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# Language Arts–Writing

*HiSET*® Exam Free Practice Test FPT2

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## Directions

This is a test of some of the skills involved in revising written materials. There are three selections that present draft reports, letters, and articles. Each selection is presented twice, first in a box in a conventional format and then in a spread-out format with certain parts underlined and numbered. Read quickly through the boxed text to get an idea of its purpose and style. Then go on to the spread-out format.

For some of the underlined parts, there is no corresponding question in the right-hand column; instead just four alternatives are listed. Choose the alternative that

- makes the statement grammatically correct
- expresses the idea in the clearest or most appropriate way
- is worded most consistently with the style and purpose of the writing
- organizes the ideas in the most effective way

In some cases, there may be more than one problem to correct or improve. If you think the original underlined version is best, choose “No change.”

Other underlined parts have questions about organization or spelling in the right-hand column. In questions about organization, you will probably find it helpful to look at the boxed text. In the questions about spelling, you are to indicate which of three underlined words is misspelled, if any. If there are no errors in any of the words, choose “None.”

Work as quickly as you can without becoming careless. Do not spend too much time on any question that is difficult for you to answer. Instead, skip it and return to it later if you have time. Try to answer every question even if you have to guess.

Mark all your answers on the answer sheet. Give only one answer to each question.

If you decide to change one of your answers, be sure to erase the first mark completely.

Be sure that the number of the question you are answering matches the number of the row of answer choices you are marking on your answer sheet.

Language Arts – Writing

Part 1

Time—40 minutes

25 Questions

Questions 1 to 9 refer to the selection below.

Read through the draft report below on an influential twentieth-century literary figure. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

- 1 Today the works of African American author Zora Neale Hurston are widely studied in high school and college classes. Her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is now put in the category of a literary classic. During her lifetime, however, Hurston’s many works—seven books and over one hundred short stories, plays, essays, and articles—were controversial and subject to much criticism.
- 2 Hurston’s life is a story of optimism and creativity, traits she attributed to her childhood in the African American community of Eatonville Florida, where she grew up, in the early 1900s. As a child, Hurston loved the stories she heard relatives and townsfolk telling, and she became a skilled storyteller herself. When Hurston was thirteen, her mother died. During her high school years, she lived with a series of relatives. Having to work to support herself. She was eventually able to attend Howard University.
- 3 While Hurston was a college student, several short stories she wrote were published in a New York City magazine. She moved to Harlem with no money but plenty of hope, talent, and enthusiasm. In fact, in those days Hurston was as well-known for her flamboyant personality as for her writing. In the 1920s, she was a prominent figure in the African American cultural revival known as the Harlem Renaissance.
- 4 [1] In 1927, Hurston returned to Eatonville to collect from local storytellers the folklore she remembered from her childhood. [2] This folklore became the basis of much of her early work, in which she crafted true-to-life characters who spoke in the dialect of the region. [3] Yet many of her fellow writers did not view her work very favorably, criticizing it for not addressing issues of social injustice. [4] Although they received high praise from literary critics, Hurston’s books did not provide much income or remain in print long. [5] Hurston moved back to Florida eventually. She continued to write until her death in 1960. She lived simply, supporting herself through a variety of jobs.
- 5 In the late 1970s, Hurston’s work was rediscovered. Scholars increasingly recognized that her fiction uniquely captured the voice of the rural Black South, preserving an important time and place in African American history.

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and she became a skilled storyteller herself.  
When Hurston was thirteen, her mother died.  
During her high school years, she lived with a

1. A. (No change)  
B. good enough to be considered by some experts to be  
C. referred to by some who should know as  
D. considered
2. The writer is considering deleting the indicated information. Should the writer delete this material?  
A. No, because these details support the idea that some of Hurston's works are classics  
B. No, because these details help convey the scope of Hurston's work  
C. Yes, because there is nothing significant about the amount of work Hurston produced  
D. Yes, because these details distract from the focus on Hurston's work
3. Which of the following words, if any, is misspelled?  
A. (None)  
B. optimism  
C. creativity  
D. traits
4. A. (No change)  
B. Eatonville, Florida where she grew up, in  
C. Eatonville, Florida, where she grew up in  
D. Eatonville Florida where she grew up in

series of relatives. Having to work to support

5

herself. She was eventually able to attend Howard University.

- 3 While Hurston was a college student, several short stories she wrote were published in a New York City magazine. She moved to Harlem with no money but plenty of hope, talent, and enthusiasm. In fact, in those days Hurston was as well-known for her flamboyant personality as for her writing. In the 1920s, she was a prominent figure in the African American cultural revival known as the Harlem Renaissance.

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6

region. [3] Yet many of her fellow writers did not view her work very favorably, criticizing it for not addressing issues of social injustice.

5. A. (No change)  
B. relatives having  
C. relatives and had  
D. relatives. While she had

6. A. (No change)  
B. characters, they spoke  
C. characters and speaking  
D. characters, speaking

[4] Although they received high praise from literary critics, Hurston's books did not provide much income or remain in print long.

[5] Hurston moved back to Florida eventually.  
7

She continued to write until her death in 1960.  
7

She lived simply, supporting herself through a variety of jobs.  
7

8

7. Which of the following would be the best way to combine the indicated sentences?
- A. Eventually moving back to Florida and continuing writing, the rest of Hurston's life was lived simply and supporting herself through a variety of jobs until her death in 1960.
  - B. Moving back eventually to Florida and supporting herself through a variety of jobs, Hurston lived simply and also continued writing until her death in 1960.
  - C. Hurston eventually moved back to Florida, where she lived simply, supporting herself through a variety of jobs and continuing to write until her death in 1960.
  - D. Supporting herself through a variety of jobs, Hurston moved back to Florida eventually, living there simply and continuing to write until her death in 1960.
8. The writer would like to add the following information to paragraph 4:

Hurston's first book of Southern folklore, *Mules and Men*, is widely regarded as one of her most important contributions to the preservation of African American culture.

For the most logical organization of ideas, where should this sentence be placed?

- A. After sentence 2
- B. After sentence 3
- C. After sentence 4
- D. After sentence 5

5 In the late 1970s, Hurston’s work was rediscovered. Scholars increasingly recognized that her fiction uniquely captured the voice of the rural Black South, preserving an important time and place in African American history.

9

9. Which of the following sentences, added at the end of paragraph 5, would provide the best concluding sentence for the paragraph?
- A. In 2005, Halle Berry starred in a television movie version of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, which was nominated for several awards.
  - B. Her books are now back in print, and in Eatonville the Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts annually honors the memory and accomplishments of this significant writer.
  - C. Today, the Hurston/Wright Foundation, named after Hurston and noted African American writer Richard Wright, provides resources for aspiring Black writers.
  - D. Given the important literary contributions she made, it is a shame that Hurston, like Edgar Allan Poe, died poor and largely forgotten by the public.



Questions 10 to 17 refer to the selection below.

Read through the draft story below about an amusing experience. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

- 1 I'm sitting on the bench beginning to figure that I won't be pitching in our annual baseball game against Midtown. This is definitely the most competitive of all our rivalries with other schools. It's the last half of the last inning and we're ahead by one. Midtown is at bat with two outs—but with runners on first and second base. To my surprise, Coach tells me that "I should warm up just in case."
- 2 Ramon, our star pitcher, is tired and wants that third out. When he throws the next pitch, their batter swings wildly but somehow manages to connect. Like a rocket, the ball heads right for Ramon. He tries to grab it, but the ball ricochets off his bare hand. Now they have runners on all three bases, and we have an injured pitcher. Coach signals for me.
- 3 I walk slowly to the pitcher's mound, trying hard to look calm. In the bleachers, someone, probably my mother, is excitedly yelling my name. The catcher, Kevin, is trying hard to look confident. The umpire shouts, "play ball!"
- 4 I finally release the first pitch, and immediately trouble. The ball is hopelessly high. Kevin, making a great attempt to grab it, the ball goes past him. While Kevin goes after it, Midtown's runner on third base starts to run toward home plate, and so do I. Kevin throws the ball. Instantly it's in my glove, my glove's on the runner, and he's out!
- 5 Grinning from ear to ear, I display the ball to the crowd. Kevin keeps laughing about how I can't pitch and he can't catch. Coach doesn't seem to think this is such a humorous coincidence, but he does look relieved. Ramon takes his hand out of the ice bucket long enough to shake everybody's hand. Coach just winks.

1 I'm sitting on the bench beginning to figure that I won't be pitching in our annual baseball game against Midtown. This is definitely the **10** most competitive of all our rivalrys with other **10** schools. It's the last half of the last inning and we're ahead by one. Midtown is at bat with two outs—but with runners on first and second base. To my surprise, Coach tells me that "I **11** should warm up just in case." **11**

2 Ramon, our star pitcher, is tired and wants that third out. When he throws the next pitch, their batter swings wildly but somehow manages to connect. Like a rocket, the ball heads right for **12** Ramon. He tries to grab it, but the ball ricochets off his bare hand. Now they have runners on all three bases, and we have an injured pitcher. Coach signals for me.

3 I walk slowly to the pitcher's mound, trying **13** hard to look calm. In the bleachers, someone,

10. Which of the following words, if any, is misspelled?
- A. (None)
  - B. definitely
  - C. competitive
  - D. rivalrys
11. A. (No change)  
B. to warm up just in case.  
C. that, "just in case I should warm up."  
D. you should warm up just in case.
12. A. (No change)  
B. As a rocket,  
C. Similar to a rocket,  
D. Literally it was just a rocket,
13. A. (No change)  
B. mound and trying  
C. mound, and trying  
D. mound. Trying

probably my mother, is excitedly yelling my name. The catcher, Kevin, is trying hard to look confident. The umpire shouts, “play ball!”  
14

4 I finally release the first pitch, and immediately  
15  
trouble. The ball is hopelessly high.

Kevin, making a great attempt to grab it, the ball  
16  
goes past him. While Kevin goes after it, Midtown’s runner on third base starts to run toward home plate, and so do I. Kevin throws the ball. Instantly it’s in my glove, my glove’s on the runner, and he’s out!

5 Grinning from ear to ear, I display the ball to the crowd. Kevin keeps laughing about how I can’t pitch and he can’t catch. Coach doesn’t seem to think this is such a humorous  
17  
coincidence, but he does look releived. Ramon  
17  
takes his hand out of the ice bucket long enough to shake everybody’s hand. Coach just winks.

14. A. (No change)  
B. “Play ball!”  
C. “play ball”!  
D. “Play ball”!

15. A. (No change)  
B. with trouble noticeably on its way.  
C. and immediately I know we’re in trouble.  
D. followed by trouble on the way.

16. A. (No change)  
B. Making a great attempt to grab it, the ball  
C. While Kevin attempts grabbing it, the ball  
D. Kevin makes a great attempt to grab it, but the ball

17. Which of the following words, if any, is misspelled?  
A. (None)  
B. humorous  
C. coincidence  
D. releived

Questions 18 to 25 refer to the selection below.

Read through the draft letter below written by the girls on a softball team about the future of their sport. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

To the Editor:

- 1 For years Lincoln High has been trying with little success to develop a quality girls' softball team. There has been a number of ongoing problems with the softball program, but we think they can be solved if people are willing to take action.
- 2 The recent deficit in the school district budget has had a devastating effect on our program. Since girls can no longer play school-sponsored softball in middle school, they enter high school lacking basic skills. To make matters worse, since girls don't learn the sport in middle school, less are interested in it in high school.
- 3 Furthermore, our softball facilities are extremely inadequate. For example, our infield is too rough, our pitcher's mound is too high, and we don't have warm-up areas for the pitchers. I mean, how much more pathetic could it be! Other schools have become reluctant to compete with us because our facilities are so poor.
- 4 We have a few ideas that we think will help revitalize this practically nonexistent program. We will lobby the high school administration to direct a bigger portion of the athletics fund to girls' softball. We can also raise money ourselves by having car washes and raffles.
- 5 To try to get girls' softball reinstated in the district's middle schools, we plan to petition the school board to reconsider this issue. We hope that all students will sign this petition, which will be located on the north wall of the cafeteria for the next three weeks.
- 6 If everyone pitches in, softball at Lincoln High could again produce fine athletes and draw enthusiastic crowds. We've got to pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps!

Respectfully,

The remaining members of the Lincoln High Girls' Softball Team:  
Katie Brown, Keisha Hill, Tanya Jackson, Amy Lee, Melinda Martinez,  
Laurie Peters

To the Editor:

1 For years Lincoln High has been trying with little success to develop a quality girls' softball team. There has been a number of ongoing **18** problems with the softball program, but we think they can be solved if people are willing to take action.

2 The recent deficit in the school district budget **19** has had a devastating effect on our program. **19**

Since girls can no longer play school-sponsored **19** softball in middle school, they enter high school lacking basic skills. To make matters worse, since girls don't learn the sport in middle school, less are interested in it in high school. **20**

3 Furthermore, our softball facilities are extremely **21** inadequate. For example, our infield is too rough, our pitcher's mound is too high, and

18. A. (No change)  
B. have been  
C. was  
D. had been

19. Which of the following words, if any, is misspelled?  
A. (None)  
B. deficit  
C. devastating  
D. sponsored

20. A. (No change)  
B. few are  
C. less of them are  
D. fewer are being

21. A. (No change)  
B. In fact,  
C. Instead,  
D. Anyway,

we don't have warm-up areas for the pitchers.

I mean, how much more pathetic could it be!

22

Other schools have become reluctant to compete with us because our facilities are so poor.

- 4 We have a few ideas that we think will help revitalize this practically nonexistent program.

We will lobby the high school administration to direct a bigger portion of the athletics fund to girls' softball. We can also raise money ourselves by having car washes and raffles.

- 5 23 To try to get girls' softball reinstated in the district's middle schools, we plan to petition the school board to reconsider this issue. We hope that all students will sign this petition, which will be located on the north wall of the cafeteria for the next three weeks.

22. A. (No change)  
B. It couldn't be more pathetic!  
C. Talk about pathetic!  
D. (Omit this sentence.)

23. Which of the following sentences, added at the beginning of paragraph 5, would provide the best transition into the paragraph?
- A. New equipment, important though it is, will never be enough in itself for the team to succeed.  
B. There are other issues that are important to consider here.  
C. Without enough players or adequate training, there is really no point in trying to have a high school team.  
D. While adequate equipment and facilities are important, players with experience are also essential.

6 If everyone pitches in, softball at Lincoln High

could again produce fine athletes and draw

enthusiastic crowds. We've got to pull  
24

ourselves up by our own bootstraps!  
24

Respectfully,

The remaining members of the Lincoln High  
Girls' Softball Team:

Katie Brown, Keisha Hill, Tanya Jackson,  
Amy Lee, Melinda Martinez, Laurie Peters

24. Which saying is most appropriate for this paragraph and most consistent with the subject of the letter?

- A. (No change; best as written.)
- B. We can shoot for the moon!
- C. All we need is a little teamwork.
- D. Remember, when the going gets tough, the tough get going.

**Question 25 refers to the letter as a whole.**

25. The writers would like to include the following information in their letter.

Most female athletes pursue the sports that have benefited from the district's continuous support.

The best place to add this sentence would be after the last sentence in

- A. paragraph 2.
- B. paragraph 3.
- C. paragraph 4.
- D. paragraph 5.



**Language Arts – Writing**

**Part 2**

**Time—45 minutes**

**Directions**

This is a test of your writing skills. You will have 45 minutes to finish your response. Your response will be scored based on:

- Development of a main idea through explanation of supporting reasons, examples, and details
- Clear organization of ideas, including an introduction and conclusion, logical paragraphs, and effective transitions
- Language use, including varied word choice, varied sentence constructions, and appropriate voice
- Clarity and correctness of writing conventions



American folksinger Bob Dylan once said, “A person is successful if he gets up in the morning and goes to bed at night and in between does what he wants to do.” Do you agree with his statement?

Write an essay in which you explain how Dylan’s statement either does provide or does not provide an accurate description of success. Think carefully about what reasons will help others understand your perspective, as well as what examples and details you can use to support your argument.



# Writing Practice Test

## Part 1

### Answer Key

Question Number	Correct Answer	Question Difficulty	Question Type
1	D	Easy	Language Facility
2	B	Difficult	Organization of Ideas
3	A	Easy	Writing Conventions
4	C	Medium	Writing Conventions
5	C	Easy	Writing Conventions
6	A	Easy	Language Facility
7	C	Medium	Language Facility
8	A	Medium	Organization of Ideas
9	B	Difficult	Organization of Ideas
10	D	Easy	Writing Conventions
11	B	Medium	Writing Conventions
12	A	Easy	Writing Conventions
13	A	Easy	Writing Conventions
14	B	Medium	Writing Conventions
15	C	Easy	Language Facility
16	D	Easy	Language Facility
17	D	Medium	Writing Conventions
18	B	Difficult	Writing Conventions
19	D	Medium	Writing Conventions
20	B	Medium	Writing Conventions
21	A	Medium	Organization of Ideas
22	D	Medium	Language Facility
23	D	Difficult	Organization of Ideas
24	C	Medium	Organization of Ideas
25	A	Difficult	Organization of Ideas

# Writing Practice Test

## Part 2

### Scoring Your Essay

The Scoring Guide used for scoring essay responses is given below. One way to see how well you did on your essay in this practice test is to ask someone with experience in scoring essays to score your response using this scoring guide. We also provide sample responses to the practice prompt that have been scored by trained essay raters. You can compare your essay to these scored responses and estimate your score that way.

Please remember that you must achieve a score of at least 2 on the essay portion of the Language Arts – Writing test in order to pass the test as a whole.

#### Scoring Guide

1	<p><i>Essays at this score point show little or no skill in responding to the task.</i></p> <p>The response has little or no development. It may provide a few ideas but lacks explanation of ideas, only repeats ideas, or the ideas lack relevance. Organization is minimal. The response lacks an introduction and conclusion, and does not demonstrate any understanding of paragraphing. If transitions appear, their use is not controlled. Language control is minimal. Word choice and sentence structure are simple. Errors in sentence construction, pronoun use, verb forms, and/or spelling are frequent and may interfere with understanding.</p>
2	<p><i>Essays at this score point show minimal skill in responding to the task.</i></p> <p>The response demonstrates minimal development. It provides a few ideas but explanation is minimal or superficial and parts of the explanation may be repetitions or lack relevance. Organization is weak. There is minimal evidence of an introduction and/or conclusion. Some related ideas are grouped together, though paragraphing may not be used. If transitions appear, their use is not controlled. Beginning skill in language is demonstrated. Word choice is awkward and/or repetitive. The response has repetitive sentence structure and/or long, uncontrolled sentences. Numerous errors in sentence construction, pronoun use, verb forms, and/or spelling interrupt the flow of communication, and some errors may interfere with understanding.</p>
3	<p><i>Essays at this score point show limited skill in responding to the task.</i></p> <p>The response demonstrates limited skill in developing ideas. It maintains focus on a central idea through some of the response. The response provides several ideas with limited or uneven explanation, offering few or only general examples and/or details to support ideas. Organization demonstrates some developing skill. The response has an introduction and conclusion, though one or both of these may be over- or under-developed. Ideas are grouped together in paragraphs, though the relationship among ideas may at times be unclear. The response uses a few transitions between and/or within paragraphs to support coherence. Some developing skill in language is demonstrated. Word choice is general and the response demonstrates a little variety in sentence structure, although a few long, uncontrolled sentences may be used. Errors in sentence construction, pronoun use, verb forms, and/or spelling are present and may occasionally interfere with understanding.</p>

4	<p><i>Essays at this score point show adequate skill in responding to the task.</i></p> <p>The response demonstrates adequate skill in developing ideas. It maintains focus on a central idea, though there may be a few minor lapses. The response provides several ideas with adequate explanation, offering some specific and relevant examples and/or details to support ideas. The response demonstrates adequate skill in organization, with a clear introduction and conclusion that are somewhat developed. The response uses appropriate paragraphing and demonstrates some evidence of logical sequencing of ideas. Transitions are consistently used between and/or within paragraphs, though the transitions may be simple. Adequate skill in language use is demonstrated. Mostly specific and somewhat varied word choice is used. The response demonstrates control of sentences with some variety in length and structure. Voice is usually appropriate for audience and purpose. Some errors in sentence construction, pronoun use, verb forms, and/or spelling are present but do not interfere with understanding.</p>
5	<p><i>Essays at this score point show competent skill in responding to the task.</i></p> <p>The response demonstrates competent skill in developing ideas. It maintains focus on a clear central idea throughout the response. The response provides several ideas with complete explanation, offering specific, relevant, and somewhat elaborated reasons, examples, and/or details to support ideas. The response demonstrates some critical thinking by introducing and addressing complications of the issue and/or addressing counterarguments. The response demonstrates competent skill in organization. The introduction and conclusion are clear and generally well developed, and the introduction clearly sets up the rest of the response. Clear and appropriate paragraphing is used, with logical sequencing of ideas through most of the response. Varied transitions are used between and within paragraphs to support coherence. The response demonstrates competent skill in language. Word choice is usually precise and varied. The response uses well-controlled sentences that are varied in length and complexity. Voice is appropriate for audience and purpose. There are few grammar, usage, or mechanics errors, and most are superficial.</p>
6	<p><i>Essays at this score point show proficient skill in responding to the task.</i></p> <p>The response demonstrates proficient skill in developing ideas. It maintains focus on a clear central idea throughout the response. The response provides several ideas with effective and thorough explanation, offering relevant and fully elaborated reasons, examples, and/or details to support ideas. The response demonstrates strong critical thinking and insight by discussing complications of the issue and/or successfully addressing counterarguments. The response demonstrates proficient skill in organization. It has an effective, well-developed introduction and conclusion, with an engaging introduction that clearly sets up the rest of the response. Clear and appropriate paragraphing is used, creating a coherent whole. Logical sequencing of ideas is demonstrated throughout the response. Effective transitions are used throughout response to support coherence. The response demonstrates proficient skill in language. Word choice is precise, varied, and engaging. The response effectively varies sentence length and complexity. Voice is appropriate for audience and purpose, and enhances the effectiveness of the response. No errors or only a few superficial errors appear, and the response demonstrates sophisticated use of grammar, usage, and mechanics.</p>

## Scored Sample Responses

**Note:** All responses are reproduced exactly as written, including errors, misspellings, etc., if any.

Score = 1

I think it is a accurate description of success, because if you think about it he said "A person is successful if he gets up in the morning and gos to bed at night". To me thats pretty much saying if you get up in the morning, and get what you have to do that day done, then go to bed at night. He is pretty much saying that you can be successful if you wake up in the morning, and go to bed at night. I really like this statement because its real.

Score = 2

Many people have a distorted and selfish perspective of what success in life means. Some think either fame or riches is the messure of success. Some others beleave that just being able to do what you want to do is success. One example of this is singer Bob Dylan, who once said, "A person is successFull if he get up in the morning and goes bed at night and in between does what he wants to do." If we live by these standards, our life is wasted.

My messure of success is in the people around you. If others are helped or their lives enriched by your being alive then you are a success. If your life has ether a negative or no effect on others then you are not a Success.

Score = 3

I'm not much of a Bob Dylan fan But, I do however agree with this statement "A person is succesful if he gets up in the morning and goes to bed at night and in between does what he wants to do". When I first read this, My thoughts immediatly went to "oh he's just a singer what does he know?" But after analyzing this theory in my head it all started to make sense. I also cannot answer the question "is this an accurate description or not an accurate description of success. Everyone person has a different meaning of success. Even my description of success has changed over the past 20 years of my life.

I would think of myself very successful if I woke up every morning and teached gymnastics to kids who Love learning all the tricks. I also would consider myself very successful if I woke up everyday and made a lot of money even if I didn't like my job. But making money is something to enjoy.

I cannot speak for everyone, only for myself, but what is success?? Money? Love? Frennds? I think it depends on who your asking. To me success is just being healthy and happy with whatever you do.

I cannot agree or disagree on weather Mr. Dylans statement is an accurate or non accurate description of "success." Success is whatever you make of it.

Score = 4

American folksinger Bob Dylan once said “A person is successful if he gets up in the morning and goes to bed at night and in between does what he wants to do.” I personally agree with this statement and think that it does provide an accurate description of success based on the fact that if a person goes to bed knowing what they must do the next day they are prepared to wake up and pursue their goals.

I’m too young to have known Bob Dylan as a singer, but what I understand from this quote is that he believed that his success was based on that he was determined to do what must be done when he wakes up in the morning. Bob wasn’t saying to wake up and do whatever you want to do, but to do what needs to be done for a successful life and future.

When I wake up in the morning for the school day, it helps when I go to bed early and even go as far as making a list of things that I must do the next day to maintain my good grades. On the other hand, if I go to bed late at possibly eleven o’clock or later and I am unsure of the course of the next day, I tend to easily forget things because my mind is wandering.

I believe the most controversial area of this quote is possibly the part where it is said, “and does what he wants to do”. This could be perceived differently because with some people, if they did what they wanted all of the time and focused more on leisure activities than working toward a goal, things really wouldn’t tend to work out for their goals in the future. In another perspective, he may be saying that what someone really just wants to do is wake up, feel good, and put in a good day of work, because in the long-run it’s going to be the work and struggles that make you who you are and put you on the right path.

Based on his quote, Bob Dylan’s songs were probably inspiring. He sounds like a person that could be a hard-worker and someone who would have their priorities straight on the path to success.

Score = 5

American folksinger Bob Dylan once said “A person is succesful if he gets up in the morning and goes to bed at night and in between does what he wants to do.” I have a difficult time agreeing with this statement, there are several flaws in Dylan’s logic in my opinion.

To begin with, the statement is ambiguos. It could be taken to mean the person who does, literally, what they wish all day is successful. The run-of-mill person on the street would more than likely wish for nothing more than a relaxing day at home. This would be counter-productive, any measure of success requires hard work, whether you enjoy said work or not.

Dylan’s statement could also be interpreted to mean the person who enjoys their work is successful, which may be true, however more often then not in the capitalist society we live in success is measured in dollar bills, not in happiness. I am an artist and entertainer who does what I wish every day. By this dollar bill standard, I am extremely unsuccessful.

However I can understand how Dylan could have formed this opinion, being a truly successful entertainer by the dollar bill standard and his own. Unfortunately for the masses, this happiness standard of success is unrealistic. Not everyone can be a talented singer, actor, athelete, or artist. Most people have to work their fingers to the bone to achieve success, and even then dont do what they wish all day. However this opens the door for them to have days where they can truly be happy.

In my opinion Dylan’s statement is naive. As cynical as it may sound the statement should have been “A person is successful if they get out of bed in the morning, go to bed at night, and work hard so they can play hard in between.” This is my definition of success, putting your all into something and getting everything back. If you can achieve that, then you have looked into the face of success.

Score = 6

I absolutely agree with Bob Dylan's personal idea about what defines success in one's life. In a world where success is typically based on an individual's income level and material accumulation, I'd say Mr. Dylan's words are hinting at the often overlooked aspect of genuine happiness in the whole "success" equation. There are millions of so called "successful" people all over the planet, as defined by large numbers in their bank accounts, large houses, fancy cars, expensive clothes, and so on. But are these people truly happy? Are they fulfilled? Are they doing what they really want to do in life? Or are they driven only by the desire for more things in order to convince themselves that they have achieved success by society's standards? In my opinion, these are the real factors that determine if one is successful or not.

Bob Dylan states that if a person spends their waking hours doing what they want to do, then they are successful. From a personal standpoint, I can absolutely verify this as true. For instance, I was once employed at a local shop where I was not being challenged and didn't feel like I was helping anyone. But before I went to work each day, I'd play in my garden tending to flowers and vegetables while my 2 year old son ate peas right off the vine. After work, I'd come home in my less-than-pristine car to a delicious home cooked meal and smiling faces excited to greet me. I didn't make much money, but I considered myself a rich and successful man because of the heartwarming beauty my day was filled with. The job didn't matter. What I possessed didn't define me. It was what I did with the resources I had that gave me a feeling of success.

Flash forward a bit, and here I am now with a new job that feeds my soul and fulfills me more than I thought possible. I have a new house, new garden, and new car. My son's a little older, and our happiness has increased with the positive changes in our lives. I'm not making much more money, but I am still a rich and successful man; only moreso now because my job is exactly what I want to be doing in the world. It will never matter where I am, what I'm wearing, what I'm driving, or how big my house is. What matters is that each day I wake up, I am excited to be alive and grateful for all that I possess. I am happy. I am fulfilled. I am successful, and the stereotypical definition of success will never be able to touch the wealth I have accumulated. For it is wealth of the heart.

In conclusion, Bob Dylan's statement is dead on. Many beautiful words came through that man's mouth, and these ones are perfect in their simplicity. Though society will continue its pursuit of success through material ways, there will always be an ever-growing number of individuals that see the truth: It is not the physical riches you acquire in this life that will leave behind a legacy of success when you die, but the riches of your heart and how you shared them with the world.

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