

# 2017-2018

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

### Pre-Writing Assessment

#### Reading

Read the passage below about the jazz musician Wynton Marsalis. As you read the passage, think about how Marsalis became a successful musician. Then use the passage to help you write a well-organized multi-paragraph expository essay.

#### Wynton Marsalis

Wynton Marsalis believes his love for jazz music comes from the way he was raised and from his hometown. “I grew up in New Orleans,” he told a reporter for *Town & Country* in 2004, “where I got to play with the symphony orchestra, ... marching bands, light classical bands... and just about every other group that performed any kind of music at any time. All I had to do was bring my horn and I was all right.”

When Wynton was twelve years old, he decided that he wanted music to be a significant part of his future. “I looked around and wanted to find something that I could do,” he told *Ebony* magazine in March 1983. “I thought I would play basketball, but I wasn’t good enough. I was too short and stuff, so I got into the band and I couldn’t play. Everybody could play and I was the saddest one there.” However, Wynton did not let that discourage him. He got to work. He went to the library and read everything he could find on the trumpet. He took private lessons for three to four hours every Saturday. “I used to practice all night. That’s all I did – practice trumpet. I would wake up in the morning and start practicing. I’d go to school and think about practicing in the daytime. I would play band in the evening and come home and pull records and books out and practice.”

His mother said that through these years she was influenced by her son’s hard work. “He taught me a great big lesson about life. He would only commit himself to the things he was most enthusiastic about, not mess around with a whole lot of little things.”

His time as a teenager and his time as a college student were filled with more of the same. He spent most of his time practicing the trumpet, taking lessons, performing with local and school bands, listening to various jazz musicians to learn their styles, and studying with dedicated teachers. All those years of hard work helped Wynton win numerous Grammy Awards and become the first jazz musician to receive the Pulitzer Prize for Music. When asked by *Ebony* magazine if he had advice for young people, he said, “I want young musicians to know that hard work is the only way to master music. You have to get the knowledge of yourself. Don’t blame it on the teacher. Don’t blame it on the programs in your school if they aren’t that good. You’ve got to go out and get the teachers you want. You must learn to play your instruments correctly and learn how to read music.”

## Directions for Writing

Write a multi-paragraph essay that explains what Wynton Marsalis did to become a successful musician. Then think about how you achieve goals. Questions to help you: What did Wynton Marsalis do to become the successful musician he is today? What do you to be successful today? Use details from the passage to explain your ideas.

As you write, follow the suggestions below:

- Be sure your essay has an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Use details from the passage and explain your choice.
- Write clearly and check for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

## Rubric – Expository Essay

	Ideas and Evidence	Organization	Language	Subtotal
A D V A N C E D  <b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The introduction is appealing and informative</li> <li>The topic is well developed with relevant facts, concrete details, and interesting quotations</li> <li>The concluding section capably summarizes information presented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organization is effective and logical throughout the essay</li> <li>Transitions successfully connect related ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing maintains a formal style throughout</li> <li>Language is strong and precise</li> <li>Grammar, usage, and mechanics are correct</li> </ul>	
C O M P E T E N T  <b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The introduction could do more to grab reader's attention</li> <li>Some key points need more support from relevant facts, concrete details, quotations</li> <li>The concluding section summarizes information presented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organization is confusing in a few places</li> <li>A few more transitions are needed to connect related ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The style is inconsistent in a few places</li> <li>Language is too general in some places</li> <li>Some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are repeated in the essay</li> </ul>	
L I M I T E D  <b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The introduction is only partly informative and could be more engaging</li> <li>Most key points need more support in the form of relevant facts, concrete details, and quotations</li> <li>The concluding section partially summarizes the information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organization is logical in some places but often doesn't follow a pattern</li> <li>More transitions are needed throughout to connect related ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The style becomes informal in many places</li> <li>Overly general language is used in many places</li> <li>Grammar, usage, and mechanics are incorrect in many places, but the writer's ideas remain clear</li> </ul>	
E M E R G I N G  <b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The introduction is missing</li> <li>Facts, details, quotations, and examples are missing</li> <li>The essay lacks a concluding section</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A logical organization is not used; information is presented randomly</li> <li>Transitions are not used, making the essay difficult to understand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The style is inappropriate for the essay</li> <li>Language is too general to convey the information</li> <li>Many errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics obscure the meaning of the ideas</li> </ul>	
			<b>Total Score</b>	