

Directed Self Placement Essay Prompt, 2013

Read the article “Cheating Upwards” by Robert Kolker

Write a 4-5 page, double-spaced essay (1000-1200 words) in response to the following prompt:

In his 2012 article “Cheating Upwards,” Robert Kolker offers several views on why cheating appears to be on the rise in highly competitive U.S. educational institutions. Read this article carefully and pay close attention to the various perspectives it presents on why cheating has become so prevalent. Drawing on one or more of these perspectives, write an essay in which you take a position on why students cheat. You may supplement your argument with evidence from your own experience and/or other texts you may have read. Be sure to indicate the source for any textual evidence, aside from this article, that you use.

Your instructor for your first writing course will read this essay in order to learn about your writing, and to help you progress as a writer in college.

Most of the writing you will do at the University of Michigan will ask you to develop a clear position and to support that position using specific evidence. In writing this essay, it will be helpful to keep the following guidelines in mind.

- **Focus:** Your essay should be developed around a clear central thesis or argument, drawing on evidence from the article to illustrate or support your argument.
- **Structure:** Your essay should be clearly organized in a way that elaborates on and supports your own central thesis. Individual paragraphs should be cohesive, and your reader should be able to follow the logical progression of your ideas from one paragraph to the next.
- **Evidence/Analysis:** Make sure that you support your claims with well-chosen examples from the article and that you explain clearly how each example supports your points.

Kolker, Robert. “Cheating Upwards.” *New York Magazine*. 16 September 2012.