can be very important.

Even beyond motivating people to work harder at the things they already know, competition encourages the acquisition of new skills and the expansion of knowledge. Sports like soccer, cross country and many others force their participants to improve on all the various skills they require and often obtain new ones as the players become more and more adept. Academic sports, like quiz bowl and debate, can be an incentive to learn more about the world and how to express one's thoughts clearly. Because of my participation in quiz bowl, I have needed to learn more about literature and history and thus become more well informed. Without the competitive element, most of these sports would lose their appeal.

Competition clearly has a plethora of qualities and effects that can be extremely beneficial for success. At the same time, however, it is important to be aware that success competitively is not the only factor that contributes to success in life. To be successful, one must only be happy and satisfied with the life they lead. If competition can be taken as a means to happiness and dropped if it gets to extreme, it can be very important. To be successful in competition, one must not only have learned to make the experience.

Score Point 4

In the final paragraph of this essay, the writer establishes the complex position that “if competition can be taken as a means to happiness and dropped if it gets to extreme, it can be very important. To be successful in competition, one must only have learned from the experience.” The writer takes an anecdotal approach to the topic, organizing ideas around two instances in which the writer succeeded academically due to competition with other students. The two anecdotes are linked by a meaningful transition (“Even beyond motivating people to work harder at the things they already know, competition encourages the acquisition of new skills and the expansion of knowledge”), clearly showing how the writer’s academic experiences, though somewhat similar to each other (“The pressure to have the best grades has . . . made me work harder and feel prouder about my accomplishments”; “Because of my participation in quiz bowl, I have needed to learn more about literature and history and thus become more well informed”), have enhanced the writer’s academic success in different ways. The writer thoughtfully links sports and academics by beginning with an account of racing against a friend (“Through trying to race her, I pushed myself much harder”) and referring to sports throughout the essay (“Competition can be a strong force for improvement in not only athletic endeavors but also every other field of life”; “Sports like soccer, cross country and many others force their participants to improve on all the various skills they require and often obtain new ones as the players become more and more adept. Academic sports, like quiz bowl and debate, can be an incentive to learn more about the world and how to express one’s thoughts clearly”) to emphasize how competition is beneficial in both fields. The writer develops the concession presented in the position by acknowledging that competition can be “detrimental insofar as it stresses me out” and “can hurt relationships if it gets out of hand,” then refutes that idea by claiming that “having it at a small level can be very important” but it “is not the only factor that contributes to success in life.” Purposeful and precise word choice throughout (“mediocre,” “exemplary,” “endeavors,” “detrimental,” “acquisition,” “incentive,” “plethora”) and a lack of errors in conventions strongly contribute to the quality and clarity of this accomplished writing performance.

