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ABSTRACT

The research attempted to determine whether or not there was any difference between the scores of two groups of juniors, both of which had no freshman composition instruction, but one of which (Group 1) had composition instruction in the junior year and the other (Group 2) had not. Three measures, COOP, CEEB, and a theme, were administered at the end of the sophomore year and again at the time when Group 1 completed the course. Comparisons were made between scores of the two groups, of the males of each group, and of the females of each group. Results are: (1) There was no statistically significant difference in favor of Group 1 as measured by COOP; (2) There was a statistically significant difference in favor of the males in Group 1 over the males in Group 2 as measured by COOP; (3) The significant difference referred to in (1) above is due to the male group; (4) There was no significant difference between Group 1 and Group 2 as measured by CEEB and a theme. The results of this research are inconclusive so far as the value of a composition course at the junior year is concerned. (CK)

FINAL REPORT
Project No. 3177
Contract No. SAE-OE-6-10-099

INSTRUCTION IN COLLEGE FRESHMAN COMPOSITION

Ross M. Jewell, Director
John Cowley, Gerald Bisbey

University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

1970

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF
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THE PROBLEM

What would happen if "freshman" composition were changed to "junior" composition? Is there any discernible difference in the writing achievement of college juniors who have had composition instruction as freshmen, when some have had such instruction as juniors, and some have not had it at all? Project 3177 attempts to find an answer to this question.

This Project is an extension of Project 2188: The Effectiveness of College-Level Instruction in Freshman Composition, which involved five universities and was carried on at the University of Northern Iowa, and reported in 1969.[1] That study compared the scores of students who had completed freshman composition with those of students who had not been permitted to register for that course, over a two-year period. Two objective tests, Cooperative English Tests: English Expression and College Entrance Examination Board English Composition Test and a theme, which was a paper written within a two-hour period on a topic supplied by the investigators, were the criterion measures. The students were tested at the beginning and end of the first semester, at the end of the second semester, and at the end of the fourth semester. The scores of the two subgroups, those with freshman composition experience and those without it, were compared at each testing period; in addition gain scores were compared for the objective tests, and male and female scores were compared at each testing period for the total group and for each subgroup, including analysis by ability quarters, and by ability quarters by sex. In Project 2188 a matched pairs design was used: at the beginning, students were matched exactly on sex and theme score, within one year on age, and within three points on a combination of CEEB and COOP scores; that is, three points in a range of roughly 40 to 160 (sum of Z-score for each of the two objective tests).

Findings revealed that the scores of 597 students taking composition were significantly higher on COOP and theme, but not on CEEB, than those for the matched students not taking composition at the end of the first semester. Scores of the 365 students taking composition were significantly higher on COOP but not on theme or CEEB at the end of the first year. Scores for the 122 matched pairs persisting at the end of the second year were essentially the same for both subgroups at the end of the sophomore year. Females scored

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[1] Ross Jewell, John Cowley, and Gordon Rhum, Final Report, The Effectiveness of College-Level Instruction in Freshman Composition (Cooperative Research Project 2188), Cedar Falls, Iowa: University of Northern Iowa, 1969.

better than males on 53 of 54 testing occasions, significantly better on 35 of them. It was concluded: "that in investigations concerning competence in composition, the ratio between sexes must be taken into account in the groups whose performance is being studied."[2] Students in the lowest quarter of the control (composition) subgroup scored consistently higher on criterion measures than those in the lowest quarter of the experimental (non-composition) subgroup.

The present investigators realized, as they reviewed their plans for Project 2188, that there would be a number of students finishing their sophomore year of college, having been tested four times, who had not received instruction of the sort given in freshman composition. The opportunity thus presented, of dividing the experimentals from Project 2188 into two random groups and, on a chance basis, assigning one group to "junior" composition while keeping the other group out as experimentals, seemed too good, and too unique, to be ignored.

Project 3177 attempts, then, to determine the effect of "junior" composition by comparing the performance of those without freshman composition who were enrolled in a junior composition course with that of a similar group of students who did not receive composition instruction either as freshmen or as juniors. All of the universities which cooperated in Project 2188 were invited to participate in Project 3177, but only the University of Colorado accepted the invitation.[3]

PROCEDURE

Because of the much smaller numbers of students (caused partly by attrition and partly by the fact that the persisting juniors were divided into two groups), analysis of covariance was used in Project 3177 instead of the matched-pairs design. The analysis by covariance procedure provides control on pretreatment differences through statistical means rather than experimental. These statistical procedures include a "control" variable deriving from a test administered at the outset of the investigation and a "criterion" variable deriving from a test administered at the conclusion of the investigation. Statistically significant changes in the relationship between the

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[2]Ibid., p. 65.

[3]For a summary of related research, see Ibid., pp. 25-37.

performances of the groups on the tests at the two testing occasions provide evidence concerning the effect of the experimental procedures.

The total of 354 students who had been kept from taking freshman composition and who registered for the junior year at both universities (the first semester at one university and the second semester at the other) were divided into two subgroups on a chance basis. The procedure was to list the students' names, numbering them, and then employ a table of random numbers in assigning students either to the experimental subgroup (those who would not receive instruction) and the control subgroup (those who would receive instruction). As in previous selection procedures, males and females were selected separately.

Students assigned to the "junior English" treatment enrolled in special composition sections in the fall of their junior year. Instructors were told to conduct the class in a manner as similar to that in which they conducted their freshman composition classes as the maturity of the students permitted. Both these students and the "experimental" students were given the three tests--COOP, CEEB, and Theme--at the end of the junior semester in which the "control" students received instruction in composition. The data from this testing was used for the analysis which follows.

Reliability of Objective Tests[4]

Cooperative English Tests: English Expression. This instrument, published in 1960, is composed of two parts: "Part I: Effectiveness," thirty items; and "Part II: Mechanics," sixty items. The time limits are 15 minutes and 25 minutes respectively. A student's score is the total number of correct responses. This raw score is transformed into a Converted Score by means of a table provided by the publishers of the test. For Form 1A, the possible range in converted scores is from 115 (raw score of 0) to 191 (raw score of 90). For the two forms of the test (1A, 1B) recommended for use with college freshmen and sophomores, the investigators were able to find reliability evidence only for the twelfth grade level. The correlation between parallel forms was 0.84 and the standard error of measurement was on the order of 4.00 converted score units.

The College Entrance Examination Board English Composition Test. This is one of the CEEB achievement tests. Evidence about

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[4]This section is quoted from Ibid., p. 42.

the functioning of this instrument seems to be directly concerned with validity. This is reflected in one of the earlier reports on the instrument, which appeared with the title "Composition Test Shows High Validity on Reliable Criterion of Writing Ability."[5] The excellent 84-page report called The Measurement of Writing Ability[6] also dealt primarily with the validity of the College Entrance Examination Board English Composition Test (CEEB). It is realized that to achieve validity a test author must at the same time achieve reliability. A third source of information was The Sixth Mental Measurements Yearbook. Holland Roberts, one of the three reviewers of the test, commented on reliability: "For the composition test a Kuder-Richardson formula 20 reliability of 0.85 and a standard error of measurement of 39 is reported, indicating satisfactory discrimination among the members of the test group."[7]

ANALYSIS OF DATA

T_1, the subgroup which took no work in composition in the junior year, was designated the Experimental group. T_2, the subgroup which received composition instruction in its junior year, was designated the Control group. As indicated previously, membership in T_1 or T_2 was randomly determined.

A further division of T_1 into males (T_3) and females (T_5), and of T_2 into males (T_4) and females (T_6) continued the attention to performance by sex which was present in the initial study, Project 2188. The reader may find it useful to remember that groups with the odd-numbered subscripts (T_1, T_3, T_5) are experimentals; those with the even-numbered subscripts are controls.

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[5]"Composition Test Shows High Validity on Reliable Criterion of Writing Ability," ETS Developments, XI (January, 1963) 1 & 4.

[6]Fred Godshalk, Frances Swineford, and William E. Coffman. The Measurement of Writing Ability, New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1966.

[7]Holland Roberts, Sixth Mental Measurements Yearbook (a review of the CEEB English Composition Test), ed. Oscar K. Buros. Highland Park, New Jersey: Gryphon Press, 1965, p. 590.

The following listings specifically define each symbol used, each treatment used, each hypothesis tested, the control variable, and the criterion variable.

Symbols Used

T_1: Those students (male and female) labeled as "experimental" in Project 2188 who entered school in September 1966 as juniors and were excused from taking instruction in composition as juniors (Experimental).

T_2: Those students (male and female) labeled as "experimental" in Project 2188 who entered school in September 1966 as juniors and received instruction in composition as juniors (Control).

T_3: Male Experimentals.

T_4: Male Controls.

T_5: Female Experimentals.

T_6: Female Controls.

Hypotheses Tested

H_1: There exists no significant difference between T_1 and T_2 at the conclusion of the treatment period.

H_2: There exists no significant difference between T_3 and T_4 at the conclusion of the treatment period.

H_3: There exists no significant difference between T_5 and T_6 at the conclusion of the treatment period.

Control Variable

COOP administered in May 1966.

Criterion Variable

COOP administered at end of treatment period.

Analysis of Covariance

The H_1 hypothesis: This hypothesis states that there exists no significant difference between T_1 and T_2 at the end of the treatment period. This was refuted, using the COOP test as both the control and the criterion variable (see Table I). There was a significant difference.

TABLE I

COMPARISON OF GROUPS T_1 AND T_2 ON 1967 COOP SCORES USING ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

Sources	Degrees of Freedom	(Control) SS COOP 5/65	S (Products)	(Criterion) SS COOP 1/67	SSY (Adjusted)	Degrees of Freedom	MSY (Adjusted)
Between Treatments	1	1.24	-16.85	228.04	240.04	1	240.04
Within Treatments	227	12,949.59	4,561.06	13,066.95	11,460.47	226	50.71
Total	228	12,950.83	4,544.21	13,294.99	11,700.51	227	

Results of Test: F=4.7335 (significant at 0.05 level of significance).

Table II indicates that though there is a significant difference between T_1 and T_2, the difference arises from the T_1 adjusted Criterion mean decreasing while the adjusted T_2 Criterion mean remains essentially the same as the unadjusted criterion.

TABLE II

COMPARISON OF THE CONTROL, CRITERION, AND ADJUSTED CRITERION MEANS ON 1967 COOP SCORES

Means	T_1 (N = 86)	T_2 (N = 143)
Control (May, 1966)	169.70	169.55
Criterion (Jan., 1967)	166.02	168.08
Adjusted Criterion	165.99	168.10

When the analysis of covariance was repeated, using male students only, the hypothesis: there exists no significant difference between T_3 and T_4 at the conclusion of the treatment period, using COOP as both the control and the criterion variable, was also refuted (see Table III).

Table IV indicates that the significant difference between T_3 and T_4 is due largely to the greater decrease between the Control and Criterion means of T_3.

A test for the homogeneity of regression indicates that the F-ratio used for testing the H_2 hypothesis did not satisfy the F-distribution for the stated degrees of freedom.[8] There exists some evidence, however, that the F-ratio tends to be conservative when the assumptions underlying the covariance model are not met and thus would probably not affect this result ($F = 11.7+$).[9]

When the analysis of covariance design was applied to the female group to test the H_3 hypothesis: there exists no significant difference between T_5 and T_6 at the conclusion of the testing period, using COOP as both the control and the criterion variable, the null hypothesis was upheld (Table V).

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[8] E. F. Lindquist, Design and Analysis of Experiments in Psychology and Education (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1956), pp. 330-31.

[9] Percy D. Peckham, "The Robustness of the Analysis of Covariance to Various Regression Slopes," University of Washington. Paper presented at the Annual AERA Conference, 1970.

TABLE III

COMPARISON OF MALE GROUPS T_3 AND T_4 ON 1967 COOP SCORES USING ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

Sources	Degrees of Freedom	(Control) SS COOP 5/66	S (Products)	(Criterion) SS COOP 1/67	SSY (Adjusted)	Degrees of Freedom	MSY (Adjusted)
Between Treatments	1	76.92	256.58	855.88	680.12	1	680.12
Within Treatments	90	5,763.95	1,973.51	5,839.98	5,164.27	89	58.03
Total	91	5,840.87	2,230.09	6,695.86	5,844.39	90	

Results of Test: F=11.7211 (significant at 0.05 level of significance).

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF THE CONTROL, CRITERION, AND ADJUSTED CRITERION MEANS FOR TWO MALE GROUPS ON 1967 COOP SCORES

Means	T_3 (N = 30)	T_4 (N = 62)
Control (May, 1966)	167.03	168.98
Criterion (Jan., 1967)	160.30	166.81
Adjusted Criterion	160.75	166.59

The three hypotheses, H_1, H_2, and H_3, were again tested using the same statistical design, but with the CEEB test as the Control and Criterion variables. The null hypothesis, in all three analyses, was upheld (see Tables VI, VII, and VIII).

The test of homogeneity of regression did reveal a significant difference for the male group. It is doubtful, however, that a real difference exists between T_3 and T_1, considering that the F-ratio was quite small ($F = 0.80$) and the conservative tendency of the F-ratio when the assumptions of the design are not met.

The same analysis was used to test the three hypotheses again, this time using the Theme scores as the Control and Criterion variables. In all cases, the test upheld the hypotheses (see Tables IX, X, and XI).

Tables XII and XIII summarize the results obtained from testing the H_1, H_2, and H_3 hypotheses for each analysis, using the three Criterion and Control variables, i.e., COOP, CEEB, and THEME.

It is noted in Table XIII for the CEEB column that a difference of 14.42 score points exists between T_3 and T_4 for the male group. A similar difference is noted between the female groups (T_5, T_6), but in the opposite direction. Yet, no statistically significant difference was observed. Table XIV shows the large score variability for the CEEB variable, disclosing the apparent reason for no significant difference.

Table XIV summarizes the criterion score variability for each variable.

TABLE V

COMPARISON OF FEMALE GROUPS T_5 AND T_6 ON 1967 COOP SCORES USING ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

Sources	Degrees of Freedom	(Control) SS COOP 5/66	S (Products)	(Criterion) SS COOP 1/67	SSY (Adjusted)	Degrees of Freedom	MSY (Adjusted)
Between Treatments	1	43.76	1.05	0.03	2.52	1	2.52
Within Treatments	135	6,824.08	1,806.50	5,539.24	5,061.02	134	37.77
Total	136	6,867.84	1,807.55	5,539.27	5,063.54	135	

Results of Test: F=0.0667.

TABLE VI

COMPARISON OF GROUPS T_1 AND T_2 ON 1967 CEEB SCORES USING ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

Sources	Degrees of Freedom	(Control) SS CEEB 5/66	S (Products)	(Criterion) SS CEEB 1/67	SSY (Adjusted)	Degrees of Freedom	MSY (Adjusted)
Between Treatments	1	15,200.99	7,545.79	3,745.74	824.19	1	824.19
Within Treatments	231	1,713,018.17	1,250,987.24	2,048,290.51	1,134,716.38	230	4,933.55
Total	232	1,728,219.16	1,258,533.03	2,052,036.25	1,135,540.57	231	

Results of Test: F=0.1671

TABLE VII

COMPARISON OF MALE GROUPS T_3 AND T_4 ON 1967 CEEB SCORES USING ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

Sources	Degrees of Freedom	(Control) SS CEEB 5/66	S (Products	(Criterion) SS CEEB 1/67	SSY (Adjusted)	Degrees of Freedom	MSY (Adjusted)
Between Treatments	1	21,651.98	26,106.24	31,476.83	3,657.85	1	3,657.85
Within Treatments	92	706,160.37	556,768.95	857,443.64	418,461.67	91	4,598.48
Total	93	727,812.35	582,875.19	888,920.47	422,119.52	92	

Results of Test: F=0.7954.

TABLE VIII

COMPARISON OF FEMALE GROUPS T_5 AND T_6 ON 1967 CEEB SCORES USING ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

Sources	Degrees of Freedom	(Control) SS CEEB 5/66	S (Products)	(Criterion) SS CEEB 1/67	SSY (Adjusted)	Degrees of Freedom	MSY (Adjusted)
Between Treatments	1	4,859.84	-2,014.22	834.82	5,456.24	1	5,456.24
Within Treatments	137	930,447.91	602,823.38	1,076,222.49	685,662.17	136	5,041.63
Total	138	935,307.75	600,809.16	1,077,057.31	691,118.41	137	

Results of Test: F=1.0822.

TABLE IX

COMPARISON OF GROUPS T_1 AND T_2 ON 1967 TOTAL THEME SCORES USING ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

Sources	Degrees of Freedom	(Control) SS May, 1966	S (Products)	(Criterion) SS Jan. 1967	SSY (Adjusted)	Degrees of Freedom	MSY (Adjusted)
Between Treatments	1	2.03	-0.56	0.16	0.98	1	0.98
Within Treatments	235	1,614.76	675.07	1,613.87	1,331.65	234	5.69
Total	236	1,616.79	674.51	1,614.03	1,332.63	235	

Results of Test: F=0.1722.

TABLE X

COMPARISON OF MALE GROUPS T_3 AND T_4 ON 1967 TOTAL THEME SCORES USING ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

Sources	Degrees of Freedom	(Control) SS May, 1966	S (Products)	(Criterion) SS Jan. 1967	SSY (Adjusted)	Degrees of Freedom	MSY (Adjusted)
Between Treatments	1	11.11	16.86	25.58	17.45	1	17.45
Within Treatments	96	848.56	217.28	604.42	548.78	95	5.78
Total	97	859.67	234.14	630.00	566.23	96	

Results of Test: F=3.0206.

TABLE XI

COMPARISON OF FEMALE GROUPS T_5 AND T_6 ON 1967 TOTAL THEME SCORES USING ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

Sources	Degrees of Freedom	(Control) SS May, 1966	S (Products)	(Criterion) SS Jan. 1967	SSY (Adjusted)	Degrees of Freedom	MSY (Adjusted)
Between Treatments	1	15.01	8.77	5.12	0.04	1	0.04
Within Treatments	137	718.15	381.83	875.51	672.50	136	4.94
Total	138	733.16	390.60	880.63	672.54	137	

Results of Test: F-0.0082.

TABLE XII

SUMMARY OF RESULTS USING THE ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE APPLIED TO THE THREE HYPOTHESES

Group	COOP	d.f.	CEEB	d.f.	THEME	d.f.
Total	4.7335*	1 & 226	0.1671	1 & 230	0.1722	1 & 234
Male	11.7211*	1 & 89	0.7954	1 & 91	3.0206	1 & 95
Female	0.0667	1 & 134	0.0822	1 & 136	0.0082	1 & 136

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance.

TABLE XIII

COMPARISON OF THE ADJUSTED CRITERION MEANS FOR EACH OF THE VARIABLES

	COOP		CEEB		THEME	
Group	T_1	T_2	T_3	T_4	T_5	T_6
Total	165.99	168.10	535.97	532.05	9.13	9.26
Male	160.75	166.59	500.88	514.46	7.80	8.72
Female	168.91	169.19	556.95	544.14	9.79	9.76

TABLE XIV

COMPARISON OF THE CRITERION SCORE VARIABILITY FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

	COOP		CEEB		THEME	
Group	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.	Exp.	Cont.
Total	7.46	7.61	89.43	96.19	2.64	2.59
Male	6.74	8.50	72.57	104.54	2.44	2.50
Female	5.85	6.69	88.35	87.74	2.37	2.50

SUMMARY

The research attempted was to determine whether or not there was any difference between the scores of two groups of juniors, both of which had had no freshman composition instruction, but one of which had had composition instruction in the junior year and the other had not. Three measures, COOP, CEEB, and a theme, were administered at the end of the sophomore year and again at the time when those juniors who took a composition course as juniors completed the course. Comparisons were made between scores of the two groups (composition and non-composition); of the males of each group, and of the females of each group.

The results of the research were inconclusive. Of the nine test analyses (the two total groups, the males in each group, the females in each group on each of three tests), there was a significant difference in only two, both on the COOP test: (1) the juniors taking composition scored significantly better on the final testing on COOP than did those juniors not taking composition; (2) the junior males who had composition scored higher than the junior males who did not have composition. On the other seven test analyses, there was not a significant difference.

The following statements summarize the findings:

1. There was a statistically significant difference in favor of those juniors taking junior composition as measured by the COOP test. This resulted not from those having composition achieving a higher average score than before composition, but from their remaining about the same and the non-composition group decreasing in average score. The investigators cannot account for this.

2. There was a statistically significant difference in favor of the males taking junior composition over the males not taking composition as measured by the COOP test. This difference resulted also from the fact that the scores of those not taking junior composition decreased more than those of the group taking junior composition.

3. The significant difference referred to in 1. above is due to the male group. The difference in scores of the two female groups was so slight that most of the difference between the composition and the non-composition groups is accounted for by the males.

4. There was no significant difference between the composition and the non-composition groups, either as a whole, or as males, or as females as measured by both CEEB and a theme. The differences between the composition and non-composition groups on CEEB was large (12 for females and 14 for males), but that difference was not significant. The investigators cannot explain this.

The results of this research are inconclusive so far as the value of a composition course at the junior year is concerned. There seems to be no explanation for the drop in scores. Since the investigators are not in a position to assert that any one test of writing skill is better or more reliable than any other, the significant difference disclosed by one test cannot be used as the sole or the main determinant. On the other hand, those advocating that the junior year is a better place for composition than the freshman year cannot take much comfort from the results recorded here.

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APPENDIX

(Theme Instructions for May 1966)

THEME INSTRUCTIONS

1. The paper which you are about to write will be judged on your success in presenting your thoughts in a clear, unified, well-organized manner, observing the conventions of standard written English. You should think about the topic until you have determined what idea you want to convey to the reader and the general procedure you will follow in doing so. Then you may write your paper. Do not hesitate to make a brief outline if you desire to do so (use the back of this sheet). An outline is not required.

2. You should write as neatly and legibly as you can, but you should not hesitate to make changes between the lines if you believe them to be necessary. You do not have to copy the paper over.

3. WRITE ON ONE SIDE OF THE PAPER ONLY. If you need more paper, ask for it.

4. Begin on the third line of the first sheet, and WRITE ON EVERY LINE THEREAFTER.

5. You must write with INK or BALL-POINT PEN.

6. Be certain to write your STUDENT NUMBER in the blank provided at the top of this instruction sheet in the upper left-hand corner under the Total Score box. It should also be written on each page of your theme. Do NOT write your name, or the name of your school, in any place other than the blank provided at the bottom of this sheet.

7. Turn in all of the paper given to you.

8. You must stay at least one hour and fifteen minutes.

9. LENGTH: 300 - 500 words.

TOPIC

Conventional is a word frequently used to refer to customary attitudes, beliefs or actions. In the United States it is a convention for men to be clean-shaven, women to wear a certain amount of make-up, boys to be interested in sports, and girls to be interested in becoming wives and mothers. A person who is unconventional in some way departs from the conventions of action or belief of the society of which he is a part.

With this explanation in mind, discuss the following statement:

"Convention is society's safeguard, but also its potential executioner." To what extent and in what ways do you agree with this statement? Use examples and details from your knowledge and experience to support your conclusion.

(Theme Instructions for January, 1967)

THEME INSTRUCTIONS

1. The paper which you are about to write will be judged on your success in presenting your thoughts in a clear, unified, well-organized manner, observing the conventions of standard written English. You should think about the topic until you have determined what idea you want to convey to the reader and the general procedure you will follow in doing so. Then you may write your paper. Do not hesitate to make a brief outline if you desire to do so (use the back of this sheet). An outline is not required.

2. You should write as neatly and legibly as you can, but you should not hesitate to make changes between the lines if you believe them to be necessary. You do not have to copy the paper over.

3. WRITE ON ONE SIDE OF THE PAPER ONLY. If you need more paper, ask for it.

4. Begin on the third line of the first sheet, and WRITE ON EVERY LINE THEREAFTER.

5. You must write with INK or BALL-POINT PEN.

6. Be certain to write your STUDENT NUMBER in the blank provided at the top of this instruction sheet in the upper left-hand corner under the Total Score box. It should also be written on each page of your theme. Do NOT write your name, or the name of your school, in any place other than the blank provided at the bottom of this sheet.

7. Turn in all of the paper given to you.

8. You must stay at least one hour and fifteen minutes.

9. LENGTH: 300 - 500 words.

TOPIC

Thoreau, watching his neighbor plowing observed that the farm owned the farmer, rather than the reverse, as the farm demanded all of the farmer's time and energy. Noting other instances of a similar nature, Thoreau concluded:

"Things are in the saddle and ride mankind."

Today, in order to "own" automobiles, lawnmowers, homes, boats, and other things, many men are forced to "moonlight" and many wives to work.

Consider the contemporary situation from the point of view of Thoreau's statement. Form an opinion concerning the relationship of mankind to things. Then write a paper in which you give your opinion, supporting it from your own knowledge, experience, and observation.