The following suggestions will let you know what to expect during the Writeplacer, a computer-scored test that measures your writing skills.

You will have 70 minutes to write an essay that will be given a score from 0 to 8. A score of 5 or higher is required to be awarded Grade 12 English equivalency (grade C) at VIU.

Before starting the test, you may click on a link to a short tutorial on “How to take an essay test.” The tutorial will open in a new window. It will briefly explain how the essay is scored, and will also identify the parts of the Writeplacer. Pay attention to the location of the writing prompt. This is the question you will respond to when you write your essay.

Look for the timer in the upper right corner of the text box where you will type your essay. You are allowed up to 70 minutes for the Writeplacer, although you do not have to take the whole time. As soon as you finish the essay, and are happy with the finished product, press ‘submit’. DO NOT RUN OUT OF TIME!

The word count button is in the lower left-hand-side of the screen. Your goal is to write 600 words, with a minimum of 300 words for an acceptable essay. Be sure to allow 5-10 minutes at the end of your testing time to proofread and correct errors.

The essay should be 4-5 paragraphs long, with an introduction and a conclusion. We recommend that you plan your essay using the paper provided before starting to type. Your plan should include:

- The topic – to remind you what you are writing about.
- Your thesis statement – your opinion on the topic
- 2-3 arguments that support your thesis statement (one for each body paragraph)
- A strong concluding sentence

Choose a side
Answer the test question by choosing a side. Stick to your position and make sure everything you write relates to the topic and your view.

For example: If you are asked to write about if schools should require students to wear uniforms, focus only on your opinion about this topic.

Be clear about your thesis (main idea)
Write a sentence that includes your main idea (your answer to the question) and put it at the end of the first paragraph. For example: “I believe school uniforms would be better for students, their families, and the school community.”

Develop your topic
Write at least 3 examples to support your answer to the question (your thesis). Why did you choose that side?
For example: If your main idea is “Students should have to wear uniforms in school.”, then you might write about how students could concentrate on school instead of fashion, parents would save money on clothes, and nobody would judge someone else’s wealth or taste.”

Organize your essay
Write a 5 paragraph essay that includes:
- An introduction paragraph that includes a thesis statement
- 3 body paragraphs with your reasons and examples
- A conclusion paragraph restating your thesis

Videos about Writing Essays
How to Write an Essay video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYL4Gq9CQDo
Five Paragraph Essay video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MV2LVR4L_DExaid=PidhYWVQfI
ACCUPLACER Writing Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJZx5To04w