Congratulations and welcome! At Curry College, we are committed to helping you to develop to your fullest and to ensuring that you can effectively express your intelligence and creativity in writing. In order to place you in a writing class that fits your needs, we need a sample of your writing that accurately reflects your writing ability. We are aware that this is a very busy time for you, so please don't spend more than a few hours on this task! Although there is no specific length for this Writing Assessment, the completed essay should be between one and two double-spaced pages of lined 8.5”x11” notebook paper.

It is extremely important for you to complete this writing task on your own and in your own handwriting. We ask you to take this assignment seriously and to return your Writing Assessment to our office within two weeks of downloading it. Try to put any insecurity out of your mind when writing this. Remember, many other students will be feeling nervous as well.

**ESSAY QUESTION:**
Please read the essay on the reverse side of this document, “What Is Intelligence, Anyway?” Think about the topic, organize your thoughts, and **handwrite** your essay on 8.5”x11” notebook paper. If you just can't seem to get your thoughts down smoothly and in an organized manner, that's ok. This is important for us to know. If spelling is a problem for you, it's ok to use a dictionary or to ask someone how to spell a word. Just write the most interesting and thoughtful essay that you can. You can't fail this!

You may be thinking, “But my handwriting is terrible. They won't even be able to read it,” or “I can only write on the computer!” If you would like to edit your essay on a word processor, feel free to use a computer. **PLEASE REMEMBER TO SEND YOUR NOTES AND OUTLINES OR MAPS WITH THE EDITED COPY, THOUGH.** Without all of this information, it's very hard for us to place you in an appropriate writing class. It's ok for your work to have self-corrections, erasures or to look messy, as long as it reflects your thinking and process. Be as creative and descriptive as you want, but please write the most organized and expressive essay that you can, and stick to the topic.

**AGAIN, PLEASE DON'T GET ANY HELP ON THIS FROM ANYONE** because it will affect the authenticity of your essay, and as a result, you may be advised into a writing class that is not designed to meet your writing needs. Remember, you've already been accepted into the College, and there is no reason to get any outside assistance. It's important for us to see work that's exclusively your own. Your writing teacher may get a copy of your essay, and s/he will assign you an in-class essay during your first class to ensure that an appropriate writing placement has been made. Writing class placements may need to be changed if the in-class essay and the essay written at home are substantially different.

When you have finished your Writing Assessment, please place the completed essay in an envelope, addressed to the Academic Enrichment Center–Writing Assessment, Curry College, 1071 Blue Hill Avenue, Milton, Massachusetts 02186, and drop it in the mail. Once the essay has been evaluated by our readers, your writing placement will be sent to the Academic Advising office. An advisor will build a class schedule with you when you attend Summer Orientation in June or Winter Orientation in January. All first-year writing courses, regardless of level, earn the same number of academic credits. Sometimes things get lost in the mail, so you should make a copy for your records!

**CALL US IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS**
Annmarie Koehler
Administrative Assistant
Academic Enrichment Center
Phone: (617) 333-2248
Email: akoehler@curry.edu

If you do not complete this Writing Assessment, you will not be allowed to take a writing course in the fall, which may put you behind in your program. All students are expected to start their writing course sequence in their first semester.

To ensure that we have the time to carefully read your essay, make an appropriate writing placement, and get this information to your advisor in a timely manner, we need your Writing Assessment to arrive within two weeks of your deposit. We'd appreciate your prompt response.
What is intelligence, anyway?  
Isaac Asimov

What is intelligence, anyway? When I was in the Army, I received a kind of aptitude test that all soldiers took and, against a normal of 100, scored 160. No one at the base had ever seen a figure like that, and for two hours they made a big fuss over me. (It didn’t mean anything. The next day I was still a buck private with KP as my highest duty.)

All my life I’ve been registering scores like that, so that I have the complacent feeling that I’m highly intelligent, and I expect other people to think so, too. Actually, though, don’t such scores simply mean that I am very good at answering the type of academic questions that are considered worthy of answers by the people who make up the intelligence tests—people with intellectual bentssimilar to mine?

For instance, I had an auto repairman once, who, on these intelligence tests, could not possibly have scored well, by my estimate. I always took it for granted that I was far more intelligent than he was. Yet, when anything went wrong with my car, I hastened to him with it, watched him anxiously as he explored its vitals, and listened to his pronouncements as though they were divine oracles—and he always fixed my car.

Well then, suppose my auto repairman devised questions for an intelligence test. Or suppose a carpenter did, or a farmer, or, indeed, almost anyone but an academician. By every one of those tests, I’d prove myself to be not very smart. In a world where I could not use my academic training and my verbal talents but had to do something intricate or hard, working with my hands, I would do poorly. My intelligence, then, is not absolute but is a function of the society I live in and of the fact that a small subsection of that society has managed to foist itself on the rest as an arbiter of such matters.

Consider my auto repairman, again. He had a habit of telling me jokes whenever he saw me. One time he raised his head from under the automobile hood to say, "Doc, a deaf-and-dumb guy went into a hardware store to ask for some nails. He put two fingers together on the counter and made hammering motions with the other hand. The clerk brought him a hammer. He shook his head and pointed to the two fingers he was hammering. The clerk brought him nails. He picked out the sizes he wanted, and left. Well, doc, the next guy who came in was a blind man. He wanted scissors. How do you suppose he asked for them?"

Indulgently, I lifted my right hand and made scissoring motions with my first two fingers. Whereupon my auto repairman laughed raucously and said, "Why, you … jerk, he used his voice and asked for them." Then he said, smugly, "I’ve been trying that on all my customers today." "Did you catch many?" I asked. "Quite a few," he said, "but I knew for sure I’d catch you." "Why is that?" I asked. "Because you’re so damned educated, Doc, I knew you couldn’t be very smart."

And I have an uneasy feeling he had something there.

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The Estate of Isaac Asimov
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Essay Question:

In this essay, Isaac Asimov challenges us to think about the nature of intelligence by poking fun at himself and by marveling at the abilities of his auto repairman. We would like you to answer the following question in an essay that is at least one 8.5”x11” notebook page in length. Please do not get any assistance with this.

Is there someone in your life who you feel is particularly “intelligent”? Please describe the nature of his or her intelligence and use concrete examples to illustrate and develop your thesis. Also, in your response, cite specific points from the Asimov article to support your thesis.
Dear Student:

Thank you for participating in the Curry College Writing Assessment. As you can imagine, we find it much easier to place students into first-year writing courses based on examination of their written work as opposed to a standardized test score. Each essay is read by multiple expert readers in order to determine the appropriate first-year writing course for you, with the goal of finding the best possible course to support each developing writer.

Your placement essay is one of the first pieces of your academic record at Curry College, and we take placement seriously. Your participation and signature below help us verify that your work is your own. Once you have completed the essay, read the statement below, fill in the appropriate information, and sign and print your name indicating that the work you are submitting is completely your own.

*I hereby certify that the essay I am submitting to Curry College is my own ideas and words. I received no outside help with this essay.*

Last Name__________________________________ First Name________________________________

Signature___________________________________ Date________________________________________