

SECTION A

A letter of critical reflection, addressed to the assessment reader, that discusses the contents of your portfolio. This letter must follow the following guidelines and must be at least 800 words.

The first section of your Writing Portfolio is a letter introducing yourself to the assessment committee and offering a critical self-assessment of your work as a writer during your first year at Spelman College. A portfolio is more than the sum of its parts; its real value lies in its ability to demonstrate the meaningful connections between its parts. Your reflective letter is your opportunity to articulate and deepen your readers', and your own, awareness of those connections.

Audience and tone. Address your letter to the assessment committee. The tone of your letter should be moderately formal. In other words, assume that you are addressing faculty, but do not feel you have to take a highly formal or distant tone. Write in the first-person singular ("I"). Be as candid and specific as possible.

Structure. The structure of your letter should be clear and simple. This is not an academic essay, so you do not need a thesis. If you wish, you may answer each of the questions in order. Please note the evaluation descriptors for this reflection letter in the rubric.

Content. It is fine to address topics not included in the following questions. However, do be sure that your letter, at a minimum, provides a full and detailed response to each of the following questions.

- During your first year at Spelman, how have you developed as a writer? What writing skills have you acquired that you will carry forward into future classes? Explain exactly how you acquired each skill you mention.
- Why did you choose the two essay/project(s) in Sections B and C? What do they demonstrate about you as a writer that you would like the assessment committee to notice? Be specific about what you accomplished in each of these essays.
- Which of the three pieces in your portfolio most engaged you as a writer? Why?
- During your first year at Spelman, what writing skills have you realized you need more work on? How will you get the ongoing support you need? Explain exactly how you plan to improve each skill you mention.
- How is writing and/or critical thinking relevant to you as a student moving into your major? How might one or both these abilities be relevant to you after you graduate?

Section B

Option 1

An essay written during your time at Spelman

Although this essay does not have to be centrally argumentative, a critical essay will still have a discernible thesis that takes a clear position, with strong topic sentences in each paragraph, that provide evidence and support for that thesis. A critical essay may inform (explain something), narrate (tell a story), or be reflective (recall a personal experience), but the focus of the essay should be a critical or argumentative position. This essay **may or may not** include research; however, if you do include sources, you must properly document the use of those sources. The essay must be 1,000 words or more.

Option 2

Students who do not have a traditional essay that fulfills Section B may select to fulfill the portfolio requirement by using a multimodal project/assignment created during your time at Spelman. This multimodal project must include text and visuals and/or text and audio. It should be a critically composed project that has been through a revision process. In addition to the project itself, **this multimodal project should be accompanied by a 500- to 1000-word process essay.** This process essay should answer the following questions:

- How did you define your objectives, identify your audience, and choose your research methods? What methods did you use to plan or gather the necessary information?
- What modes (e.g., visual, auditory, textual) and media (e.g., videos, podcasts, infographics) did you incorporate into your project? Explain why you have selected them.
- Describe your critical thinking process on this multimodal project. What decisions did you make on how to rhetorically represent your ideas?
- Describe the challenges you encountered, (technical, creative, or research-related) during the composition process and explain what strategies you used to overcome them.
- How did you evaluate the effectiveness of your multimodal project, and what feedback did you receive?

Section C

An essay written during your time at Spelman

Although this essay does not have to be centrally argumentative, a critical essay will still have a discernible thesis that takes a clear position, with strong topic sentences in

each paragraph, that provide evidence and support for that thesis. A critical essay may inform (explain something), narrate (tell a story), or be reflective (recall a personal experience), but the focus of the essay should be a critical or argumentative position.

This essay **must** include at least two outside sources and those sources **must** be properly documented. The essay must be 1,000 words or more.