**Empathy-Oriented Rubric for a “Profile Essay” Assignment in a First-Year Composition Course**

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|   |   | **Advanced** | **Proficient** | **Developing** |
| **Content** | Theme | Essay identifies a specific theme, and this theme is consistently considered throughout the essay. | Essay identifies a specific theme, although parts of the essay may move away from a focus on this theme. | Essay’s theme can be articulated more explicitly. |
|  | Support | Essay contains supporting paragraphs that convincingly illustrate the centrality of the theme to the profile subject’s life. | Essay contains supporting paragraphs that clearly relate to the theme identified in the first paragraph. | Body paragraphs can be revised to enhance their relevance to the essay’s theme. |
|  | Evidence | Each body paragraph includes quotations from the profile subject and/or biographical details from the profile subject’s life that illustrate the theme.  | Each body paragraph includes quotations from the profile subject and/or biographical details from the profile subject’s life, but their relevance to the theme can be articulated more explicitly. | Body paragraphs can be revised to include quotations from the profile subject and/or biographical details from the profile subject’s life. |
| **Style** | Opening | Essay begins with an engaging sentence that establishes the essay’s tone. | Essay begins with an engaging sentence, but this sentence can be revised to more effectively establish the tone of what follows. | Essay can be revised to begin with a more engaging opening sentence. |
|  | Closing | Essay concludes with a memorable sentence that sums up something important about the writer’s meaning. | Essay concludes with a memorable sentence, but this sentence can be revised to enhance its relevance to the essay’s main ideas. | Essay can be revised to conclude with a more memorable sentence. |
|  | Voice | Word choice and sentence structure of the essay convey a vivid sense of the writer’s personality. | Word choice and sentence structure of the essay convey a general sense of the writer’s personality. | Word choice and sentence structure of the essay can be revised to evoke a more powerful sense of the writer’s personality. |
| **Mechanics** | Proficiency | Essay includes no errors in spelling, punctuation, or grammar. | Essay includes roughly one error in spelling, punctuation, or grammar per paragraph. | Essay includes more than one error in spelling, punctuation, or grammar per paragraph. |
|  | Paragraphing | Essay consistently uses paragraph breaks to distinguish key pieces of information. | Essay mostly uses paragraph breaks to distinguish key pieces of information. | Essay can be revised to employ paragraph breaks in ways that distinguish key pieces of information more effectively. |
|  | Format | Essay is 1,000 words in length and is formatted clearly and appropriately. | Essay is 1,000 words in length but can be revised to adhere more closely to the recommended format. | Essay is substantially longer or shorter than 1,000 words and/or can be revised to adhere more closely to the recommended format. |