

2012

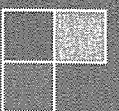
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 30-1

Part A: Written Examination Prep



@mrbonner
#BonnerPrep

MR. T. BONNER
FCHS/AHSFA



PART I: DIPLOMA EXAMINATION OVERVIEW

What to Expect in Part A?

Mr. T. Bonner



OVERVIEW

Overview of the English 30-1 Part A: Written Examination

What are my tasks?

There are two different types of responses you will on your Diploma exam.

- **Task 1: Personal Response to Text (PERT)**
- **Task 2: Critical/Analytical Response to Literature (CARL)**

The critical/analytical essay corresponds to the major assignment on the diploma exam, and the response corresponds to the minor assignment.

Remember, no matter which type of response you are creating, the main point of any literary work is to demonstrate an understanding of the literary theme. Your goal should be to show insight into the literature to which you are referring for *either* type of response.

Overview of English 30-1 Diploma Exam

- You have three hours to complete two, thematically linked, written responses worth 50% of your Diploma exam mark.
- You should flip through the entire exam before you read in detail or begin to write. Begin with your PERT if you are writing a CPU (as it will help you clarify your understanding of the topic, and general clarity in regards to the use of text in the CARL), write the CARL Essay first if you are writing a Creative/Personal (as this does not help warm you up to the topic, and for time reasons).
- You **SHOULD** bring a dictionary and thesaurus. You can bring a writer's handbook; however, if you do not use one regularly it will prove more of a distraction. **ASK ME ABOUT THE POST-IT NOTE TRICK.**
- If you are using a computer for your Diploma you have access to the word processing tools (spell-check and thesaurus are likely disabled, turn them on, or simply use them manually).
- No one besides the exam creator knows the exam topic in advance. It is a secured exam.
- Your responses are marked by 4 different markers. The PERT is marked first by a set of two markers, and then the CARL is marked by a different set of two markers. If there is a large discrepancy between these groups of markers, or the total mark on the written section is more than 8%, it will be marked again a third reader.
- Once you receive your marks, you may have your written work rescored, but you must keep the new mark. It does not usually change substantially, since the new marking system was implemented.

Personal Response to Text Assignment (20%)

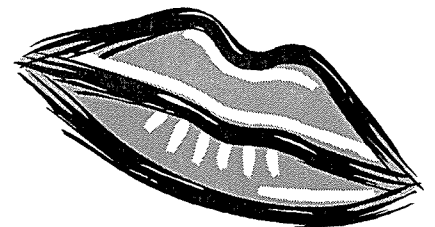
- ✓ Plan to spend 1 hour to 1 ¼ hours (this will vary from the time recommended on the actual exam instructions)
- ✓ You are assessed on your ability to **read and interpret literature** and create a response in a **format of your choice** that conveys your skills as a writer and the degree that you have “**read and actually thought about the topic.**” This understanding of the topic is developed through the creation of a unified idea with supporting evidence.
- ✓ You should spend approx. 15 minutes reading the texts provided and brainstorming/planning your response. It is apparent when students have not fully read the text provided and when the ideas are not planned out.
- ✓ Your response must be in **prose form.**
- ✓ The **Initial Planning** section on the exam should be completed AFTER you have written the response. Use it to constructively and to clearly indicate your use of text, format choice and thesis relevant to the topic. Markers are instructed to read these planning pages.

Critical Analytical Response to Literature (30%)

- ✓ Plan to spend 1 ½ to 2 hours (again, this will vary from instructions provided on the exam).
- ✓ You are assessed on your understanding of **ONE text studied in your ELA 30-1 class** in terms of you are able to apply that text to the assigned topic. Text is any full-length literary work studied in the course (short story, play, film, novel) and will take the format of a critical analytical essay. You are not expected to use quotations, although if memorized, and appropriate, they will add to the precision of your use of text. You are expected to know explicit details of the exam to indicate understanding and provide support for your thesis.
- ✓ You should spend a minimum of 15 minutes **brainstorming and planning/outlining** your response.
- ✓ Your response must be in essay format – **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- ✓ The **Initial Planning** page should be used to clarify for the marker the text used as well as the thesis for your response.

The “General” Kisses of Death

- × Non-prose forms (Poems, Drawings, in either response)
- × Using the wrong texts on the PERT or CARL
- × Writing on Something that you have just read, or worse, just viewed
- × Writing on Multiple Texts
- × Notes to Markers
- × Pleas for Help
- × Rants on the pointlessness of the Diploma
- × Poor Clerking



PART II: PERSONAL RESPONSE TO TEXT

Task #1

Mr. T. Bonner



PERT

The PERT and YOU: A Step by Step Approach

Preamble:

In a personal response to text essay the writer may choose to respond “using a personal, creative, or analytical (critical) perspective. You may keep the format of the essay critical, in which the pieces of literature presented are analyzed. The writer will also relate their own experience as it relates to the material provided using emotional and sensory detail as support.

Critical: The most analytical approach, dissect and uncover the meaning of the story by explaining and interpreting the characters, plot, symbolism, etc...

Personal: Relate the themes of the text to personal observations and interpretations

Creative: Using a creative approach, illustrate the facts and themes of the story; this is often considered an indirect approach to personal response.

However, you are required to respond to the topic and at least one of the texts provided.

The format of a personal response is much the same as any other written response; you state your idea and then you defend the idea with details from the text. Ultimately, you really have one of 3 choices:

- Critical/Personal Commentary (CPU Response)
- Creative Response (Narrative or Script)
- Personal Response (If desperate)

WHEN READING A TEXT, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS...

- ✓ What ideas, feelings or impressions does the text communicate to me about the topic?
- ✓ What details in the text create and convey these ideas, feelings or impressions?
- ✓ How does a character transformation support, or not support this thematic idea?
- ✓ What have I experienced or learned that is relevant to my ideas, feelings, or impressions of the topic?
- ✓ What ideas and support will allow me to compose the most effective response to the topic?
- ✓ How might these texts relate to one another, my ideas, and the topic?

What ideas and impressions does the text suggest to you? Consider the context, and develop your response by referring to the text.

- ✓ In your writing you should...
 - ✓ Select one of the above prose forms that is appropriate to the ideas you wish to express, that will enable you to effectively communicate to the reader, and based on your unique skill set.
 - ✓ Discuss ideas and impressions that are meaningful to the text and you.
 - ✓ **Consider how you can create a strong unifying effect (theme).**
-

THE PERT TOPIC

What do these texts suggest to you about _____? Support your idea(s) with reference to one or more of the texts presented and to your previous knowledge and/or experience.

EVALUATION (SEE APPENDIX FOR RUBRIC):

A. Ideas & Impressions:

- The personal response develops YOUR ideas on the topic presented
- The depth and insight you develop about the topic
- The detail and thought you put into responding to the topic
- Support for the text(s) is evident and incorporated effectively and smoothly
- The evidence that you have chose has been carefully selected to develop and enhance your ideas as opposed to just ‘getting a quote in there’

B. Presentation:

- Successfully choose a style you are comfortable/confident with – DON’T write in a style that you know very little about!
- You successfully create a voice.
- All ideas are unified
- Stylistic choices are considered and polished – sentence construction, word choice, emphasis of certain words ideas, punctuation, etc.

<u>PERSONAL RESPONSE RUBRIC</u>	5	4	3	2	1
Ideas & Impressions	Perceptions are insightful and carefully considered. Support is precise, purposefully chosen, and strongly connected to the ideas and impressions.	Perceptions are thoughtful and considered. Support is relevant, detailed, and clearly connected to the ideas and impressions.	Perceptions are appropriate but may be generalized. Support is adequate and generally connected to the ideas and impressions.	Perceptions are superficial or ambiguous. Support is imprecise, unclear, and /or vaguely connected to the ideas and impressions.	Perceptions are underdeveloped or incomprehensible. Support is lacking, inappropriate, or unrelated to the ideas and impressions.
Presentation	5 Voice is engaging and the tone is confident. Stylistic choices are precise and effective. The writing is skillfully developed and the unifying effect is confidently sustained.	4 The voice is distinct and the tone is well considered. Stylistic choices are specific and frequently effective. The writing is coherently developed, and the unifying effect is capably sustained.	3 Voice is matter-of-fact and the tone is appropriate. Stylistic choices are adequate and occasionally effective. The writing is generally clearly developed, and the unifying effect is appropriately sustained.	2 Voice is inconsistent and/or the tone is inappropriate. Stylistic choices are inappropriate, imprecise, and often ineffective. The writing is unclearly or incoherently developed, and the unifying effect is not sustained.	1 Voice is confused and/or there is no discernible attempt to address the intended audience. Stylistic choices are ineffective and/or impede communication. The writing is ineffectively developed, and /or a unifying effect is absent.

THERE ARE **FOUR STEPS** TO FIGURE OUT BEFORE YOU BEGIN WRITING...

1. What is the **TOPIC** asking me.
2. The **THEME** of the text (What is the main idea, impression or point that you are trying to make?)
3. The **SUPPORTING DETAILS** from the text (how are you going to prove or support the point you are trying to make?)
4. A **PROSE FORM** (What is the prose form your response will take):

When considering the prose form that will best communicate your ideas, ask yourself the following questions:

- ✓ What prose form will allow me to communicate my ideas and impressions most effectively?
- ✓ What prose forms have allowed me to communicate successfully in the past? Have I been able to master a creative approach? Are my skills better suited to a personal or analytical composition in the context of a timed test?
- ✓ How can I use language and develop my ideas to make my writing communicate effectively?

STEP #1: Dissection of the Topic (THE MOST CRUCIAL STEP IS HERE).

It could be this bad

Discuss the ideas developed by the text creator in your chosen text about **the interplay of fear and foresight when making life-altering decisions.**

We will come back to it. Let us use a different one.

Discuss the ideas developed by the text creator in your chosen text about **the ways in which individuals struggle to restore honour and certainty.**

The Process NOTES:

Planning a Thesis

What is a Thesis Statement?

Remember that in a literary essay, you are asked to make a debatable claim to demonstrate your insight given a specific topic or an essential question. Your claim needs to make an 'aha' rather than a 'duh' observation.

On the diploma exam, you will be given a topic that is general, broad and can be related to a variety of texts. Here are a couple of examples:

- *Discuss the ideas developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the ways in which individuals struggle to restore honour and certainty.*
- *Discuss the ideas developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the ways in which individuals strive to express their ideal selves.*
- *Discuss the ideas developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the ways in which empathy is significant to developing personal growth.*
- *Discuss the ideas developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the importance of forgiveness.*

- Your thesis is the statement of the central idea that you are proposing to support, prove, or develop in the rest of your essay.
- The thesis statement usually appears near the beginning of the essay so that the reader is clear about what central idea the essay will be exploring.
- A good thesis statement clearly indicates that you understand the assigned topic, and it clearly suggests what the rest of the essay will be about.

Step One

- a. Underline the key words (See Dissection above)
Ex. (honour/certainty) and (struggle to restore)
- b. Develop your own interpretation
 - o How will you describe each thematic word?
Ex. how will you describe honour? How will you describe certainty?
 - o How will you address the concept of restoration?
 - o How will you 'massage' your interpretations with your chosen text?

Step Two

Change the given topic into a statement that you can relate to with a specific text.
How/Why/When (under what circumstances) do / does (name character/s) struggle to restore honour and certainty in author's (name text)?

Step Three

Brainstorm a subset of questions As you do so, think of possible answers. Let your imagination roam over all possible questions:

- How is honour and certainty compromised in the play?
- How does / do the character/s display / interpret honour and does this interpretation change throughout the course of the text?
- How does / do the character/s display / interpret honour?
- How does / do the character/s display / respond to certainty?
- Which character's (or characters') responses best demonstrate the struggle with compromised honour and / or certainty?
- What is the nature of the character's (or characters') struggle (internal/external)?
- How does the character (do the characters) of your choice attempt to restore honour and certainty?
- Is honour and certainty restored in the end by the actions of your character(s) and if so how?

Formula for Thought (When in doubt, try this)

Think about it this way:

By looking at ____, we see that ____ (unique insight) which is significant because ...

Consider:

whether your statement implies cause and effect (a 'leads to' statement), makes connections or comparisons (an 'is' statement) or comments on a theme related to the prompt.

3 Easy Steps

Step I: **Broaden the Topic Concept** (List synonyms for the topic word(s))

Step II: **Relate the Character(s) to the topic** (How does the topic affect the character? How does the character relate to the topic?)

Step III: **Result for the character(s)** (What is the ending or result for the character(s)?)

To write the thesis statement. Put the three steps together. Consider: how does the character relate to the topic idea and what is the result for the character?

Step Four Blueprinting

- look for patterns in your brainstorming to help you establish a claim with the potential for debate
- find **specific events** to support your arguments

Step Five

Write your thesis

Remember that a good thesis does not only present your claim, but it also suggests the structure of your paper. The thesis should allow the reader to imagine and anticipate the flow of your discussion.

Your statement should:

- State the topic
- State your insight/interpretation/claim
- Refer the text if you have not already done so in your introductory paragraph
- State specific character(s) involved
- Suggest a sequence of points that logically prove the essay's main assertion
- Be expressed in the present tense

Thematic Thesis Statement Notes

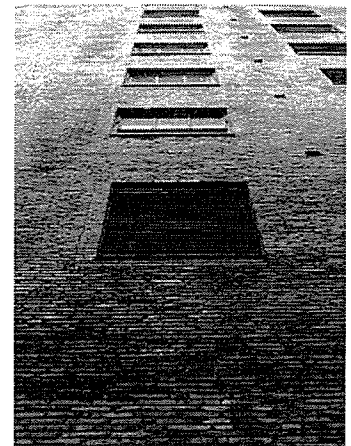
The student should be led to discover that some interpretations are more defensible than others. A complex work...offers the basis for various interpretations; yet their acceptability will depend, first, on whether they take into account as many as possible of the elements present in the text, and second, on whether they do not imply elements that are not present in it.

Rosenblatt, L.M. Literature as Exploration. P. 115

What is Theme?

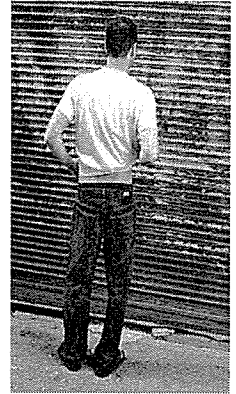
Human nature, at its simplest, contains a minimum of two sides or aspects (example: good and evil, selfishness and altruism). Real people, however, are complex and exhibit often contradictory motivations and behaviors. Not surprisingly, then, fictional story characters may also behave in ironic ways or reveal contradictory or conflicting sides in their attitudes and behaviors.

Story protagonists often face difficult choices. Sometimes they choose well and succeed or, in some cases, survive a crisis. Other times, they make poor choices that don't work. Leading to failure, unhappiness, and even destruction. In any case, protagonists by the end of the story arrive at an understanding of something – some general truth about life – from the experience of their conflict. If at the end they have been rendered unable to reach this understanding, then an alternate character, or even the reader, is left to learn from their experience. Everyone can appreciate lessons of life, the truths, that emerge from the triumphs and failures of story character's experiences. Such truths, expressed as unifying generalizations about life, are referred to as theme.



Principles for Stating Themes

The truth about life that a story projects can often be expressed in a theme statement. A theme gives the story a kind of unity; a reader's theme statement identifies the reader's understanding of that unity.



1. There is no set method for determining theme. Sometimes we may discover theme by examining:
 - (a) the way in which the main character has changed or what s/he has learned
and/or
 - (b) the nature of the central conflict
2. Theme must be expressed in the form of a statement (a sentence or several sentences). Single words, such as "guilt," or phrases, such as "appearance versus reality," are topics. The theme is the author's ideas about the topic. It is useful to identify several topics introduced by the text and then determine what the author argues about this topic.
3. A theme is a generalization about life. The characters in the text are not mentioned by name. Words such as the following are useful when writing theme statements: people, a person, individuals, an individual, someone.

WARNING: A theme should not be so general that it says nothing.

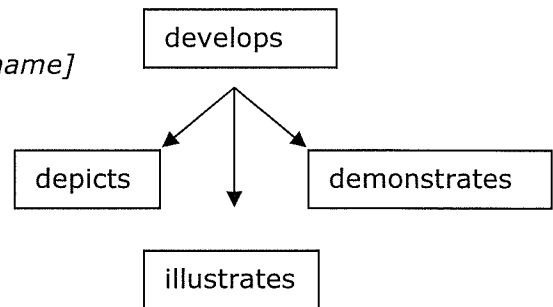
Ex: "The effects of risk taking can be positive or negative" is so broad that it says very little.

HINT: To overcome this, ask the question: in the text what are the positive effects of risk taking, and what are the negative effects of risk taking? Or ask, why is risk taking positive, and why is risk taking negative?

4. The theme statement should be worded as a generalization about life, one that is true to the character(s) in the story and must account for all the major details in the story, and is at the same time true to life beyond just the story situation. Specific details can be listed to support the theme even though they are not part of the theme statement. To be accurate, the theme statement both must hold true for all the major details of the story, and must not be contradicted by any detail of the story.
5. Avoid absolutes and sweeping generalizations. Words to be avoided include the following: all, every, always, and never. In other words, never say "never." Instead, try words and phrases such as the following: usually, sometimes, frequently, most of the time, often, hardly ever, rarely, etc.
6. The theme should not be reduced to a cliché, or trite, overused saying/moral, such as "don't judge a book by its cover." While such expressions may initially appear to capture some kind of a truth, they often overlook the many complexities that are part of the story's particular truth. They are typically trite and uninformative, and demonstrate no serious thought. As a result they risk missing the story's subtleties.
7. Usually, a well-written text has more than one topic and more than one theme.
8. It is useful to mention the title, author, and genre of a text in a theme statement.

Ex: In the [genre] [title]," [the author's full name]
the idea that ...

In [author's name](s) [genre] [title],
he/she develops the idea that..."



A THEME STATEMENT SHOULD BE ORIGINAL, CONCISE, THOUGHTFUL ANALYSIS OF STORY MEANING AND PURPOSE THAT CAN BE DISCUSSED AND VERIFIED WITH APPROPRIATE REFERENCE TO STORY CHARACTERS AND EVENTS.

TITLE RULE: Major texts are underlined or *italicized* **NEVER** (do this either) both, and minor texts are in "quotation marks."

YOUR ABILITY TO DO WELL ON THIS EXAM BOILS DOWN TO YOUR ABILITY TO COME UP WITH GOOD THEME STATEMENTS!

PLANNING

SECTION	DESCRIBE THE SECTION IN ONE SENTENCE	PROVIDE 3 EXAMPLES FOR EACH SECTION • Dialogue or Narrative; • Symbols (most powerful of any example) • Provide page #'s
<p><u>BALANCED STATE:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BALANCED STATE is when all acting influences on a character are minimized to create a stable, balanced and mostly unchanging life. • It is the character's comfortable way of life before the conflict is introduced; it is important to note however, that in some cases the character may not be happy in this state, but they have learned to accept this Balanced State life. • It is the character's background information: the previous history of characters, flashbacks, the relationship between/among characters, or the setting. • It can be internal force. 		
<p><u>CONFLICT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the person or force which disrupts the character's balanced and stable existence. • The character is thrown into a crisis, and must make a choice about how to deal with the conflict. What are the character's choices? • Can be the external force. 		
<p><u>RESOLUTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the character responds and deals with the conflict; essentially, what choice do they make? • What factors influence the character to make the choice they do? • What effect does the situation have on the character, or how does the character change? • Which force triumphs? • What theme emerges out of the resolution? 		

NOTES:

Style #1

CRITICAL PERSONAL COMMENTARY

CPU

Critical/Personal/Universal Response

*THIS IS YOUR "GO TO" RESPONSE STYLE – IT IS SAFE,
EFFECTIVE, AND THE ONE YOU DEFAULT TO.*

PERSONAL RESPONSE TO TEXT: CPU FORMAT

CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING PARAGRAPH MODEL

Your *Theme Statement* is referenced here.

This section is intended to explore the theme as presented in the text studied.

You need to discuss what is happening in the text, and examine / provide details that support your thematic understanding of the text.

PERSONAL CONNECTION PARAGRAPH MODEL

This section is intended to explore how a personal event also proves your selected theme.

Your personal connection must have the following elements:

- A personal story that is easily related to the subject of the text.
- The connection to your specific theme (*How does the story prove the theme?*)
- The personal experience does not have to model the events of the source text. Rather, it should further develop the same thematic understanding as that of the text.

UNIVERSAL UNDERSTANDING PARAGRAPH MODEL

This section expresses a "big world"—global—understanding of the topic and encourages others to consider the ideas being expressed—and perhaps you even convince the reader to adopt your ideas as their own. The comparison you present is an image that will linger with the reader long after they have read your piece.

Your section needs to:

- Answer the big question: So what? What does this mean for all of us?
- You must use a metaphor in this paragraph and explain its connection to your big idea / theme.

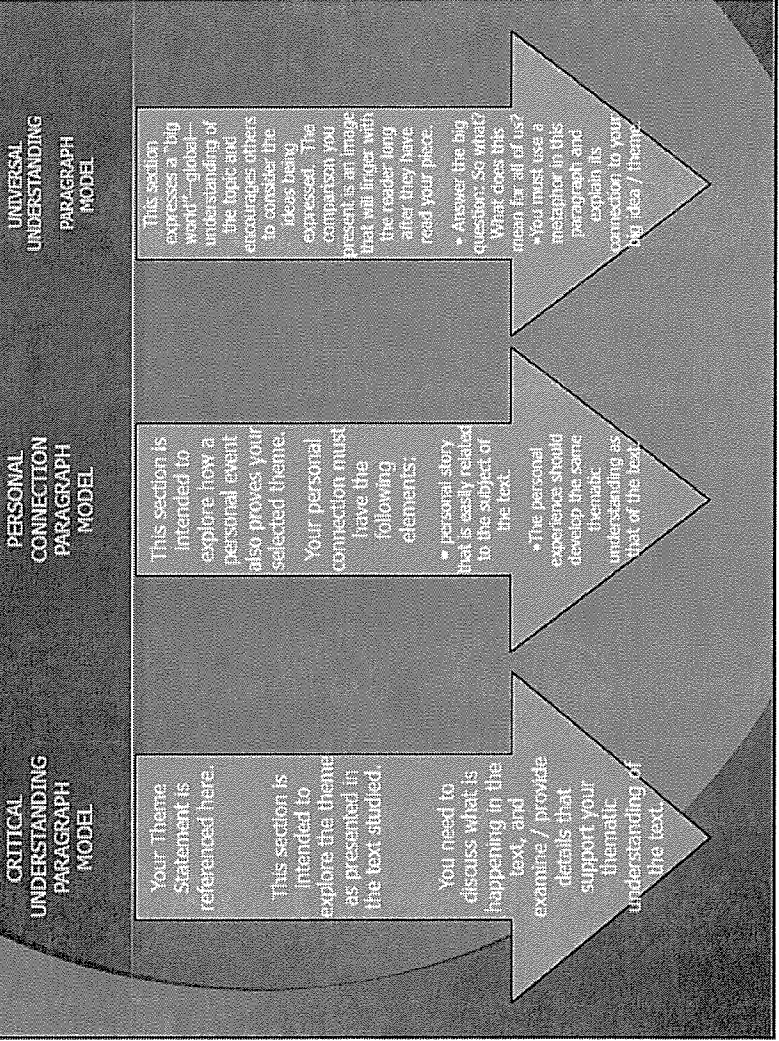
THE CRITICAL SECTION SHOULD BE THE LONGEST (1 Full Page, ½ page for each of the other two sections)

Critical Personal Universal

One style of a personal response is a CPU essay. A critical/personal/universal essay combines on paragraph of critical analysis with a paragraph of personal connection and finishes with the universal application of the theme statement.

Critical Personal Universal

- in your introduction: theme statement; text discussed; overview of main points.
- in your critical paragraph: give specific evidence from the text to support your theme statement.
- in your personal paragraph make a connection to your theme statement.
- conclude with a universal application of the theme statement



Attaining Independence in Personal and Critical/Analytical Response

Response to literature is not an end in itself. We teach students the skills and strategies of response in order to enable them to better understand increasingly complex story texts. We teach them to answer certain kinds and levels of questions so that they might in time internalize those questions, and the associated *patterns* of questioning, which they must engage in order to attain sophisticated understandings. Essentially, we want students to develop independence in making meaning of text.

The following three-part, open-ended process offers students a format within which to engage in such response. Students react to a story *on their own terms*: they begin with those elements that have most caught their attention, that they believe to be most significant in terms of reflecting the story's theme. Next, they relate some aspect of their *own* lived experience to their identified statement of theme. Finally, they evaluate the veracity of the author's point of view.

Part One: Making Meaning

Students begin by exploring the theme of the story:

- Students identify, in a word or two, the subject of the story.
- Students identify several specific story details that reflect their thinking about the subject. Details might include any of the following:
 - a specific plot event or occurrence, or pattern of occurrences
 - a conflict experienced by a central character, and the resolution or non-resolution of that conflict
 - a protagonist's motivation, crisis, turning point, or epiphany
 - the setting of the story (physical, social, emotional, or psychological) and the mood which that setting evokes
 - the author's perspective towards the events of the story: her/his tone
 - a stated or implied central irony of the story
 - the author's use of a particular motif, symbol, or allusion
 - the author's choice of sense imagery, or of connotative language
- Students do not simply *retell* the plot events. Retelling often results when students experience difficulty with theme identification. Instead of asking themselves *what has happened*, they should explore the question of *how* and *why* things happened as they did. How have story details *shaped* the reader's understandings?
- Near the end of *Part One*, the students write a story theme statement, an insight about human nature as they understand the story to have expressed it. All story details that they identified and discussed should collectively point to the accuracy and appropriateness of the story's identified controlling idea.

We most frequently use writing in secondary schools in two ways. More often, we use writing as a means to evaluate students' mastery of content or of the written form. Less often, we use writing as a means to engage students in learning. For learning, the act of writing provides a chronology of our thoughts, which we can label, objectify, modify, or build on; and it engages us in becoming invested in our ideas and learning. Writing-to-learn forms and extends thinking and thus deepens understanding.

Jacobs, V.A. "Reading, Writing, and Understanding."
Educational Leadership. November 2002. P.60.

Part Two: Drawing A Personal Connection

Students reflect upon and describe an incident that relates to their theme statement in a personally significant way:

- Ideally, the incident should be their own lived experience, as this will be most meaningful to them.
- If students are unable to identify an incident from their own lives, they may instead write about an incident or event ...
 - ... that happened to a relative: parent, sibling, grandparent
 - ... that happened to a friend, or a neighbour or acquaintance
 - ... that they read about, factual or fictional, or they saw in film or on TV
- The *event* they describe need not be similar to that of the story: in fact, it often won't be. But what transpired from the event must relate purposefully to the main idea of the story. They make a *thematic*, not *factual*, connection.
- Students explain the *connection* between the experience of the story and that of their life. How does the experience of the one help them to better understand the other?
- Students may choose to connect the two experiences through *contrast* rather than similarity: they may relate to the author's idea by describing what did *not* happen to them rather than what did, and the implications this has on their understanding.

Part Three: Expressing a Global View

In part one, students focused on the story ideas and details. In part two, they personalized those ideas. Now, students generalize beyond the story and beyond themselves to reflect on the nature of the human condition:

- In what way are the ideas of the author universal? Without referring directly to either the events of the story or of their own lives, students reflect on the significance of the author's *ideas* and what they say about human nature and experience? What makes those ideas important to all people, in all places, at all times?
- Students evaluate the *truth* of the author's thinking:
 - Is the author honest in her/his representation of life?
 - If so, are the ideas relevant? Are they important? To whom? Why?
 - Can students accept the author's perspective?
 - Can students find direction in the author's ideas?What might have been the author's purpose in writing the story?
- Students are always free to *challenge* what a writer says. However, a challenge, like a statement of agreement, must be supported.

Typically, classroom discussion of the story *follows* the completion of this initial student response. Students in the class have registered their own thoughts about the story, and are now prepared to share these thoughts at the discussion table.

Because such response is exploratory in nature, writing is often irregular, even repetitive, in its attempt to find its focus. It is evaluated, therefore, *not* as a piece of final-draft exposition, but rather for its considered recognition of, and insightful reflection about, the author's ideas. Errors of diction, usage, agreement and tense shifting are expected when *thinking* rather than *expression* is the primary activity, and students are not penalized for errors in matters of correctness.

This was a beautiful and magnificent story. It is a wonderful example of how difficult reality can be at times. This is how it was in the short story "Horses of the Night" by Margaret Laurence. Chris is a captivating character who wins the reader's heart almost immediately. His intelligence, persistence and passive behavior ignites almost a mild sense of pity at his unappreciated diligence. Oftentimes, this is the case for many individuals. Many times, people venture through life not sure of what their purpose is, encountering pitfalls and obstacles which cause many to give up and instead lose hope. Chris had based his life entirely on dreams and hopes. However, throughout his journey he was never given the opportunity to pursue anything. Being unable to attend college to being unable to find a steady job in order to give him a sense of meaning in his life. It seems that since his father's death, he shut himself off from the pain that the world can suppress [impose] upon the heart. He creates an imaginary world for Vanessa that consists of two beautiful and elegant horses, and in doing so, he creates a connection between their two minds despite their age difference. Vanessa always seems to be somewhat protective of Chris. She wishes to guard him from the minds of those around him who don't care or want to understand him. It is hard to find true evidence in regards to "feelings" she may have for Chris. He is after all her cousin. She seems to want to be able to impress him, to enhance her level of intelligence so she may actually converse with him rather than just listen with nothing but pure acceptance of him. It seems that Vanessa is the only person in Chris' life that loves him for who he is, inside and out. It is only she who takes the time to get to know him, enough so that he trusts her and writes to her when he is fighting in the war. Chris creates this fantasy world, and Vanessa knew this all along. From the time that he changed her perception of how the north was, how his home was, even to the time they spent the night sleeping under the stars. It seems that Chris has always longed for that person who he could talk to—that person who would give him one hundred percent of their attention. And it goes back again to the point of Chris "never seemed to beholding back with a terrible, strained force for fear of letting go and speaking out and having the known world unimaginably fall to pieces." It seems that he shut himself off from the world when he felt like he was being insulted or offended by isolating himself into his own source of reality. Perhaps even Vanessa was the only one who could save him, the only one who he actually allowed to see his world. He explained to her his reasonings in regards to not necessarily believing in a God. Every example he gives proves that he did not really live in anything anymore. After he joined and fought in the army, his body became forced to march, and to kill. Nothing was truly "Chris" anymore, he no longer truly existed. He was now instead someone labelled as one who suffered a "mental breakdown." His personality had become transformed when his mind could no longer handle the harshness of life. And so, finally, I think the main idea the author is trying to relay to the reader is that *oftentimes, when individuals become weakened mentally by excessive circumstances they can no longer handle, they may be forced into shutting themselves off completely from the world.* [A note the student has written in the margin to herself reads, "Find something in the text connecting Chris' relationship to Vanessa—adult developing such closeness to little child."]

PART
ONE

When I was around five years old, I remember that my parents used to argue a lot. A majority of the time it would be over stupid things such as culture and language differences. They would accuse each other of various things and my sister and I would be brought into it to choose sides. I've always loved my mom more than my dad. Perhaps it is because I resent him for all the times that he made my mom leave or cry. It was always his fault, for being inconsiderate or selfish. Expecting others to be telepathic and always rushing to his every whim and demand. I spent many of my childhood moments blocking out all the times they would argue and fight. It became a somewhat ordinary circumstance and I would just do my best to shut it out. I'd retreat somewhere by myself so I wouldn't have to listen anymore, because I didn't want to choose because I knew I'd choose the one I loved most.

PART
TWO

I think what the author says about certain personality types is true. People who experience a lot of trauma and are passive tend to seek refuge in fantasy. Once someone gives way to the power and temptation of forgetting about problems or escaping, it is often very difficult to go back. In our society I think there are both severe and more mild forms of escape developed in today's world that are easily accessible to those who are susceptible to the power of escape.

PART
THREE

Critical, Personal, Universal Response Outline

This style of response is intended to maximize the rubric. In the critical section, you will maximize the ideas and impressions category, and the personal section will allow you to create a voice. The important thing to remember is that this format of an essay, unlike the critical/analytical response, allows you to use personal pronouns (except the word 'you') in the **PERSONAL SECTION OF THE RESPONSE ONLY! THIS STYLE DOES NOT WORK FOR THE VISUAL!**

I. INTRODUCTION

a. **GENERAL STATEMENT** to introduce the topic in the question.

b. **FOCUS** into answering the question; you should also mention the literature and/or other materials and situations you will be referring to here. You may use a phrase such as: "In life, as in literature, people . . ." Follow this statement with the introduction of the materials you will be discussing in your essay. Do not talk about yourself or your experience yet because you want to build a bridge of common knowledge with your readers first.

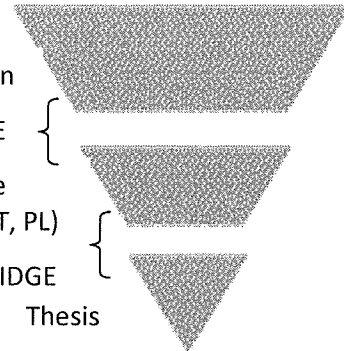
Generalization

BRIDGE

Literature Specific (T, PL)

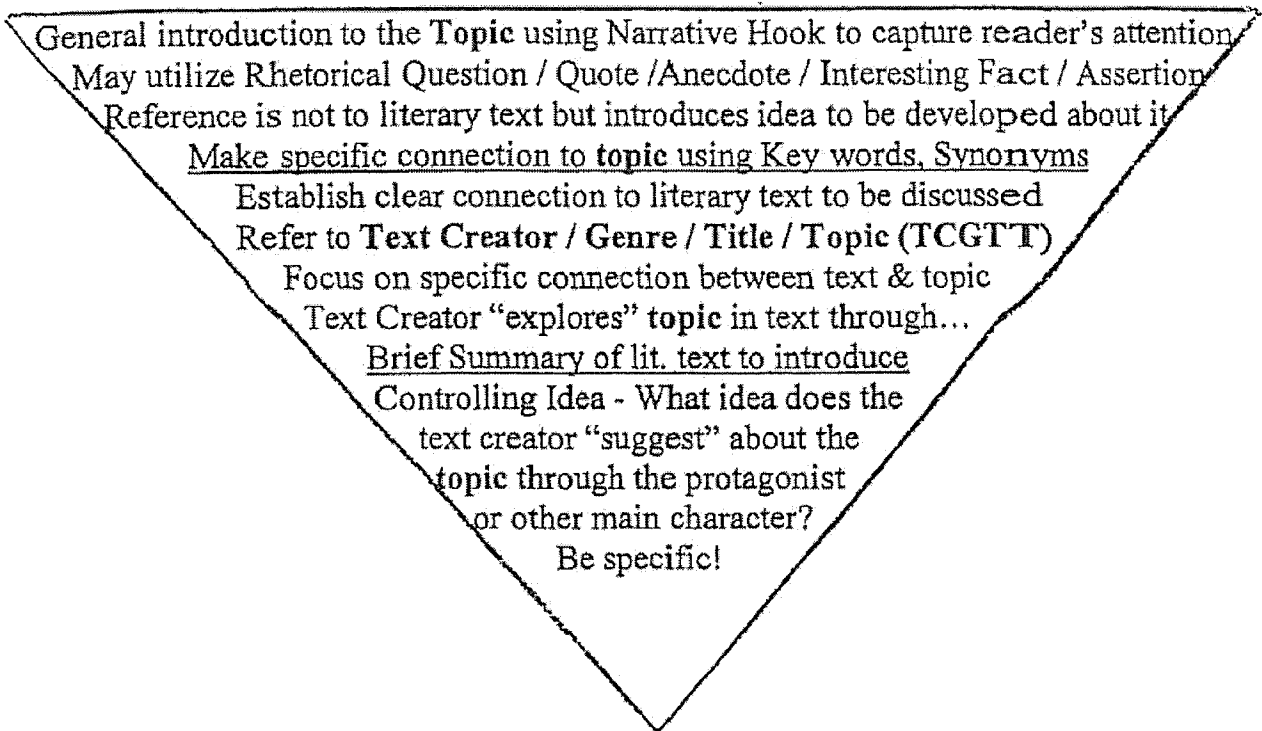
BRIDGE

Thesis



INTRODUCTION

c. **CONTROLLING IDEA/THESIS STATEMENT:** This is where you answer the question being asked. You answer what is conveyed about people and set up what you will explain/support/prove in your body paragraphs. (You can have one point supported by all paragraphs, or one for each paragraph – the choice is yours: look at your examples and what they will support before writing your thesis.)



II. BODY PARAGRAPHS (please note that c and d are reversible; order does not matter, as long as both are present. Likewise, you may choose to have one paragraph deal with the text entirely and then your second paragraph would explain/develop your personal connection to the text) (Minimum 2 paragraphs)

a. TOPIC SENTENCE a general statement; the point from the thesis you will be addressing/supporting/proving in this paragraph.

b. EXPLAIN more about the paragraph topic in your own words.

c. SPECIFIC EXAMPLE from the Texts: find an example you can explain and/or quote from the text or other materials you've been provided with, which supports the topic sentence and proves it true. State the situation from the piece of literature or describe the visual, what happens/how the situation is addressed, and what the outcome of the situation is to adequately prove your point.

Note there are THREE distinct sections of this critical section (like a critical essay but in miniature).
BALANCED STATE (EXPOSITION), CONFLICT (EVOLUTION), RESOLUTION

SECTION 1 is EXPOSITION –

- provide background that establishes how the topic affects the protagonist
- use actions of protagonist and interactions with other characters for support
- establish physical / psychological setting, circumstances that lead to conflict
- explore the initial conflict and explain how it reflects the topic
- use key words to connect to the topic and reinforce controlling idea
- transitional sentence to reconnect to controlling idea, reinforce topic and maintain cohesive flow of ideas between paragraphs

SECTION 2 is EVOLUTION –

- as conflict intensifies explore how the protagonist reacts in connection to the topic
- explore and support how other characters react to the conflict
- explore and support the influence others have on the protagonist
- determine what factors interfere with the protagonist resolving the conflict
- connect the protagonist's attempts to resolve the conflict clearly to the topic
- continue to effectively develop the controlling idea using support from the text
- transitional sentence to reconnect to controlling idea, reinforce topic and maintain cohesive flow of ideas between paragraphs

SECTION 3 is RESOLUTION –most significant reflection of the conflict occurs

- explore and support if protagonist resolves or fails to resolve the conflict
- determine whether the protagonist changes / maintains resolve / fails to grow, achieves realization / experiences an epiphany which results in enlightenment...
- explore this resolution or lack thereof using specific evidence from the text
- make final connections to the topic and the consequences for the protagonist
- reinforce controlling idea by explaining clear connections between resolution and topic
- transitional sentence to reconnect to controlling idea, reinforce topic and maintain cohesive flow of ideas between paragraphs

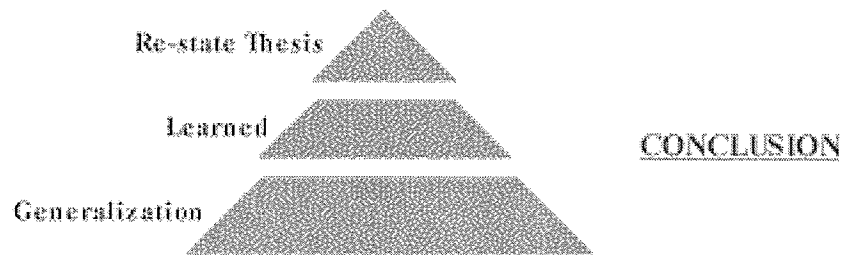
d. **PERSONAL ANECDOTE:** Give an example from your own life, or from reality, that proves your topic sentence true; that is, the real example you give shows that people do the thing your topic sentence says they do. **THIS IS THE *ONLY* PLACE IN YOUR PAPER THAT YOU MAY USE PERSONAL PRONOUNS: I, MY, ME, ETC.. OTHERWISE IT IS A FORMAL PAPER AND SHOULD BE WRITTEN AS SUCH.**

e. **CLINCHER SENTENCE:** Sum up your paragraph's point/argument in a general sentence; restate your topic sentence more specifically.

III. CONCLUSION

a. Restate Central Idea without adding new information. Reinforcing the idea the idea the text creator develops.

b. Move beyond the text to explain how this idea about the topic relates universally. Assert the significance of this topic by clarifying / dangers / benefits / value of facing it.



c. **FINAL THOUGHTS:** End with a thought provoking statement that will leave your reader thinking about and with an impression of your overall argument – this should be a strong statement that sums up your overall argument. Leave your reader with a pithy, insightful, thoughtful reflection to sum up your perceptions (suggestion, work in a metaphor).

TEXT: _____ TOPIC: _____	Beginning	Middle	End
Motivation/Cause			
Reaction/Catalyst			
Outcome/Effect			

NOTES:

CREATIVE RESPONSE

Style #2

Narrative

A.K.A. - A Short Story

THIS IS ONLY COVERED BRIEFLY. IT HAS THE POTENTIAL FOR GREAT SUCCESS, BUT THERE ARE RISKS. USE ONLY IF YOU ARE A SOLID CREATIVE WRITER. YOU WILL FIND OUT ABOUT WHAT SHOULD GO INTO A GOOD NARRATIVE, NOT HOW TO ACTUALLY WRITE ONE. IF YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO WRITE A STORY OR A SCRIPT, THIS IS NOT FOR YOU.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

You can choose to do a WEB or POINT FORM outline for this type of paper. A personal narrative means telling a “story” that conveys/shows/demonstrates/depicts/illustrates the idea you are being asked to discuss and answer in the question. This means that it must include the following things (at least):

1. Introduction and Initial Incident – set the scene (who, what, where, when) and state the event that begins the conflict.
2. Conflict – the conflict between the protagonist (main character) and some other force(s) in the story; they should be conflicts that have to do with the main issue in the question you are asked in the topic.
3. Initial incident – starts the central conflict.
4. Rising Action – a building tension, with the conflicts coming to a head and the protagonist about to come into direct conflict with the ESTABLISHED antagonist. These are the main “obstacles” the protagonist must overcome throughout the story. As the protagonist goes, **the answer to the question begins to reveal itself** – it will be fully answered based on the action and outcome of the following steps.
5. Climax/Resolution – the highest point of tension; MORE THAN one or two sentences long. Use SHORT, CHOPPY sentences to build the tension. Here the protagonist faces a conflict dealing with the main issues in the question and where (s)he will DEVELOP as a character to demonstrate a theme that is in accordance with the topic. THIS IS WHERE THE QUESTION IS FULLY ANSWERED.
6. Denouement/Conclusion: This is the outcome – it is revealed here what the protagonist does with the knowledge (s)he has gained in the climax. This relates directly back into the topic and is the FINAL answer to “the question”. It should be partially reflective in nature

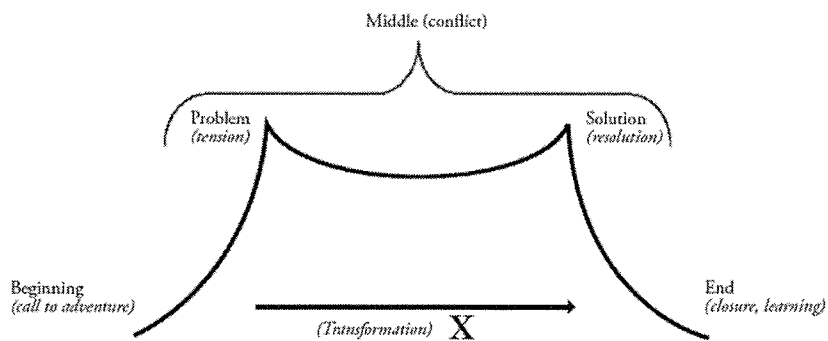
Other things that need to be attended to:

1. SHOW the story, don’t just “tell” it.
2. Use figures of speech to help you in your descriptions. (at least 5)
3. Include physical and emotional feelings.
4. Include strong adjectives and strong verbs.
5. Include sensory detail. (at least one for each sense!)
6. SHOW, don’t tell the story.
7. INCLUDE DIALOGUE!!! Every time a new character speaks, start a new paragraph. Every time (s)he is done, start a new paragraph. Refer to your punctuation notes for proper formatting.

Structure of a Narrative – Redux!

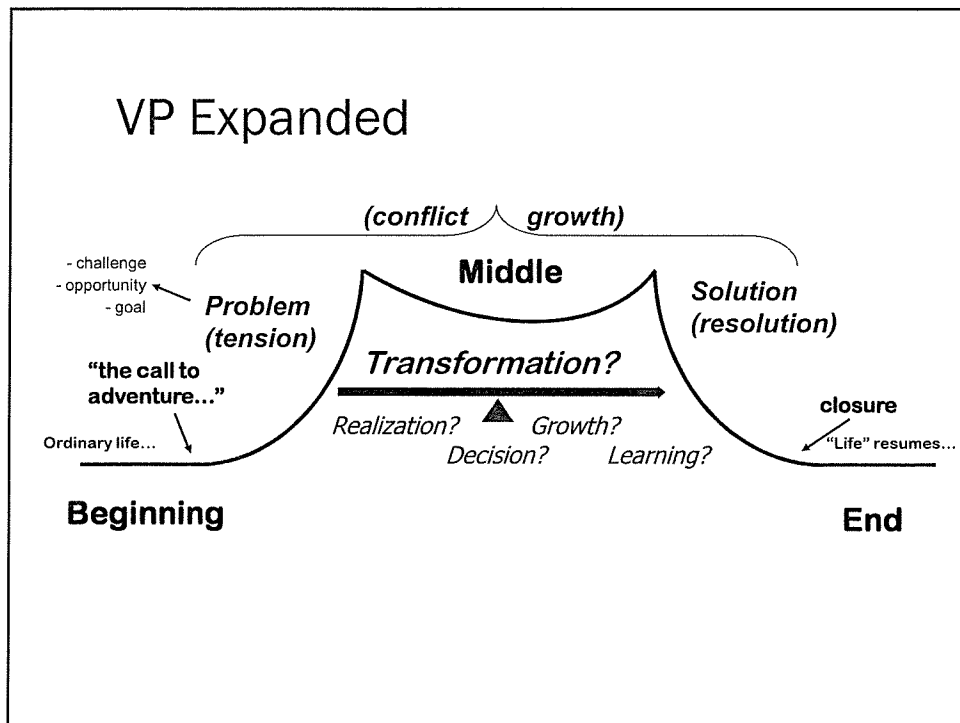
The Story Arch, Transformations & You!

Visual Portrait of a Story



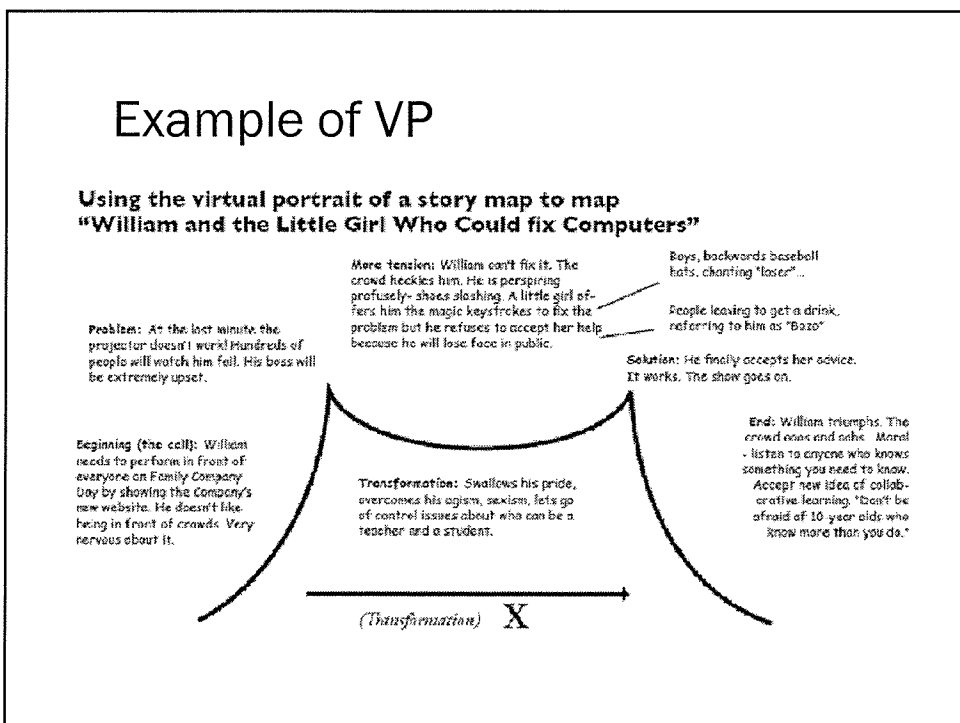
Visual Portrait of a Story (dillingham, 2001), with transformation (ohler, 2003)

VP Expanded



Example of VP

Using the virtual portrait of a story map to map
"William and the Little Girl Who Could fix Computers"



Transformations are the Center of Organic Stories

Transformation is change on steroids. Whereas changes can be small, transformations **tend to be big**.

We change our socks but we are not transformed when we do so.

It is the transformation of characters in a dramatic work that gives the audience a chance to transform as well.

Transformations Defined

The catch-all definition I use for transformation is **"slaying internal dragons through attitude adjustment."**

The adjustment is necessary because of "the hero's flaw." The flaw identifies a hero's imperfection and how s/he needs to transform to address it. The flaw also tends to define the nature of the challenges that s/he will face during the course of the story.

8 Levels of Transformation

The levels do not often appear in isolation, therefore characters often transform at more than one level at the same time.

Level	Kind	Explanation
1	Physical/kines- thetic	Character develops strength or dexterity; Popeye eats spinach and grows muscles; 'Baby' (Jennifer Grey in <i>Dirty Dancing</i>) learns how to dance and wins the contest.
2	Inner strength	Character develops courage, overcomes fear, at great risk to themselves. Lucilla and Proximo (Connie Neilson and Oliver Reed in <i>Gladiator</i>) help Maximus (Russell Crowe) in his effort to restore the republic of Rome.
3	Emotional	Character matures, thinks beyond his or her own needs; Hans Solo returns to fight the good fight in <i>Star Wars</i> .
4	Moral	Character develops a conscience; Schindler develops his list

7	Intellectual/cre- ative	Character advances intellectual/creative ability to learn or do something new, allows him/her to solve a problem, puzzle or mystery (Neo in the <i>Matrix</i>). This level captures the essence of making students heroes of their own learning stories.
8	Spiritual	Character has an awakening, which changes his or her entire perspective. With the help of a lama, Larry Darrell (Bill Murray in <i>Razor's Edge</i>) achieves a kind of enlightenment that alters his perspective of what is important about life.
5	Psychological	Character develops insight, self-awareness. Neo (Keannu Reeves in <i>Matrix</i>) understands who he is in relation to the <i>Matrix</i> .
6	Social	Character accepts new responsibility with respect to family, community or a group; Max (Mel Gibson in <i>Road Warrior</i>) sticks around and helps the small oil refinery community defend itself against terrorist bike gangs.

Back to the Example Story

How did William transform in the example story?

- Physically/intellecutally he learned some new keystrokes.
- But he also gained courage and maturity in order to accept advice from a little girl in order to solve his problem.
- Ultimately, he changed a number of attitudes about society, particularly with respect to how teaching and learning happens.

In the stories that you find powerful, ask yourself how their main characters transformed?

Transformation = Memorable

Consider B Action movies for a moment and why they tend not to stick with you. While they usually contain a lot of conflict and resolution in the form of endless fighting, there is:

- Very little internal conflict
- Very few inner dragons are slain
- The good guys tend to be good
- The bad guys tend to bad
- and no one transforms.

Just a lot of fighting. Boring. And what does boring really boil down to?
Unmemorable and no impact!

The Location of Transformation

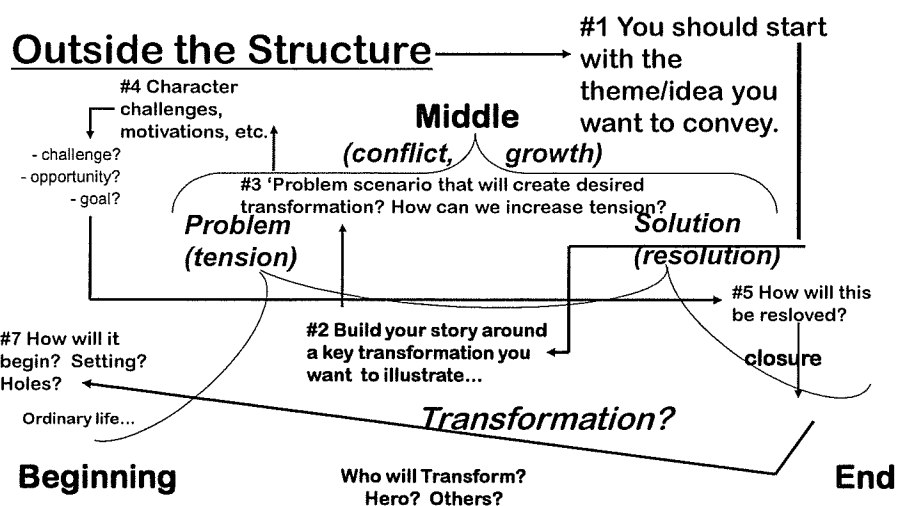
There are 2 places where you find transformation within a story:

1. Hero or central character.

2. Those the hero impacts.

As with Ghandi, much of the transformation occurred in those who observed him, a point the movie made very well.

Start your story with Theme



PRT – Select a Theme

- Examine the topic.
- Select one of the prompting texts (not the visual) as your primary text and generate a theme statement
- Develop a theme statement for your selected piece...your narrative must have either the same or opposite theme to the one you created.
- Use your planning to make your intentions clear to the marker.

PRT - Transformation

- Use the process to determine the characters and transformation that will occur. Your theme should be the catalyst for this transformation.
- Have your characters grow organically from the theme and transformation, do not decide on characters first.
- Remember the 3 required parts is to demonstrate how character is prior to change, the moment that causes the change, and the effect of the change.
- These 3 sections are not equally weighted – the beginning should be the smallest.

PRT – Starting Your Narrative

- This is not a full blown story – but more of an expanded moment. Start in media res (in the middle of things), right before the action of the tale.
- Remember to use telling details (review tomorrow).
- Do not waste my time describing things that do not matter – there is a reason Tolkien's books feel long – it is because he describes bushes for 2 pages. You do not have that kind of time, tell me only about what matters.

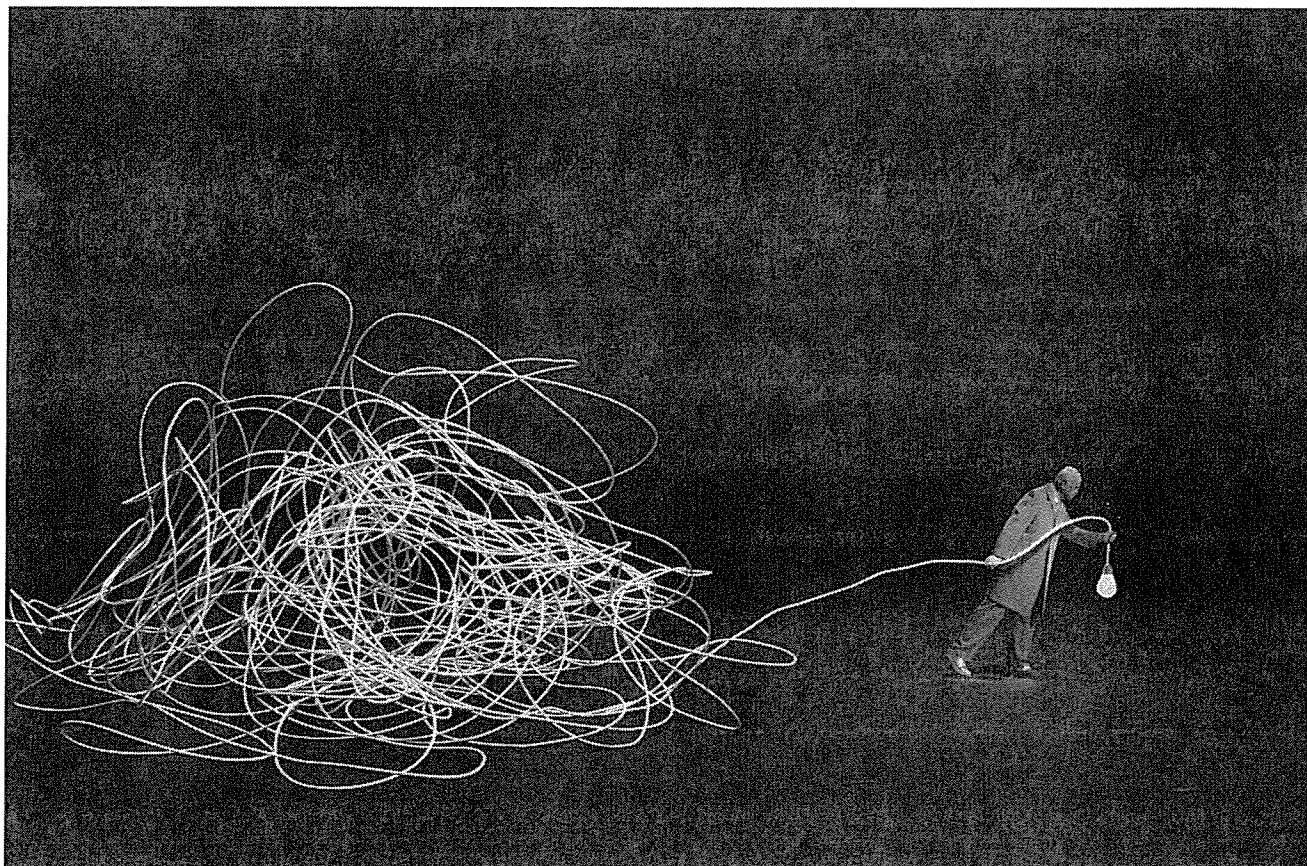
PRT – Final Reminders

- You need one explicit reference, either the image as a metaphor or a quotation that you integrate.
- Avoid wiener explicit references (the other day in English class...I met an old man at a bus stop...etc.).
- Never – I mean never, set your story in the picture. Also, do not tell the narrative from a different perspective.
- Even more importantly – you are not allowed to adopt the persona of an inanimate object – Macbeth from the POV of his dagger. Wrong on soooooo many levels.
- You have strong expectations in a story, but a great potential too. You must use all of the conventions of literature. If you can make me feel something – you will get a proficient at least.

PRT - Warnings

- Keep the saccharine scale low (gagging is not good while marking).
- Avoid cliché settings and story lines – in a prison, or difficult stories – cancer.
- Write about real experiences you know rather than contrived unbelievable plot lines.
- Never forget that you are trying to answer the question – develop a theme, do not get lost in the story!
- Most importantly – treat your subject matter with the seriousness that it merits.

Diogène ou la Lucidité – Diogenes¹ or Lucidity, 2005



© Gilbert Garcin / Courtesy of Stephen Bulger Gallery

¹Diogenes—a famous Cynic philosopher (404–323 BC), who lived with extreme simplicity, acted without shame, valued the power of reason, critiqued living by convention, and is reported to have lit a lamp in the middle of the day and wandered about saying: “I am looking for an honest man.”

New York, ca. 1962



© The Estate of Garry Winogrand, courtesy Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco

Garry Winogrand

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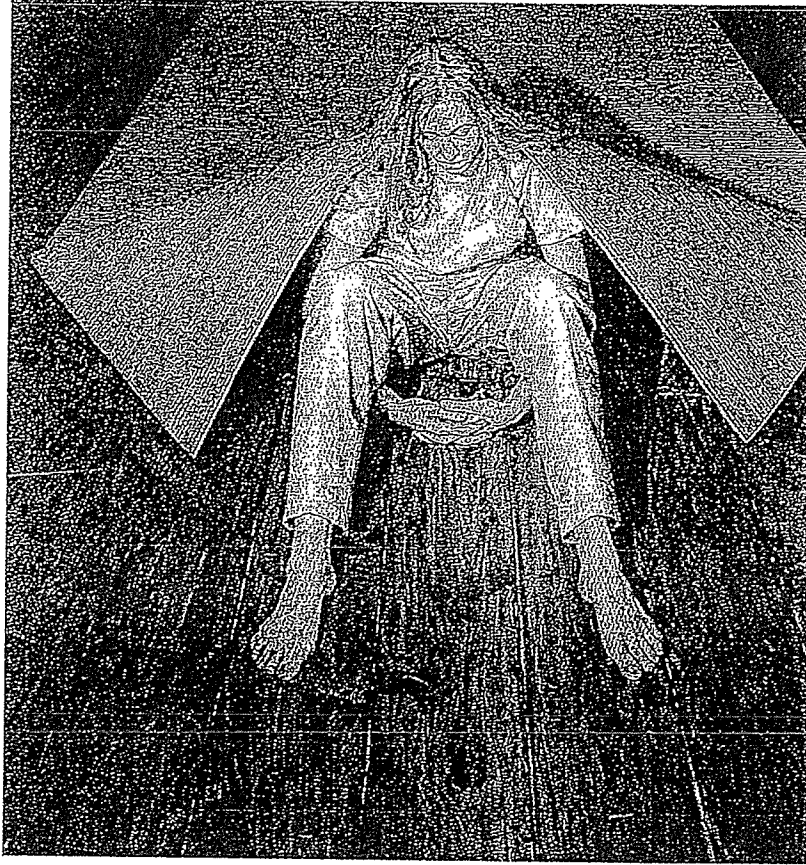
120 km/hr, 1975



Jan Saudek

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-35-

Waited



Clive Smith

Waited by Clive Smith. Courtesy Galerie de Bellefeuille. Reproduced with permission from Clive Smith.

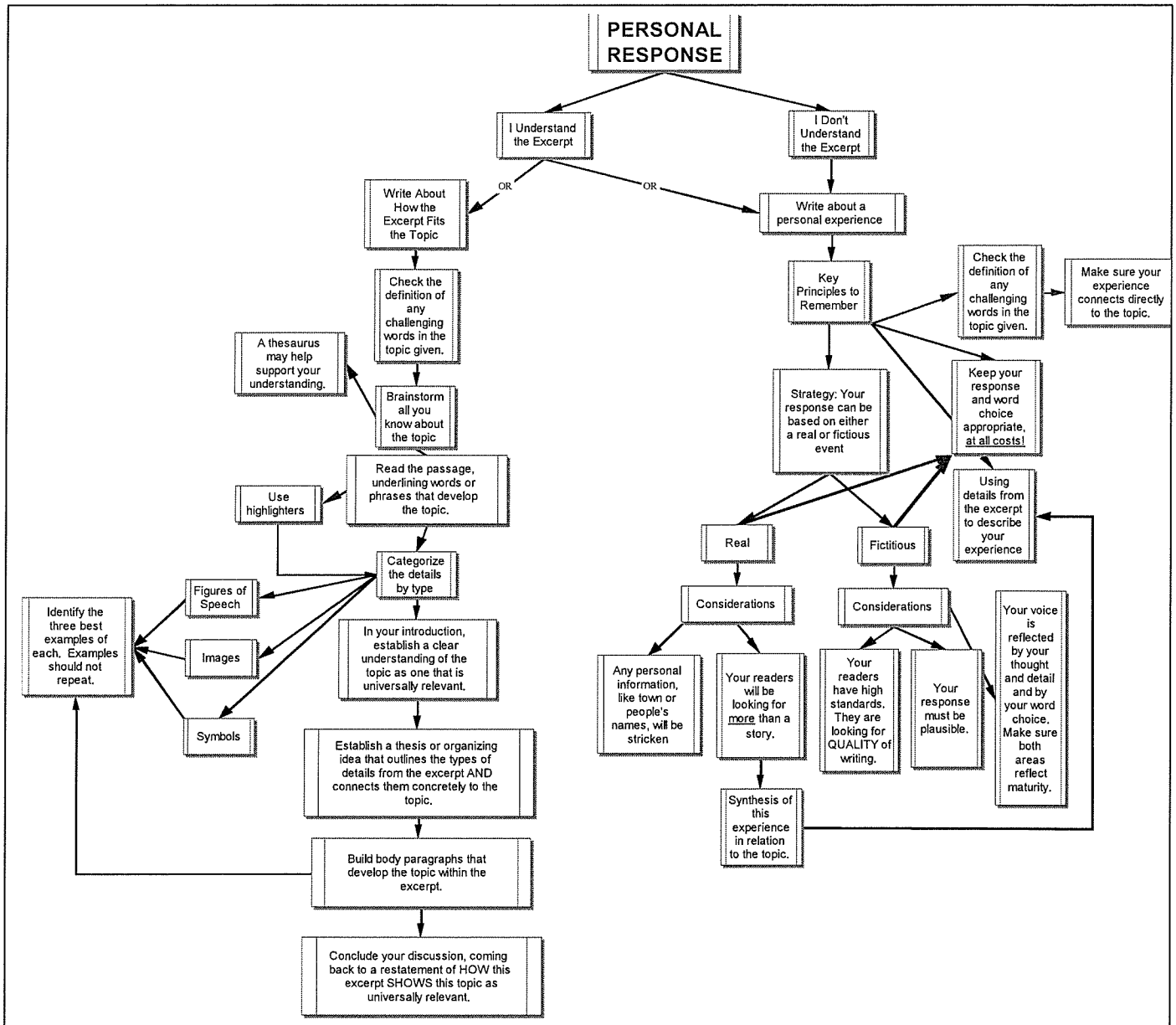
PERSONAL RESPONSE TO TEXTS ASSIGNMENT

Pinocchio



Photograph by Keith Carter

WMA



Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Initial Planning

To which of the provided texts are you responding? What is the connection between the text(s) and your response?

What idea do you intend to explore and how does it address the topic?

State your choice of prose form. Choose from prose forms that you have practiced in English Language Arts 30–1. You may respond using a personal, creative, or analytical perspective. Do NOT use a poetic form.

Additional space is provided for planning on other pages in the examination booklet.

PERSONAL RESPONSE CHECKLIST & FORMATIVE SUGGESTIONS

The following checklist is based on the Alberta Learning Rubric for Personal Response. This list of key descriptors is intended to provide students with information on the categories of personal response they have the most and least success with.

NAME: _____

	Category	Poor P	Limited Lt	Satisfactory S	Proficient Pf	Excellent E	
IDEAS AND IMPRESSIONS	When marking Ideas and Impressions , the marker should consider the quality of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the student's exploration of the topic • the student's ideas and reflection • support in relation to the student's ideas and impressions 			AREA FOR FUTURE FOCUS			
	Exploration of Topic	Minimal	Vague	Generalized	Purposeful	Insightful	
	Perceptions &/or Ideas	Underdeveloped	Superficial	Straightforward	Thoughtful	Confident	
		Irrelevant	Ambiguous	Relevant	Considered	Discerning	
Support	Lacking	Imprecise	Adequate	Specific	Precise		
	Unrelated	Ineffectively related	Clarifies	Strengthens	Aptly Reinforces		

- Exploration of the topic
- Ideas and reflection
- Support

CRITICAL/ANALYTICAL PERSONAL RESPONSE	CREATIVE PERSONAL RESPONSE
Y N Develop a strong unifying idea in response to the question	Y N Create an original title
Y N Write an original title	Y N Develop a strong unifying plot in response to the topic
Y N Refer to only one of the selections	Y N Setting choice supports plot
Y N Distinguish between the poet/author and the narrator	Y N Character development demonstrates a plausible transformation (verisimilitude)
Y N Use specific details and/or significant quotations from the selection	Y N Story theme relates to topic
Y N Write a clear, original thesis that focuses the assignment and provides direction	Y N The action word in the topic is incorporated into your story
Y N Develop a clear, coherent connection between the reader/writer and the literature	Y N There is an implicit and explicit connection to the text you have selected
Y N Order paragraphs logically, in a unified coherent manner	Y N The image, if used at all, is a metaphor included into your text
Y N Avoid plot summary	Y N Your text is not overly sentimental, or cliché
Y N Ensure that a personal response is related to the theme and context of the reading	Y N The narrative starts right when it needs to (at the correct moment)
Y N Ensure that the conclusion expands on theme and offers a universal or philosophical statement	Y N Story has "telling details" selected for a specific developmental purpose.

PRESENTATION

When marking **Presentation**, the marker should consider the effectiveness of

- **voice** in relation to the context created by the student in the chosen prose form
- **stylistic choices** (including quality of language and expression and the student's creation of **tone**)
- the student's development of a **unifying effect**

Consider the proportion of error in terms of the complexity and length of the response.

AREA FOR FUTURE FOCUS

- Voice in relation to the chosen prose form
- Stylistic choices & tone
- Developing a unifying effect

Voice	Obscure	Indistinct	Apparent	Distinct	Convincing
Stylistic Choices & Tone	Impede communication	Imprecise	Specific	Competent	Precise
	Ineffective	Inconsistent	Conventional	Competent	Adept
Unifying Effect	Absent	Inadequate	Appropriate	Capable	Skillful

CRITICAL/ANALYTICAL PERSONAL RESPONSE

CREATIVE PERSONAL RESPONSE

- Y N Diction is varied and precise
- Y N Sentences are varied in length and structure
- Y N The style is appropriate
- Y N Quotations are integrated correctly and are not too long
- Y N Writing is fluent and natural
- Y N Writer's voice is evident and appropriate
- Y N A consistent point of view is maintained
- Y N The present tense is consistently maintained
- Y N Spelling and punctuation errors are corrected
- Y N Sentence fragments and run-ons are eliminated
- Y N Subject-verb and pronoun antecedent agreement are correct
- Y N Care and attention in editing are reflected in your work
- Y N Eliminate the use of "you"

- Y N Dialogue is correctly punctuated
- Y N Diction is varied and precise
- Y N Stylistic choices strengthen presentation
- Y N Reference to the provided text is observed
- Y N Writing is fluent and natural
- Y N Story ends appropriately
- Y N Theme is implicit/explicit
- Y N Characterization is effective
- Y N Spelling and punctuation errors are corrected
- Y N Sentence fragments, comma splices, and run-ons are eliminated
- Y N Subject-verb and pronoun antecedent agreement are correct
- Y N Care and attention in editing are reflected in story.
- Y N The format selected is appropriate for the topic and the examination

Comments:

TOTAL MARK

/30

NOTES:

PART III: CRITICAL/ANALYTICAL RESPONSE TO LITERATURE

Task #2

Mr. T. Bonner



CARL

THE CRITICAL ANALYTICAL RESPONSE TO LITERATURE (C.A.R.L) & YOU: ELA 30-1 LITERARY ANALYSIS ESSAY

I. WHAT IS IT EXACTLY?

The critical/analytical essay is major assignment on the diploma exam. It is worth 2/3 of 25% of your diploma score (I know the math is icky, but it is important).

The main point of any essay is to present information in a *clear and concise* manner. The essay is a structured type of argument which enables the author to present evidence in a precise form. The key word there is *evidence*. The weak essays will have plot in them, explaining who, what, where, and when. The strong essays will answer these questions, to a lesser extent, but will also answer *how*. If your essay goes into detail, with specific support from the literature, you will present a strong essay and gain a good mark. In order to present strong evidence, you will have to use *specific* evidence from the story. This can often come in the form of a quotation (correctly cited) but does not have to be a quotation. A reference to the work, such as a description of a specific event (paraphrase), is also sufficient.

The purpose of a literary analysis essay is to carefully examine, and sometimes evaluate, a work of literature or an aspect of a work of literature. As with any analysis, this requires you to break the subject down into its component parts. Examining the different elements of a piece of literature is not an end in itself, but rather, a process to help you better appreciate and understand the work of literature as a whole. For instance, an analysis of a poem might deal with the different types of images in a poem or with the relationship between the form and content of the work. If you were to analyze (discuss and explain) a play, you might analyze the relationship between a subplot and the main plot, or you might analyze the character flaw of the tragic hero by tracing how it is revealed through the acts of the play. For the purpose of the Diploma examination however, you will be identifying a particular theme (like the difficulty of making the transition from adolescence to adulthood) and showing how the writer suggests that theme through a text of your choice.

For the essays in this course, you can choose to write on any of the **one piece of literature** you have studied for this course:

- i. Do not write on more than one piece of literature (unless there is a VERY good reason to)
- ii. Do not write on something that you have not read/viewed in ITS ENTIRETY.
- iii. Do not write on something that you have not STUDIED in CLASS.

Remember, the main point of any literary essay is to demonstrate an **understanding of the literature**; and to show **your insight** into the literature to which you are referring to.

II. MORE SPECIFICALLY THAT MEANS?

Your ultimate goal is to write a sharpened, focused expression of thought and study. As you develop your writing skills, you will also improve your perceptions and increase your critical abilities.

Writing ultimately boils down to the development of an idea. Your objective in writing a literary analysis essay is to convince the person reading your essay that you have supported the idea you are developing. *Unlike ordinary conversation and classroom discussion, writing must stick with great determination to the specific point of development.*

This kind of writing demands tight organization and control. Therefore, your essay must have a *central idea (thesis)*, it must have *several paragraphs* that grow systematically out of the central idea, and *everything in it must be directly related to the central idea and must contribute to the reader's understanding of that central idea*. These three principles are listed again below:

1. *Your essay must cover the topic you are writing about.*
2. *Your essay must have a central idea (stated in your thesis) that governs its development and directly relates to the topic*
3. *Your essay must be organized so that every part contributes something to the reader's understanding of the central idea.*

III. OK I'VE GOT THE GENERAL IDEA, BUT WHAT IS CRITICAL WRITING REALLY?

(AKA: Your professor told you to stop summarizing and start analyzing)

So you have been given an assignment to write an essay about a piece of literature. This assignment may have been called a "critical literature essay," an "analysis," a "critical analysis" or by one of many other frustrating terms. The most important thing to remember is that you **will not summarize** what has happened in a literary work **but analyze** it.

Without a doubt, the biggest problem with essays discussing literature is that the essay writer either retells the story or summarizes it. This makes for an ineffective essay for two reasons. First, what happens in the story is not the point of your essay. Everyone reading your essay, including your evaluator, will have had the opportunity to read the original. Let them do that. The author has already told the story. You do not need to tell it again. Second, by simply relaying the plot-lines of the story, you are making no statement about the content and have nothing to prove. Very likely, the essay question also goes unanswered. **This is a very easy trap to fall into; be careful that you do not.** You must write "critically."

For the purpose of this next section, we will pretend that you must write a critical analysis of the Wizard of Oz. (Yes, it was a book before it was a movie!) It is important to note, that when writing critically that last sentence makes 3 errors in critical writing & 1 punctuation error with parentheticals, can you pick them out? I will pause now while you answer.

Good, now moving on.

The idea behind **critical analysis** of literature is to write an essay that explains **how a work demonstrates its themes**.

So [again] what exactly is critical writing?

To write **critically** means to actually think about what a piece of literature means and find a way to express what it says to you. You must "consider" the work, form opinions about what you have read, and think about how the ideas in the work connect to the world in a larger way (by the way, never do this in formal writing either. Quoting for emphasis is bad form, so is bolding, underlining, adding blinking text, color, shape, or any other lame way of drawing attention to your words. Think Joey from Friends, and you should get the idea).

In your paper, you will most likely discuss how certain literary techniques are used to convey specific ideas. You will not rate how good or bad an author is. You will discuss *what a piece means* and *how it achieves its effect*. To write critically, you must provide analysis of specific points. You will explain how the events (quotes, actions, speech, examples, etc.) demonstrate themes and ideas. You will focus on the transformation of your selected character/s, as well as a complementary literary device if at all possible.

In the following paragraph, the essay writer explains what the ruby slippers represent in an example of **critical analysis**:

"The red ruby slippers represent Dorothy's untapped power. She wears the shoes throughout the entire story, never understanding that she could have used them all along to go home. The Good Witch, Glinda, points out what Dorothy hasn't realized when she says, "You've had the power all along." Dorothy, like her friends the Scarecrow, the Tinman, and the Lion, was always able to solve her own problems but never looked inside herself to do it. When she taps her feet together, she takes control and uses her own resources."

Notice that in this **analysis**, the author uses examples and quotes to support his point (That the ruby slippers represent Dorothy's untapped power). The author does not just present quotations separately; he works them smoothly into grammatical sentences that show how they function in the story. The essay writer also uses dependent clauses: "When she taps her feet together (plus your opinion of what this action means)" to show what ideas a specific example from the story demonstrates.

He doesn't just tell what happens. He uses a topic sentence to clearly explain that the paragraph will *discuss* the meaning of the slippers.

To "**summarize**" is to restate the main points and events in a condensed way.

Example of **summary**: "Dorothy is a farm-girl from Kansas. Dorothy is unhappy in Kansas, and when a tornado comes along, her house gets sucked up into it and she ends up in a magical land called "Oz.". Her house lands on a witch, killing her and causing everyone to think she is a witch, too. When she wakes up the first day in Oz, a good Witch approaches her and gives her a pair of ruby slippers. Then she sets off on a yellow brick road to find the Wizard...."

But what's wrong with summarizing?

You **can't** write like this, because this it only tells what happens in the story. Although you will have to **discuss** the actions/plot of the story, **you will not merely restate** what happens.

IV. APPROACHING THE ASSIGNMENT – AKA HOW DO I ACTUALLY BEGIN THIS SILLY THING.

Here we go. You have to start somewhere. Don't go into this blindly.

STAGE A: Before the Test:

1. **Review** any **literary terms** mentioned in the course. Read up on the terms wherever they occurred in your textbook or check the glossary. For essays, in addition to character, irony, symbol, motif are potential devices for discussion. But only in reference to theme development.
2. **Read the piece** of literature **more than once** (if it is a novel or long play, you should at least re-read the sections you feel will be important to your paper.) Take notes in the margins. (News flash... if you sell your book back, it will bring a "used" price whether or not you write in it.) Ask questions. Flag pages or passages that relate to your topic and/or that interest you. Prep the text, more on that will come later in the course.
3. Memorize some key passages.

STAGE B: During the Test

1. Make sure that you have **thoroughly read over the question** for the specific Assignment. Take notes on it; circle/underline what you know must be included in the essay:

- Step 1 - Isolate the subjects (there typically two or more)
- Step 2 - Conjunction Junction – Determine its function. Find the conjunction (typically – “and” or “or”). This will tell you the limitations/requirements of the above topics.
- Step 3 – Most importantly find the verbs. These are actually what you are writing about.
- Step 4 – Even more most importantly, remember that you are not WRITING ABOUT A TEXT, you are WRITING ABOUT A TOPIC.
- Step 5 - Choose your literary text However, you need to select your text (considering my advice above). Ensure that you **choose a literary work that you** feel you generally **understood**. You should have a good grasp of what the themes are. The **themes** are the major ideas expressed by the work. When someone asks you, "What was the book about?" You might be tempted to say "A farm-girl named Dorothy." However, that can't be a theme; it's not an idea. Themes are like lessons or values. So, you might say the theme is, "Finding your own power," or "There's no place like home." Those are themes that can be worked with. Maybe you think the theme is friendship or cooperation. That's ok. There are many themes to any one work. Your job is to take the assigned theme and explain how it is presented.
- Step 6 - Try to **choose one literary aspect** of the work **to focus on**, in addition to the character transformation. You are going to discuss Dorothy's character development in the Wizard of Oz as it contributes to the theme, but you should also analyze how the ruby slippers function as a symbol in contribution to that theme.

V. BEGINNING THE WRITING PROCESS

Ok. Now you are ready to write. WAIT! NO! You should think and plan first. Some things that are generally helpful.

1. **Outlining:** You can write an outline and plan what topics you want to cover to prove a specific point. This is more easily done if you have taken lots of notes in your book as you read the piece. You might Write down topic sentences for each paragraph and list possible examples.

2. **Freewriting:** You can just start freewriting on the topic given. As you write, don't censor yourself. Just get out your ideas in rough sentences. Ask questions. Complain. Make connections. It's ok to write "Why didn't Dorothy ever stop whining?" or "That stupid dog annoyed me," or "The wizard was a total fraud just like all politicians." When you are done freewriting, look for all the spots where you had a strong opinion. The best ideas will come from your strongest opinions. Now what you have to do is prove your point by finding examples and support in the text. I recommend setting a time limit on this.
3. **Clustering:** You can write down all sorts of ideas, phrases and examples on a piece of paper and then use circles or arrows to figure out how they connect. Often clustering leads to an outline. The Writing Center has handouts on clustering.
4. **Starting without an intro:** If you are stuck for a specific thesis or intro, but have some ideas to write about, don't agonize over the intro. You can figure that out later after you see where your ideas have lead you. As you write the paper, your opinions may change somewhat. That's ok. Just make sure, when you are done, that all the points you made relate to you thesis; change your thesis and revise your introduction if you have to.

Things you might not know about writing a critical English paper

1. **Format Matters:**
 - Use Times New Roman font, 12 point, and double-space throughout.
 - Only on one side of the paper
2. It should be written in the **present tense**. Yes, really. Most likely the book or story was originally in the past tense. That's not important. Write your essay as if the piece of literature and its characters have always existed and will exist forever. Ex: "When Dorothy taps her shoes together, it shows that..."
3. **It should not go in chronological order.** That means that your paper should not move in order through the literature. The reason for this is A: this will cause you to fall into summary. B: You are analyzing the work and should organize the paper into logical points and topics. If you are writing about the ruby slippers, you will not start at the beginning, describe how Dorothy acquired them, then move on to where she wears them, and then describe what she does with them in the end. Instead, you will organize by topic. Ultimately, we want to avoid the shuffle test. More on that later.
4. You must **assume that the audience** (your marker or other students) **is familiar with the work**. This is why you will not summarize or tell what happened in the story. Your job is to prove your opinion about *how the author and/or literature present themes*. Assume

that the reader already knows **what** happens, but not **why**. You will not tell the reader that a witch attacked Dorothy, but that the witch who attacked Dorothy was a symbol of all Dorothy's fears.

5. **You will not rate** how well or poorly the author has done his/her job. That is the topic of a review. You are writing literary analysis. You will describe **how and why** certain techniques are used. You will analyze the effects of the author's techniques. You will not give your opinion about whether or not it was a good story/poem/play
6. Do not dismember your texts. That is referring to the text or the essay by its relevant parts. It is rude. Do not say, "in this essay," "in the above quotation," nor "in the beginning of the novel," etc.

General tips

1. Mention the author, title, general themes, and thesis in your intro statement, but don't use examples in it.
2. Explain how the literary techniques convey ideas, but don't define literary terms in your essay.
3. Work all quotes smoothly into grammatical sentences that explain how and why the quote supports your thesis. Don't begin paragraphs with quotes.
4. Don't discuss the fact that you are writing a paper. Just state your points and prove them.
5. Don't repeat "in the story" over and over. Your mark knows the context already.
6. Use topic sentences in each paragraph. The topic sentence should link the examples in the paragraph to your general thesis/point.
7. Restate and reword your thesis while providing some fresh insight in your conclusion. Don't just restate the intro.
8. Don't say "I" in the essay. I don't want to know you – this is critical analysis not personal opinion.
9. Do not refer to me in any way, do not say "the reader" or "the audience" and NEVER say "you." You do not know me, don't pretend that you do. Also, limit the use of "one" it makes your essay feel chunky. Instead, just talk about the text itself, you do not need to refer to the anyone, the text is sufficient.
10. Print out your paper and read it slowly before handing it in. Read it out loud if possible.

The English 30-1 Essay

The critical/analytical essay corresponds to the major assignment on the diploma exam, and the response essay corresponds to the minor assignment.

The main point of any essay is to present information in a **clear and concise** manner. The essay is a structured type of argument which enables the author to present evidence in a precise form. The key word there is **evidence**. The weak essays will have data in them, explaining who, what, where, and when. The strong essays will answer these questions, to a lesser extent, but will also answer *how*. If your essay goes into detail, with specific support from the literature, you will present a strong essay and gain a good mark. In order to present strong evidence, you will have to use *specific* evidence from the story. This can often come in the form of a quotation (correctly cited) but does not have to be a quotation. A reference to the work, such as a description of a specific event, is also sufficient. How you use the specific evidence will depend on the type of essay you are creating.

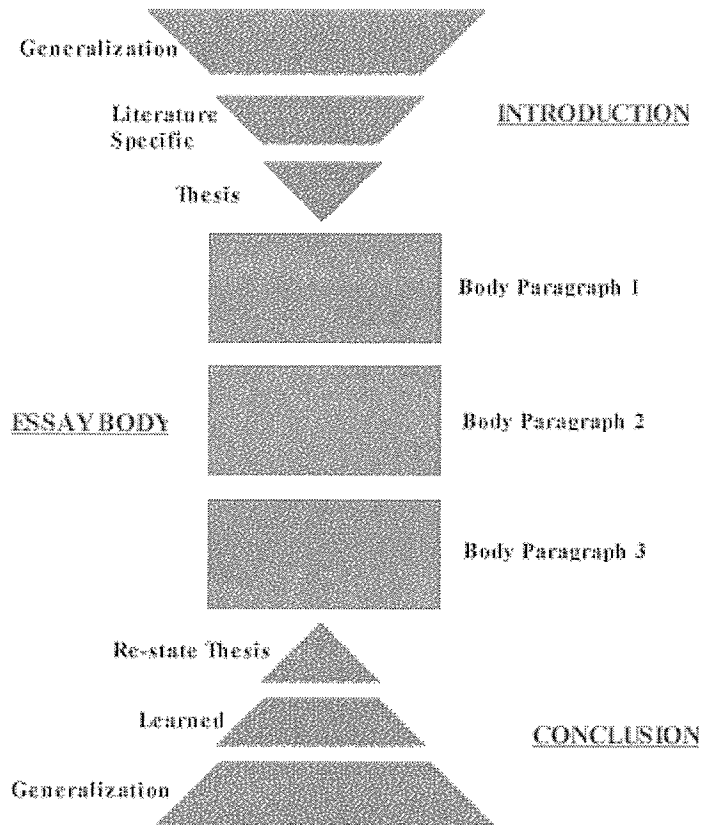
Remember, no matter which type of essay you are creating, the main point of any literary essay is to demonstrate an understanding of the literature. Your goal should be to show insight into the literature to which you are referring for *either* type of essay.

Without a doubt, the biggest problem with essays discussing literature is that the essay writer either retells the story or summarizes it. This makes for an ineffective essay for two reasons. First, what happens in the story is not the point of your essay. Everyone reading your essay, including your evaluator, will have had the opportunity to read the original. Let them do that. The author has already told the story. You do not need to tell it again. Second, by simply relaying the plot-lines of the story, you are making no statement about the content and have nothing to prove. Very likely, the essay question also goes unanswered. **This is a very easy trap to fall into; be careful that you do not.**

Format of an Analytical Essay

In an analytical essay, you are required to develop and support a thesis, based on a work of literature. For the essays in the course, you will be asked to write on a specific piece of literature, or from a small selection of literature. For the Diploma Examination, you can choose to write on any of the literature you have studied for this course.

Most analytical essays are written in a similar format. You will be expected to follow a standard format in creating your essay. The diagram below presents this format. The diagram has links to explanations of the different elements of your essay. These explanations can be found below the image.



Writing Critical Responses*

- Here, the analytical essay or literature composition, is referred to as a *critical response essay* (not to be confused with a *reader's response essay*, which is the type of essay you will write for the minor assignment and which is referred to in this course as a *response essay*).

Many good guidebooks and Internet resources are available on how to write more effectively. The following brief notes summarize some essential points for you to consider when you are writing essay responses.

Getting Started

- Study the assigned question very carefully to be certain that you understand what you are being asked to do.
- Are there any terms or other vocabulary with which you are unfamiliar? If so, look them up in the dictionary to ensure you understand.
- Do you understand the specific focus of the assignment?
- What do you already know about the topic?
- Is there an opportunity to discuss your ideas with someone else?

If you are interpreting literature, it may be helpful to research the author, read criticisms, or view a film interpretation. This information does not have to be included in your essay (and should not unless included for an important reason, and then it should be documented and correctly cited), but it can provide you with greater understanding of the literature and the writer's purpose.

Structure of an Essay

An essay is a composition that has a structure consisting of an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The introduction is usually one paragraph that includes the required thesis statement. The body can be two or more paragraphs. Most topics cannot be fully discussed in less than three (body) paragraphs. The conclusion is usually one short paragraph.



Introduction The introduction is possibly the most complicated part of any essay. It is what will generate interest from your reader, give direction to your writing, and show your effective planning. The introduction is created using three parts. Each part should be about two to three sentences long. A longer essay (over 500 words) should have a longer introduction (more than five sentences). Each of the three elements of the introduction has a specific purpose.

- **Generalization** The generalization is approximately two sentences which, while relating to the topic of the essay, make broad statements about society in general. They do not deal with the literature specifically, but instead apply to the subject of the essay (which relates to the literature) to a larger scale.
- **Literature Specific** In this section, the literature will be specifically introduced, naming the author and title of the work. (For the majority of essays, one work will be sufficient; in some cases, two works could be examined, but not more than two.) The sentences will introduce the literature in the context of the subject of the essay. The best way to introduce both author and title is to separate them into the two sentences: i.e. have the title of the work in the first sentence and introduce the author in the second sentence.
- **Thesis** The thesis is the most important part of the essay. This is where the main idea of the essay will be presented in a clear, concise manner. Since the thesis is the most crucial part of an essay, it should have significant work put into it. A strong essay introduces the topic specifically and presents what the essay will try to prove. A strong essay does NOT present two opposing views; rather a strong essay will choose a point to prove, will prove it, and will not include statements that prove the opposite.

What Else Should be in the Introductory Paragraph?

If you are interpreting literature,

- Include the title, the author's name, and the genre (i.e. short story, poem, novel, etc.) in your introductory paragraph.
- A clear, thoughtful introduction is the key to developing a good essay

Here is an introductory paragraph for an essay exploring how individuals are affected by the society in which they live. Notice how the writer has limited the assigned topic and indicates a clear direction for the rest of the essay.

Patterns of thoughts, actions and beliefs repeat themselves and become traditions within specific societies. Judaism is an example of a religious society whose roots and traditions go back thousands of years. The very existence of this religion depends upon adherence to its traditions. In the short story, "Defender of the Faith," Philip Roth explores what it means to be Jewish through the character of Sergeant Nathan Marx. Marx discovers how to maintain his identity as a Jew within the strict confines of the military. He realizes that the most important part of his Jewish tradition is not what he eats or whether he celebrates Sabbath on a weekly basis. He comes to recognize that the essence of his religious tradition is his relationship with his fellow men, with his God, and with himself.

Here is another sample introduction. Let's see how it follows the pattern.

Generalization: Most individuals experience a need at times to escape from the harsh reality of the real world. However, when individuals constantly avoid facing reality by creating more and more illusions, the consequences can be tragic. **Literature Specific:** In the short story "Horses of the Night," the author, Margaret Laurence, reveals the tragic consequences that can be the ultimate result when an individual is unable to face reality. **Thesis:** Chris is a young man who ultimately completely retreats from the real world to his own inner world because he finds the harsh circumstances of his life too difficult to face.

(Courtesy of the Alberta Online Consortium)

IN THE BEGINNING...

WRITING EFFECTIVE INTRODUCTIONS :

A PRACTICAL GUIDE

WHAT IS THIS HANDOUT ABOUT?

This handout will explain the functions of introductions, offer strategies for writing effective ones, help you check your drafted introductions, and provide you with examples of introductions to be avoided.

THE ROLE OF INTRODUCTIONS:

Introductions and conclusions can be the most difficult parts of papers to write. Usually when you sit down to respond to an assignment, you have at least some sense of what you want to say in the body of your paper. You might have chosen a few examples you want to use or have an idea that will help you answer the question: these sections, therefore, are not as hard to write. But these middle parts of the paper can't just come out of thin air; they need to be introduced and concluded in a way that makes sense to your reader.

Your introduction and conclusion act as bridges that transport your readers from their own lives into the "place" of your analysis. If your readers pick up your paper about education in the autobiography of Frederick Douglass, for example, they need a transition to help them leave behind the world of network television, e-mail, and the *Daily-Grind* and help them temporarily enter the world of nineteenth-century American slavery. By providing an introduction that helps your readers make a transition between their own world and the issues you will be writing about, you give your readers the tools they need to get into your topic and care about what you are saying. Similarly, once you've hooked your reader with the introduction and offered evidence to prove your thesis, your conclusion can provide a bridge to help your readers make the transition back to their daily lives.

WHY BOTHER WRITING A GOOD INTRODUCTION?

1. **You never get a second chance to make a first impression.** *The opening paragraph of your paper will provide your readers with their initial impressions of your argument, your writing style, and the overall quality of your work. A vague, disorganized, error-filled, off-the-wall, or boring introduction will probably create a negative impression. On the other hand, a concise, engaging, and well-written introduction will start your readers off thinking highly of you, your analytical skills, your writing, and your paper. This impression is especially important when the audience you are trying to reach (your teacher) will be grading your work.*

2. **Your introduction is an important road map for the rest of your paper.** *Your introduction conveys a lot of information to your readers. You can let them know what your topic is, why it is important, and how you plan to proceed with your discussion. It should contain a thesis that will assert your main argument. It will also, ideally, give the reader a sense of the kinds of information you will use to make that argument and the general organization of the paragraphs and pages that will follow. After reading your introduction, your readers should not have any major surprises in store when they read the main body of your paper.*

3. **Ideally, your introduction will make your readers want to read your paper.** *The introduction should capture your readers' interest, making them want to read the rest of your paper. Opening with a compelling story, a fascinating quotation, an interesting question, or a stirring example can get your readers to see why this topic matters and serve as an invitation for them to join you for an interesting intellectual conversation.*

STRATEGIES FOR WRITING AN EFFECTIVE INTRODUCTION:

1. **Start by thinking about the question.** Your entire essay will be a response to the assigned question, and your introduction is the first step toward that end. Your direct answer to the assigned question will be your thesis, and your thesis will be included in your introduction, so it is a good idea to use the question as a jumping off point. Imagine that you are assigned the following question:

Education has long been considered a major force for American social change, righting the wrongs of our society. Drawing on The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, discuss the relationship between education and slavery in 19th-century America. Consider the following: How did white control of education reinforce slavery? How did Douglass and other enslaved African Americans view education while they endured slavery? And what role did education play in the acquisition of freedom? Most importantly, consider the degree to which education was or was not a major force for social change with regard to slavery.

You will probably refer back to this question extensively as you prepare your complete essay, and the question itself can also give you some clues about how to approach the introduction. Notice that the question starts with a broad statement, that education has been considered a major force for social change, and then narrows to focus on specific questions from the book. One strategy might be to use a similar model in your own introduction—start off with a big picture sentence or two about the power of education as a force for change as a way of getting your reader interested and then focus in on the details of your argument about Douglass. Of course, a different approach could also be very successful, but looking at the way the professor set up the question can sometimes give you some ideas for how you might answer it. Keep in mind, though, that even a “big picture” opening needs to be clearly related to your topic; an opening sentence that said “Human beings, more than any other creatures on earth, are capable of learning” would be too broad.

2. **Try writing your introduction last.** You may think that you have to write your introduction first, but that isn't necessarily true, and it isn't always the most effective way to craft a good introduction. You may find that you don't know what you are going to argue at the beginning of the writing process, and only through the experience of writing your paper do you discover your main argument. It is perfectly fine to start out thinking that you want to argue a particular point, but wind up arguing something slightly or even dramatically different by the time you've written most of the paper. The writing process can be an important way to organize your ideas, think through complicated issues, refine your thoughts, and develop a sophisticated argument. However, an introduction written at the beginning of that discovery process will not necessarily reflect what you wind up with at the end. You will need to revise your paper to make sure that the introduction, all of the evidence, and the conclusion reflect the argument you intend. Sometimes it helps to write up all of your evidence first and then write the introduction—that way you can be sure that the introduction matches the body of the paper.

3. **Don't be afraid to write a tentative introduction first and then change it later.** Some people find that they need to write some kind of introduction in order to get the writing process started. That's fine, but if you are one of those people, be sure to return to your initial introduction later and rewrite if necessary.

4. **Open with an attention grabber.** Sometimes, especially if the topic of your paper is somewhat dry or technical, opening with something catchy can help. Consider these options:

- An introduction using description (and an anecdote as well):

"A weasel is wild. Who knows what he thinks? He sleeps in his underground den, his tail draped over his nose. Sometimes he lives in his den for two days without leaving. Outside, he stalks rabbits, mice, muskrats, and birds, killing more bodies than he can eat warm, and often dragging the carcasses home. Obedient to instinct, he bites his prey at the neck, either splitting the jugular vein at the throat or crunching the brain at the base of the skull, and he does not let go. One naturalist refused to kill a weasel who was socketed into his hand deeply as a rattlesnake. The man could in no way pry the tiny weasel off, and he had to walk half a mile to water, the weasel dangling from his palm, and soak him off like a stubborn label."
 -Anne Dillard, *Living Like Weasels*

- A vivid and perhaps unexpected anecdote (*for example, "Learning about slavery in the American history course at Frederick Douglass High School, students studied the work slaves did, the impact of slavery on their families, and the rules that governed their lives. We didn't discuss education, however, until one student, Mary, raised her hand and asked, 'But when did they go to school?' That modern high school students could not conceive of an American childhood devoid of formal education speaks volumes about the centrality of education to American youth today and also suggests the significance of the deprivation of education in past generations"*).

- An intriguing example (*for example, the mistress who initially teaches Douglass but then ceases her instruction as she learns more about slavery*).

- A provocative statement

"I am an academic call girl. I write college kids' papers for a living. Term papers, book reports, senior theses, take-home exams...."
 -Abigail Witherspoon, *This Pen for Hire*

- ❑ A related quotation (*Douglass writes that "education and slavery were incompatible with each other"*).

"'Where I was born and where and how I have lived is unimportant,' Georgia O'Keefe told us in the book of paintings and words published in her ninetieth year on earth. She seemed to be advising us to forget the beautiful face in the Stieglitz photographs. She appeared to be dismissing the rather condescending romance that had attached to her by then, the romance of extreme good looks and advanced age and deliberate isolation..."
 -Joan Didion, *Georgia O'Keefe*

- ❑ A puzzling scenario (*Frederick Douglass says of slaves that "[N]othing has been left undone to cripple their intellects, darken their minds, debase their moral nature, obliterate all traces of their relationship to mankind; and yet how wonderfully they have sustained the mighty load of a most frightful bondage, under which they have been groaning for centuries!" Douglass clearly asserts that slave owners went to great lengths to destroy the mental capacities of slaves, yet his own life story proves that these efforts could be unsuccessful*).
- ❑ A thought-provoking question (*given all of the freedoms that were denied enslaved individuals in the American South, why does Frederick Douglass focus his attentions so squarely on education and literacy?*)

5. **Pay special attention to your first sentence.** Start off on the right foot with your readers by making sure that the first sentence actually says something useful and that it does so in an interesting and error-free way.
6. **Be straightforward and confident.** Avoid statements like "In this paper, I will argue that Frederick Douglass valued education." While this sentence points toward your main argument, it isn't especially interesting. It might be more effective to say what you mean in a declarative sentence. It is much more convincing to tell us that "Frederick Douglass valued education" than to tell us that you are going to say that he did. Assert your main argument confidently. After all, you can't expect your reader to believe it if it doesn't sound like you believe it!

HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR INTRODUCTION DRAFT:

Ask a friend to read it and then tell you what he or she expects the paper will discuss, what kinds of evidence the paper will use, and what the tone of the paper will be. If your friend is able to predict the rest of your paper accurately, you probably have a good introduction.

FIVE KINDS OF LESS EFFECTIVE INTRODUCTIONS:

1. **The place holder introduction.** When you don't have much to say on a given topic, it is easy to create this kind of introduction. Essentially, this kind of weaker introduction contains several sentences that are vague and don't really say much. They exist just to take up the "introduction space" in your paper. If you had something more effective to say, you would probably say it, but in the meantime this paragraph is just a place holder.

Example: Slavery was one of the greatest tragedies in American history. There were many different aspects of slavery. Each created different kinds of problems for enslaved people.

2. **The restated question introduction.** Restating the question can be an effective strategy, but it can be easy to stop at JUST restating the question instead of offering a more effective, interesting introduction to your paper. The teacher wrote your questions and will be reading ten to seventy essays in response to them—he or she does not need to read a whole paragraph that simply restates the question. Try to do something more interesting.

Example of a weak opening that restates the question:

“Does Beowulf make the correct decision when he elects to fight the dragon? Yes, he does. The reason why is that he does indeed know, like all mortals, that he must die, and so he meets his fate heroically.”

Example of a more effective strategy:

“Beowulf’s arrogance, bravery, self-sacrifice and the loyalty he inspires in his men all make him one of literature’s most heroic figures. Although some critics, including Beowulf’s own retainer, have complained that fighting the dragon was a prideful and foolish act, he clearly had no other choice.”

3. **The Webster’s Dictionary introduction.** This introduction begins by giving the dictionary definition of one or more of the words in the assigned question. This introduction strategy is on the right track—if you write one of these, you may be trying to establish the important terms of the discussion, and this move builds a bridge to the reader by offering a common, agreed-upon definition for a key idea. You may also be looking for an authority that will lend credibility to your paper. However, anyone can look a word up in the dictionary and copy down what Webster says—it may be far more interesting for you (and your reader) if you develop your own definition of the term in the specific context of your class and assignment. Also recognize that the dictionary is also not a particularly authoritative work—it doesn’t take into account the context of your course and doesn’t offer particularly detailed information. If you feel that you must seek out an authority, try to find one that is very relevant and specific. Perhaps a quotation from a source reading might prove better? Dictionary introductions are also ineffective simply because they are so overused. Many graders will see twenty or more papers that begin in this way, greatly decreasing the dramatic impact that any one of those papers will have.

Example of a weak opening using a definition:

“The American Heritage Dictionary defines weak as ‘Lacking physical strength, energy, or vigor; feeble....Likely to fail under pressure, stress, or strain; lacking resistance: *a weak link in a chain.*’”

Example of a more creative approach:

“‘Asymptotic freedom.’ It was the first and only piece of text that had intruded into the long rows of equations and symbols that covered that morning’s blackboard. Perhaps that accounts for the words being so seared into my memory. Or perhaps it was just the first thing on the board that morning that made any sense to my numerically challenged mind. ‘Asymptotic freedom.’ What beautiful words. The dictionary defines the term as referring to ‘a property of the forces between quarks, according to quantum chromodynamics, such as that they behave almost like free particles when they are close together within a hadron.’ You would probably need a graduate course in quantum physics to truly understand the concept, but it is basically a fairly simple notion. An ‘asymptote’ is a line on a graph that extends into infinity.”

-Christopher Livaccari, qtd in *Frames of Mind*, 398

4. **The “dawn of man” introduction.** This kind of introduction generally makes broad, sweeping statements about the relevance of this topic since the beginning of time. It is usually very general (similar to the place holder introduction) and fails to connect to the thesis. You may write this kind of introduction when you don’t have much to say—which is precisely why it is ineffective.

Example of a weak “since the beginning of time” introduction:

“Since the beginning of history, poverty and inequality have been a problem for mankind.”

Example of a more effective approach:

“It is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town, or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads and cabin-doors crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags, and importuning every passenger for alms....

-Jonathan Swift, *A Modest Proposal*

5. **The book report introduction.** This introduction is what you had to do for your fifth-grade book reports. It gives the name and author of the book you are writing about, tells what the book is about, and offers other basic facts about the book. You might resort to this sort of introduction when you are trying to fill space because it’s a familiar, comfortable format. It is ineffective because it offers details that your reader already knows and that are irrelevant to the thesis.

Example: Frederick Douglass wrote his autobiography, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, in the 1840s. It was published in 1986 by Penguin Books. He tells the story of his life.

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AND IN CONCLUSION...

WRITING EFFECTIVE CONCLUSIONS :

A PRACTICAL GUIDE

Do you remember the last words spoken by your ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend, the final advice given in your senior year by your favorite teacher, the words spoken by your mother or father as you left for college? These important moments ended a passage in your life; thus, they took on heightened significance and resonated long after they were spoken. In the same way, a good conclusion continues speaking to and resonating with a reader long after he or she has finished reading it.

A GOOD CONCLUSION SHOULD:

1. Remind the reader of the thesis statement and answer the question, "So What?"
2. Give the essay a sense of completion and closure
3. Leave the reader with a final, lasting impression

2 QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE & MEMORABLE CONCLUSIONS

- ❑ The Frame or Full-Circle Technique: Here, a writer circles back to the beginning, returning to the metaphor, image, anecdote, quotation, or example he or she used in the introductory paragraph. Echoing the introduction gives essays a nice sense of unity and completion.
- ❑ Panning to the Horizon Technique: This technique moves the reader from the specifics of a paper or essay to a larger, perhaps even universal, point. It redirects the readers, giving them something meaty to chew over. You can demonstrate the importance and broad significance of your topic by using an appropriate analogy, tying the topic to a larger philosophic or political issue, posing a challenging question, or encouraging the reader to look to the future.

Teresa Sweeney & Fran Hooker

The Body of the Essay and the Importance of Topic Sentences

The term regularly used for the development of the central idea of a literary analysis essay is the **body**. In this section you present the paragraphs (**at least 3 paragraphs for a 500-750 word essay**) that support your thesis statement. Good literary analysis essays contain an explanation of your ideas and evidence from the text (short story, poem, play) that supports those ideas. **Textual evidence** consists of **summary, paraphrase, specific details, and direct quotations**.

There needs to be two or three paragraphs, each containing a different main point. In this section, use the details you have selected to prove or support your thesis statement and thereby answer the essay question. For each statement you make, have a supporting piece of evidence (a quotation, detail, or example) from the literature you are dealing with, but make sure you *are* making a statement, and not just retelling the story. There should also be transitional sentences between the body paragraphs. A transitional sentence will summarize the previous paragraph and introduce or flow into the next paragraph. They should be the first or last sentence in each paragraph. You will further examine organizing the body of the essay and using transitional sentences in another lesson in this unit.

Developing the Supporting Paragraphs

- The supporting paragraphs of your essay must be unified. In other words, their relationship with your thesis must be perfectly clear.
- Indicate how paragraphs link to or are related to each other as well.
- When you are interpreting literature, refer to specific details and examples from the literature to support your observations and analysis. As well, explain *how* these details and/or examples develop your observation and analysis.

Each of the paragraphs of your essay should contain a **topic sentence** (usually the first sentence of the paragraph) which states one of the topics associated with your thesis, combined with some assertion about how the topic will support the central idea. The purpose of the topic sentence is twofold:

1. To tie the details of the paragraph to your thesis statement.
2. To tie the details of the paragraph together.

The substance of each of your **developmental paragraphs** (the body of your essay) will be the explanations, summaries, paraphrases, specific details, and direct quotations you need to support and develop the more general statement you have made in your topic sentence. The following is the first developmental paragraph after one of the introductory paragraphs (C) above:

TOPIC SENTENCE

Sammy's descriptions of the A & P present a setting that is ugly, monotonous, and rigidly regulated. We can identify with the uniformity Sammy describes because we have all been in chain stores. The fluorescent light is as blandly cool as the "checkerboard green-and-cream rubber tile floor" (486). The "usual traffic in the store moves in one direction (except for the swim suited girls, who move against it), and everything is neatly organized and categorized in tidy aisles. The dehumanizing routine of this environment is suggested by Sammy's offhand references to the typical shoppers as "sheep," "house slaves," and "pigs." These regular customers seem to walk through the store in a stupor; as Sammy tells us, not even dynamite could move them out of their routine (485).

**EXPLANATIONS AND
TEXTUAL EVIDENCE**

This paragraph is a strong one because it is developed through the use of quotations, summary, details, and explanation to support the topic sentence. **Notice how it relates back to the thesis statement.**

NOTES:

STRATEGY: Make the quotation part of your own sentence without any punctuation between your own words and the words you are quoting.

- Example: In *Where I Lived, and What I Lived For* Thoreau states directly his purpose when he tells us that "[he] went to the wood because [he] wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if [he] could learn what it had to teach, and not, when [he] came to die, discover that [he] had not lived."
- Example: Thoreau argues that "shams and delusions are esteemed for the soundest truths, while reality is fabulous."
- Example: According to Thoreau, people are too often "thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls off the rails."

Notice the word "that" is used and replaces a comma (Thoreau says, "quotation" or Thoreau says that "quotation"). Also notice the alteration of the pronoun within the [] punctuation.

STRATEGY: Use short quotation- only a few words- as part of your own sentence.

- Example: Thoreau argues that people blindly accept "shams and delusions" as the "soundest truths," while regarding reality as "fabulous."
- Example: Although Thoreau "drink[s] at the stream of time" he can detect how "shallow it is."
- Example: In *Where I Lived, and What I Lived For*, Thoreau states his retreat to the woods around Walden Pond was motivated by his desire "to live deliberately" and to face only the "essential facts of life".

When you integrate quotations in this way, you do not use any special punctuation. Instead you should punctuate the sentence just as you would if all the words were your own.

*All of the strategies that are included are correct, but you should not rely too much on just one method. You should instead use a variety of methods.

The Title of Your Essay

It is essential that you give your essay a title which is descriptive of the approach you are taking in your paper. Just as you did in your introductory paragraph, try to get the reader's attention. **Using only the title of the literary work you are examining is unsatisfactory.** The titles that follow are appropriate for the papers (A, B, C) discussed above:

Robert Browning's Duke: So What's to Like?

The A & P as a State of Mind

"The Secret Lion": It's Hard to Grow Up

Audience

Consider the reader for whom you are writing your essay. Imagine you are writing for other students in your class who have about as much education as you do. They have read the assigned work just as you have, but perhaps they have not thought about it in exactly the same way as you. In other words, **it is not necessary to "retell" the work of literature in any way.** Rather it is your role to be the explainer or interpreter of the work -- to tell what certain elements of the work mean in relation to your **central idea (thesis)**. When you make references to the text of the short story, poem, or play, you are doing so in order to remind your audience of something they already know. **The principle emphasis of your essay is to draw conclusions and develop arguments.**

USING TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

The skillful use of textual evidence -- **summary, paraphrase, specific detail, and direct quotations** -- can illustrate and support the ideas you are developing in your essay. However, textual evidence should be used judiciously and only when it directly relates to your topic. The correct and effective use of textual evidence is vital to the successful literary analysis essay.

Summary

If a key event or series of events in the literary work support a point you are trying to make, you may want to include a **brief summary**, making sure that you show the relevance of the event or events by explicitly connecting your summary to your point. Below is an effective summary (with its relevance clearly pointed out) from the essay already quoted above on "The Secret Lion" (B):

The boys find the grinding ball, but later attempt to bury it (**SUMMARY**). Burying it is their futile attempt to make time stand still and to preserve perfection (**RELEVANCE**).

Paraphrase

You can make use of paraphrase when you need the details of the original, but not necessarily the words of the original: paraphrase to put someone else's words into your own words. Below is an

example (also from the paper on "The Secret Lion") of how to "translate" original material into part of your own paper:

Original: "I was twelve and in junior high school and something happened that we didn't have a name for, but it was nonetheless like a lion, and roaring, roaring that way the biggest things do."

Paraphrase: Early in the story, the narrator tells us that when he turned twelve and started junior high school, life changed in a significant way that he and his friends couldn't quite find a name for.

Specific Detail

Various types of details from the text lend **concrete** support to the development of the central idea of your literary analysis essay. These details add credibility to the point you are developing. Below is a list of some of the details which could have been used in the developmental paragraph from the paper on John Updike's short story "A & P" (*see the paragraph again for which details were used and how they were used*).

"usual traffic"
 "fluorescent lights"
 "checkerboard green-and-cream rubber-tile floor"
 "electric eye"
 shoppers like "sheep," "houseslaves," and "pigs"
 neatly stacked food
 dynamite

Using Direct Quotations

Quotations can illuminate and support the ideas you are trying to develop. A judicious use of quoted material will make your points clearer and more convincing. ***As with all the textual evidence you use, make sure you explain how the evidence is relevant -- let the reader know what you make of the quotations you cite.*** Below are guidelines and examples that should help you use quotations effectively:

1. Brief quotations (four lines or fewer of prose and three lines or fewer of poetry) should be carefully introduced and integrated into the text of your paper. Put quotation marks around all briefly quoted material.

Prose example:

As the "manager" of the A & P, Lengel is both the guardian and enforcer of "policy." When he gives the girls "that sad Sunday-school-superintendent stare," we know we are in the presence of the A & P's version of a dreary bureaucrat who "doesn't miss much" (487). ***Make sure you give page numbers when necessary. Notice that in this example the page numbers are in parenthesis after the quotation marks but before the period.***

Poetry example:

From the beginning, the Duke in Browning's poem gives the reader a sense of how possessive he really is: "That's my last Duchess on the wall, / Looking as if she were alive"

(1-2). We can't help notice how, even though the Duke is talking about her portrait, his main concern is that she belongs to him. **Notice that line # 1 is separated from line # 2 by a slash. Make sure you give the line numbers when necessary.**

2. Lengthy quotations should be separated from the text of your paper. More than **four lines of prose** should be double spaced and indented **ten spaces** from the left margin, with the right margin the same as the rest of your paper. More than **three lines of poetry** should be double spaced and **centered** on the page. **Note: do not use quotation marks to set off these longer passages because the indentation itself indicates that the material is quoted.**

Prose example:

The first paragraph of "The Secret Lion" introduces the narrator as someone who has just entered adolescence and isn't quite sure what to make of it:

I was twelve and in junior high school and something happened that we didn't have a name for, but it was there nonetheless like a lion, and roaring, roaring that way the biggest things do. Everything changed. Just that. Like the rug, the one that gets pulled -- or better, like the tablecloth those magicians pull where the stuff on the table stays the same but the gasp! from the audience makes the staying-the-same part not matter. Like that. (41-42) **Make sure you give page numbers when necessary. Notice in this example that the page numbers are in parenthesis after the period of the last sentence.**

Poetry example:

The Duke seems to object to the fact that his "last Duchess" is not discriminating enough about bestowing her affection. In the following lines from the middle of the poem, the Duke lists examples of this "fault":

Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The drooping of the daylight in the west,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace -- all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech. (25-30)
Make sure you give line numbers when necessary.

3. If any words are added to a quotation in order to explain who or what the quotation refers to, you must use **brackets** to distinguish your addition from the original source.

Example:

The literary critic John Strauss asserts that "he [Young Goodman Brown] is portrayed as self-righteous and disillusioned." **Brackets are used here because there is no way of knowing who "he" is unless you add that information.**

Brackets are also used to change the grammatical structure of a quotation so that it fits into your sentence.

Example:

Strauss also argues that Hawthorne "present[s] Young Goodman Brown in an ambivalent light." **Brackets are used here to add the "s" to the verb "present" because otherwise the sentence would not be grammatically correct.**

4. You must use **ellipsis** if you omit any words from the original source you are quoting. **Ellipsis** can be used at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the quotation, depending on where the missing words were originally. **Ellipsis is formed by either three or four periods with a space between each period.**

Original: "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise."

Example (omission from beginning):

This behavior ". . . makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise." **Ellipsis formed by three dots after the quotation marks.**

Example (omission from middle):

This maxim claims that "Early to bed . . . makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise." **Ellipsis formed by three dots used in place of the words "and early to rise."**

Example (omission from end):

He said, "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy . . ." **Ellipsis is formed by four dots before the quotation marks -- the fourth dot is really a period which ends the sentence.**

5. Use a single line of **spaced periods** to indicate the omission of an entire line of poetry.

Example:

The Duke seems to object to the fact that his "last Duchess" is not discriminating enough about bestowing her affection:

.....
 The drooping of the daylight in the West,
 The bough of cherries some officious fool
 Broke in the orchard for her, while the white mule
 She rode around the terrace -- like and each
 Would draw from her alike the approving speech. (26-30)

Punctuating Direct Quotations

You will be able to punctuate quoted materials accurately if you observe the following conventions

used in writing about literature:

1. When the quoted material is part of your own sentence, place **periods and commas** inside the quotation marks.

Example:

The narrator of "The Secret Lion" says that the change was "like a lion." ***The period is inside the quotation marks.***

2. When the quoted material is part of your own sentence, but you need to include a parenthetical reference to page or line numbers, place the **periods and commas** after the reference.

Example:

The narrator of "The Secret Lion" says that the change was "like a lion" (41). ***The period is outside the quotation marks, after the parenthetical reference.***

3. When the quoted material is part of your own sentence, punctuation marks other than periods and commas, such as question marks, are placed outside the quotation marks, unless they are part of the quoted material.

Example (not part of original):

Why does the narrator of "The Secret Lion" say that the change was "like a lion"? ***The question mark is placed after the quotation marks because it does not appear in the original -- it ends a question being asked about the story.***

Example (part of original):

The Duke shows his indignation that the Duchess could like everyone and everything when he says, "Sir, 'twas all one!" ***The exclamation point is placed inside the quotation marks because it appears in the original.***

4. When the original material you are quoting already has quotations marks (for instance, dialog from a short story), you must use single quotation marks within the double quotation marks.

Example:

Lengel tries to stop Sammy from quitting by saying, " 'Sammy, you don't want to do this to your Mom and Dad'. "

THREE CONVENTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WRITING A LITERARY ANALYSIS ESSAY

1. You must give a clear, full reference to the work and author you are writing about somewhere in your introductory paragraph (see the example introductory paragraphs A,

B, and C above).

2. Use the correct format for referring to the work you are discussing. The titles of short stories, poems, and essays should be placed in quotation marks; the titles of novels, plays, films, and TV shows should be either underlined or italicized:

"My Last Duchess" (poem)
 "The Secret Lion" (short story)
Pride and Prejudice (novel)

Antigone (play)
Forest Gump (movie)
Roseanne (TV show)

3. Use the *present tense* when you are discussing and writing about literature -- literary works are considered to exist in the present (*see all the example paragraphs throughout*).

CHECKLIST

1. Is the topic you have chosen to write about manageable for the length of the paper you are writing?
Is it too narrow or too broad?
2. Is your title engaging? Does it suggest the approach you are taking in your paper?
3. Does your first paragraph introduce your topic, name the writer and the work, and end with your thesis statement? Will it get the reader's attention?
4. Is your thesis clear? Does it state the central idea of your paper?
5. Is your paper organized in a way that your reader will be able to follow?
6. Are your developmental paragraphs unified (everything in the paragraph relates to the topic of the paragraph) and coherent (everything in the paragraph is arranged in a logical order)?
7. Have you used transitional words where necessary within each paragraph? Are there transitions linking all the paragraphs of your essay?
8. Does your concluding paragraph provide a sense of closure?
9. Have you used technical terms correctly?
10. Have you used brief summary, paraphrase, specific details, and direct quotations? Have you explained why you are using them and how they support your central idea?
11. If you have used information from sources outside the actual work of literature (for example, books of criticism), have you documented this information properly? To provide documentation for literary papers, you need to use **MLA documentation style, which can found in most English handbooks and in books on how to write research papers.**
12. Have you proofread your final draft?

Conclusion Like the introduction, the conclusion is also a complex paragraph. While it is set up in the reverse of the introduction, it is not simply a copy. The conclusion is often the forgotten paragraph, with students so eager to finish the essay; the conclusion is often thrown together without thought. Remember that the conclusion is the final thought in the reader's mind when they finish the essay. A strong conclusion adds immensely to the strength of an essay. If attacked properly, it is relatively easy to develop.

Concluding Your Essay

- Your conclusion should serve to remind your reader what it was that you set out to prove or to support (your thesis).
 - **Restate Thesis** When you restate the thesis statement, you need to reword and revamp it, so that, although it does state essentially the same idea, it is formed differently. By the end of the essay, the original thesis has been proven using the specific details you presented. The re-statement of the thesis should reflect this completion.
 - **Learned** Restates the author and title of the work and shows either what the characters or reader learned through the journey of the work (this must relate to the thesis), or sums up the main ideas in the essay. As in the introduction, the author and title can be separated into different sentences.
 - **Generalization** Similar to the generalization in the introduction, these sentences should reflect a generalization about society or life. This can now be accomplished either by reflecting what the characters learned, what the reader has learned (without using the first person), or what society should have/has learned.

The following is an example of a concluding paragraph that might be used in conjunction with the introductory paragraph above.

Marx rediscovers his beliefs and his identity as a Jew when he is forced to reevaluate his traditions of service to God within the confines of the army, whose tradition is service to country. He is also forced to wrestle with his moral beliefs about his obligations to others and to accept the dark side of his own inner nature. Through Nathan Marx, the author, Philip Roth, suggests that the essence of all traditions that have formed the foundations of societies that have endured is our ability to assess honestly what is truly important in relationships to others, to God and to ourselves.

Conclusions

As you have seen, a conclusion is similar to an introduction, but in reverse. Begin with a restatement of your thesis. Then, summarize the main points or state what has been learned. Finally, return to the generalization with which you began your essay. Following is a sample conclusion, based on the introduction you read in the previous lesson.

Thesis Restatement: **These harsh realities have caused Chris to withdraw into a world of his own. Sum Up: From the poverty of his childhood to the horrors of war, Chris is unable to deal with life's truths, so he creates a world of delusion. This eventually drives him out of the real world entirely, and into a mental institution. Through the character of Chris, Margaret Laurence has vividly depicted what can happen when someone cannot face reality. Generalization: Although many people have difficulty with this at times, when taken to extremes, it can have disastrous consequences.**

Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Essay Format English Language Arts

(How to answer...Discuss the idea the author develops re: topic.)

This format asks that you state a main idea/thesis and support that main idea/thesis with examples to convince your audience that your opinion is true. Use a formal tone for this composition. This means that your final copy should not sound like a conversation between you and a friend. As well, a critical/analytical response should not sound like a journal entry. It should sound confident and polite – **do not use contractions**. Avoid phrases such as “I think that...”, “In my opinion...”, “If you ask me...”, and “As you can see...”. The response requires a writer to be an informed and confident reader. Become an expert on the text you will be writing about by including a *close critical reading focusing on the topic question*.

I. INTRODUCTION

- a. GRABBER – general, theme-like statement to introduce the topic in the question: definition of a keyword as it applies to your topic, statistic, quotation, or intriguing statement.
- b. FOCUS - into **how this topic is developed**. State the literature and the author you will be discussing and the elements used to develop points on the topic within the text (e.g. In the text . . . , the author/director uses characters and situations to illustrate _____). Give a brief overview of the text and how it will link to the idea to transition into your thesis. This should not include core text details, but basic ones.
- c. CONTROLLING IDEA/THESIS STATEMENT: This is where you focus your essay for your reader into theme-like specific statements. You should include information that will lead into each body paragraph. These statements are not text specific, though must be based on the idea you will show is developed. Look at your examples and what they will support before writing your thesis. (Try to have one “big idea” or thesis statement followed by the controlling idea(s), one for each paragraph, or your thesis statement may result as a shaped discussion of your three controlling theme-like ideas in one phrase – umbrella statement.)
ALLUDE to the idea you are going to discuss and develop in your essay; do NOT go into detailed specifics, for these belong in the body paragraphs for support!

II. BODY PARAGRAPHS (3 minimum; likely no more than 4)

The information in your developmental paragraphs supports and proves your controlling idea/thesis statement to be believable and truthful. Three body paragraphs/arguments are required. Please note that if you choose to write on more than one text, it is best to refer to parts of them all – use transitions if you do so in the same paragraph, or split them up and use one for each body. Work chronologically, if possible; strongest argument last.

- a. CONTROLLING STATEMENT: *Topic statement*: a text-based idea statement; the point from the introduction on the topic addressed/supported/proven/discussed in this paragraph. It should be 2-3 sentences long to cover idea on topic developed based on the proof to follow.

- b. **EXAMPLE:** use examples (own words, imbedded quotations and paraphrasing the text) to show your supporting detail to your readers. Discuss the point identified in the topic sentence using specific details from the text, and develop the idea that you are trying to convey to the audience in your own words. *You will need THREE pieces of supporting evidence to support the idea for top marks, including direct quotes!!!!* This can be three examples of different people/things/aspects to support the idea, three examples of the same person throughout the text, or variations thereof, et cetera.

HOW TO... create the **Specific Example** from the text you're writing about. Find an example you can explain and imbed quotes from on the text, which supports the controlling idea and proves it "true". State the situation from the piece of literature (the context for the example), what happens/how the situation is addressed (action on topic), and what the outcome of the situation is to adequately prove your point. Each detail should have information in your own words, an imbedded quote or technical detail to show it IS in the text, and a follow up point of interpretation of the detail on the topic. **DO NOT** just repeat what the quote says; instead, explain how it shows the detail information and/or further develops your point. Support should be explicit, precise, and deliberately chosen to reinforce your idea in a deliberate and meaningful way. **Do NOT** summarize the text!!!!

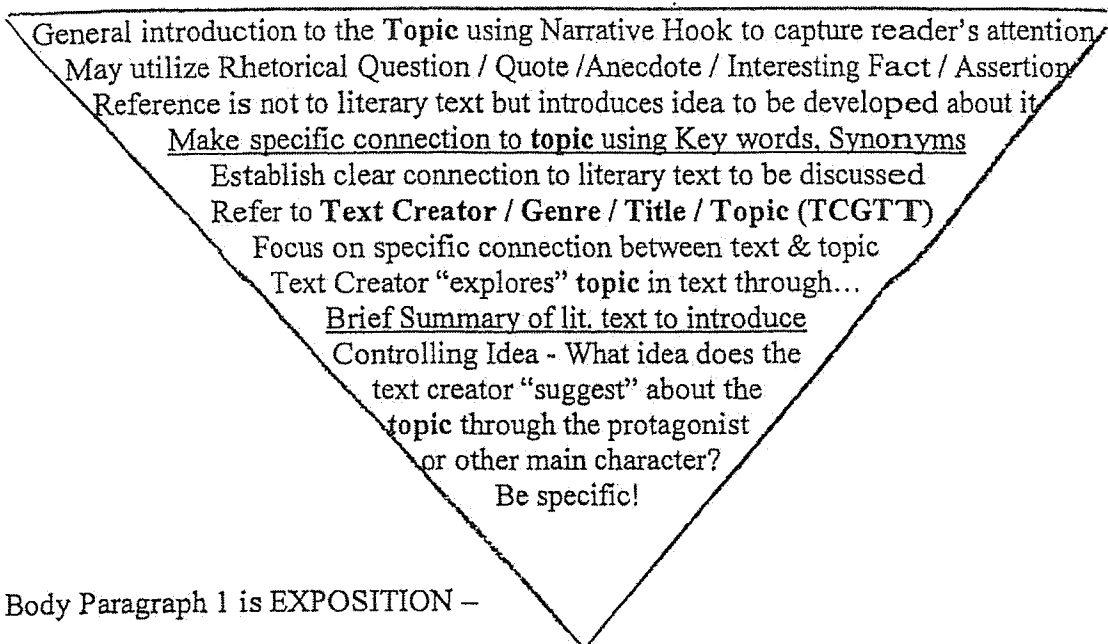
- c. **EXPLANATION:** FOR EACH EXAMPLE INCLUDED, qualify the connection between your controlling statement and your example – how does your example support the controlling statement of your paragraph? Communicate how the example demonstrates, develops, and/or reflects the idea from your controlling statement. Explain the importance of the quotation/detail you used. **YOU** are the expert – it is **YOUR** job to explain all connections and revelations in the example(s). These connections need to relate back to the thesis statement. **EXAMPLES WITHOUT STRONG CONNECTIONS MEAN VERY LITTLE!!** Build in the links as you go.
- d. **CLINCHER:** Sum up your paragraph's point/argument as it relates to the controlling idea of your essay. Remind your reader about the point you have made in your paragraph. In addition, attempt to also create a transition into your next paragraph. Transitional devices from paragraph to paragraph help to make your writing flow coherently and become more understandable and unified.

III. CONCLUSION

- a. **SUMMARIZE** your main points; restate your controlling ideas/thesis (look at your clincher sentences to help you). It may help to reverse the format of your introduction: restate your controlling idea/thesis statement in your first concluding sentence, then wrap-up the response **without** introducing new ideas. In addition, please be sure to give an overall point on how the proof as a whole demonstrates idea(s) on the topic – top students will also look at why the proof does so (an extra step of analysis); however, this is not **NEW** information, but a synthesis of the proof shown to make a final conclusion and/or generalization about the topic as shown **BY** the proof.
- b. **THINKER:** End with a thought provoking statement on your topic that will leave your reader thinking about and with an impression of your overall argument – this should be a strong statement that sums up your overall argument. Say something "quotable".

English Language Arts

Guidelines to Organizing the
Five Paragraph Critical/Analytical Essay
based on a Literary Text



Body Paragraph 1 is EXPOSITION –

- provide background that establishes how the topic affects the protagonist
- use actions of protagonist and interactions with other characters for support
- establish physical / psychological setting, circumstances that lead to conflict
- explore the initial conflict and explain how it reflects the topic
- use key words to connect to the topic and reinforce controlling idea

- transitional sentence to reconnect to controlling idea, reinforce topic and maintain cohesive flow of ideas between paragraphs

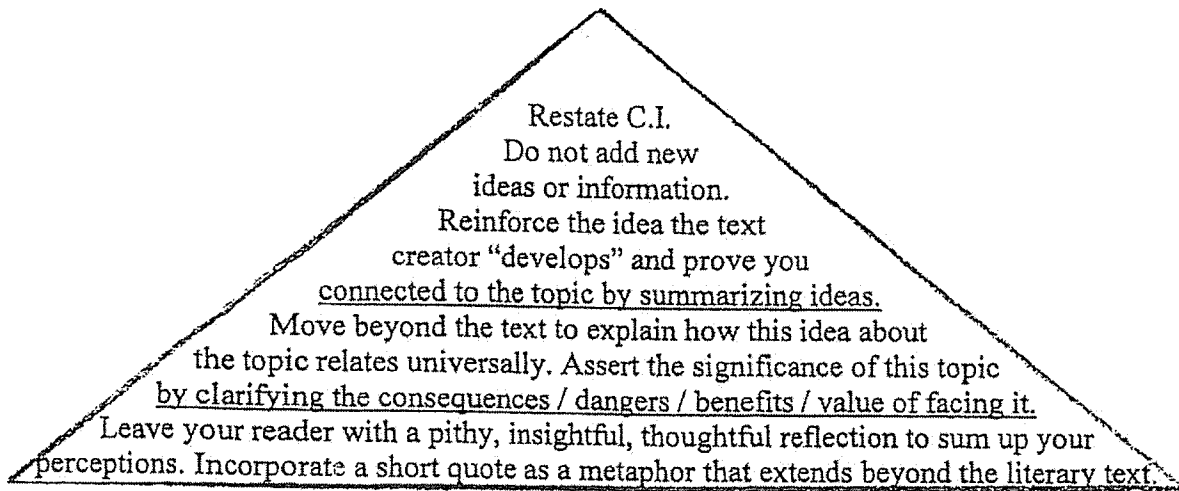
Body Paragraph 2 is EVOLUTION –

- as conflict intensifies explore how the protagonist reacts in connection to the topic
- explore and support how other characters react to the conflict
- explore and support the influence others have on the protagonist
- determine what factors interfere with the protagonist resolving the conflict
- connect the protagonist's attempts to resolve the conflict clearly to the topic
- continue to effectively develop the controlling idea using support from the text

- transitional sentence to reconnect to controlling idea, reinforce topic and maintain cohesive flow of ideas between paragraphs

Body Paragraph 3 is RESOLUTION –most significant reflection of the conflict occurs

- explore and support if protagonist resolves or fails to resolve the conflict
 - determine whether the protagonist changes / maintains resolve / fails to grow, achieves realization / experiences an epiphany which results in enlightenment...
 - explore this resolution or lack thereof using specific evidence from the text
 - make final connections to the topic and the consequences for the protagonist
 - reinforce controlling idea by explaining clear connections between resolution and topic
- transitional sentence to reconnect to controlling idea, reinforce topic and maintain cohesive flow of ideas between paragraphs



- Use transitional sentences (last or first) between body paragraphs to maintain the flow of your ideas
- Throughout your essay make specific, logical references by quoting the literary text and frequently reconnect to the topic using key words and synonyms.
- Organizational structure of body paragraphs moves From... Through... To...

The Dirty Dozen – okay, the dirty 15, but I know that is not right!

Rules: _____

1. Never dissect your essay.

Rule: _____

2. In the beginning, since the time and history began!

Rule: _____

3. Soapbox = Distraction!

Rule: _____

4. It is important that you have one!

Rule: _____

5. No Ewe POOP!

Rule: _____

6. In not out!

Rule: _____

7. A Book! I love this present!

Rule: _____

8. There is no I in Essay.

Rule: _____

9. Don't forget the "tion"

Rule: _____

10. A Lot! Oh never mind!

11. I've contracted a deadly disease, haven't I? (this is a two-for) ah poop (and four/for).

Rules: _____

12. I'm hear to watch a movie called movie.

Rules: _____

13. You only need pads in football.

Rule: _____

14. And the point is?

Rule: _____

15. And that's all folks.

Rule: _____

Sample.

MARKING RUBRIC
CRITICAL/ANALYTICAL RESPONSE

	Excellent	Proficient	Satisfactory	Limited/Poor	INS
Supporting Evidence 7.5	Support is explicit, precise and deliberately chosen to reinforce student's ideas in an effective and judicious way. A strong connection to student's ideas is maintained	Support is relevant, accurate, and occasionally deliberately chosen to reinforce the student's ideas in a logical and clear way. A clear connection to the student's ideas is maintained	Support is adequate and general, but occasionally lacking in persuasiveness and consistency. A straight-forward connection to the student's ideas is maintained	Support is often inappropriate or is irrelevant, over generalized and or lacking or repetitive. The connection to the student's ideas is vague or unrelated.	Student has written so little that it is not possible to evaluate or no reference has been made to literature or no evidence of an attempt to address the assignment
Thought & Understanding 7.5	Ideas are insightful, demonstrating a comprehension of subtle distinctions in the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are perceptive and illuminating.	Ideas are thoughtful, demonstrating a well considered comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are revealing and convincing	Ideas are relevant and straightforward, demonstrating a generalized comprehension of the literary text(s) and topic. Literary interpretations are general but plausible.	Ideas are superficial, oversimplified or irrelevant and/or do not develop the topic. Literary interpretations are incomplete or little comprehension is demonstrated	
Form and Structure 5	An effective arrangement of ideas and details contributes to a competent, controlled discussion that concludes appropriately. The unifying effect or controlling idea is sustained and coherently presented.	A considered arrangement of ideas and details contributes to a competent, controlled discussion that concludes appropriately. The unifying effect or controlling idea is sustained and coherently presented	A straightforward arrangement of ideas and details provides direction for the discussion that concludes functionally. The unifying effect or controlling idea is presented and maintained generally; however, coherence may falter	A haphazard arrangement of ideas and details provides little of no direction for the discussion A unifying effect or controlling idea is not maintained or is absent.	
Matters of Choice 5	Diction is precise and effective. Syntactical structures are effective and sometimes polished. Stylistic choices contribute to a confident composition with a convincing voice.	Diction is specific. Syntactical structures are generally effective. Stylistic choices contribute to a competent composition with a capable voice.	Diction is adequate but may be lacking in specificity. Syntactic structures are generally clear, but attempts at complex structures may be awkward. Stylistic choices contribute to a clear composition with a matter-of-fact voice	Diction is over generalized and/or inaccurate. Syntax is frequently awkward, confused or uncontrolled. The writing may be vague, redundant and/or unclear. Inadequate language choices contribute to a confusing composition.	
Matters of Correctness 5	This writing demonstrates confidence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The relative absence of error is impressive considering the complexity of the response	This writing demonstrates competence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. Minor errors in complex language structures are understandable considering the circumstances	This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar and mechanics. There may be occasional lapses in control and minor errors. However, the communication remains clear.	This writing demonstrates faltering control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar and mechanics. The range of errors blurs the clarity of communication.	

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Student Name:

Critical Essay Marking Guide

Essay Subject:

Scale & Focus		Excellent (5)		Proficient (4)		Satisfactory (3)		Limited (2)		Poor (1)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effectively do the student's ideas relate to the assignment? What is the quality of the literary interpretations & understandings? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideas are insightful and carefully considered, demonstrating a comprehension of subtle distinctions in the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are perceptive and illuminating. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideas are thoughtful and considered, demonstrating a competent comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are revealing and sensible. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideas are relevant & straightforward generalizing a comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are general but plausible. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideas are superficial demonstrating a weak comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are incomplete and/or literal. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideas are largely absent or irrelevant, and/or do not develop the topic. Little comprehension of the literary text(s) and/or the topic is demonstrated. 	
<p>Thought & Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-read the literature to gain an internalized appreciation & understanding. Need more depth and complexity to your ideas Do not use analysis/quotations as a substitute for your own writing and/or analysis Attempt a clear, original thesis which focuses precisely on the assignment and the literature in your introduction. 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Thought & Understanding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay on topic throughout the essay Use clear, relevant contextual or background information to reinforce rather than obscure your thesis. Avoid plot summary by limiting background information to essential information 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Thought & Understanding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support is precise, and astutely chosen to reinforce student's ideas in a convincing way. A valid connection to the student's ideas is effectively maintained. 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Thought & Understanding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support is specific and well chosen to reinforce student's ideas in a persuasive way. A sound connection to the student's ideas is capably maintained. 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Thought & Understanding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support is general, adequate and appropriately chosen to reinforce the student's ideas in an acceptable way but may lack persuasiveness. A reasonable connection to the student's ideas is maintained. 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Thought & Understanding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support is irrelevant, overgeneralized lacks validity, and/or is absent. Little or no connection to the student's ideas is evident. 	
<p>Supporting Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carefully select quotations, details, and scenes to support your thesis Ensure that quotations are short and clearly related to your focus/thesis Your textual information (paraphrases) etc. does not relate to your focus/thesis 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Supporting Evidence)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid inappropriate, personal, opinionated, judgmental comments. Your facts, information, & paraphrases are not correct, considering the selected literature. Your information needs to be precise and detailed. 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Supporting Evidence)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A judicious arrangement of ideas and/or details contributes to a fluent, discussion that is developed skillfully. The unifying effect or controlling idea is effectively sustained and integrated. 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Supporting Evidence)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A purposeful arrangement of ideas and details contributes to a controlled discussion that is capably developed. The unifying effect is coherently sustained and presented. 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Supporting Evidence)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A straightforward arrangement of ideas and details provides direction for the discussion that is developed appropriately. The unifying effect or controlling idea is presented and maintained generally; however, coherence may falter. The discussion concludes functionally. 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Supporting Evidence)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A discernible but ineffectual arrangement of ideas and details provides some direction for the discussion that is underdeveloped. A unifying effect or controlling idea is inconsistently maintained. The discussion does not conclude deliberately. 	
<p>Form & Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A coherent, focussed, and shaped discussion in response to the assignment. Maintenance of a unifying effect A developed and concluded discussion. 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Form & Structure)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an original and appropriate title You need to refer to both the author and the selections(s) in the introduction and perhaps the conclusion Use precise topic sentences/unifying ideas which provide smooth, logical transitions, making clear the relationship between one idea and the next in the body paragraphs. 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Form & Structure)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not introduce new material in the conclusion You need to remind your reader of your thesis, possibly with a key word or re-emphasis of a main idea. Need a thoughtful concluding statement which expands on the theme – a global or philosophical statement. You need a clear organization which includes and introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. 		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Form & Structure)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A haphazard arrangement of ideas and details provides little or no direction for the discussion and development is lacking or obscure. A unifying effect or controlling idea is absent. The conclusion absent and/or obscure. 					

Insufficient is not an indicator of quality. Assign insufficient when:
 The student has written so little that it is not possible to assess thought and detail OR No reference has been made to literature studying OR The only literary reference presents is to the selection on the examination OR The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment as stated.

STWPOINT

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Matters of Correctness		Matters of Choice	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sentence construction ◆ Usage ◆ Grammar ◆ Mechanics <p>Proportion of error to complexity of length of response must also be considered.</p>	<p>This writing demonstrates confidence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The relative absence of error is impressive considering the complexity of the response and the circumstances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Diction is precise. Syntactical structures are effective and sometimes polished. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a skillful composition with a capable voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Diction is specific. Syntactical structures are generally effective. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a considered composition with a capable voice.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Correct your spelling ◆ Capitalize correctly. ◆ Punctuate correctly: (You need to work on) -apostrophes, commas, semicolons, colons, quotations marks ◆ Need agreement between subject and verb 	<p>This writing demonstrates competence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. Minor errors in complex language structures are understandable considering the circumstances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Diction is adequate. Syntactical structures are straightforward but attempts at complex structures may be awkward. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a conventional composition with an appropriate voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Diction is imprecise and/or inappropriate. Syntax is frequently awkward and/or ambiguous. Inadequate language choices contribute to a composition with an undiscerning or uncritical voice.
<p>Additional Comments (please see highlighted comments above):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Need clear and consistent pronoun references. ◆ Need agreement between pronoun and antecedent ◆ Comma Splices are an issue. ◆ Run-on sentences are an issue ◆ Sentence fragments are an issue 	<p>This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. There may be occasional lapses in control, and minor errors. However, the communication remains clear.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Use a style appropriate to formal analysis ◆ Do not use slang, contractions, abbreviations, and cliches. ◆ Use the present tense consistently. ◆ Use the 3rd person pronouns and avoid "you" and "yr". ◆ Use quotations correctly, effectively, and appropriately and avoid padding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Diction is overgeneralized and/or inaccurate. Syntax is uncontrolled and/or unintelligible. Lack of language choices contributes to a confusing composition with an ineffective voice.
<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Matters of Correctness)</p>		<p>Tutorial Suggestions (Matters of Choice)</p>	
<p>Total Mark: /25</p>			

PART IV: MECHANICS, GRAMMAR, ETC.

Essential Writing Skills

Mr. T. Bonner



Mechanics

SALT

Powerful Verbs for Weaving Ideas in Essays

The following verbs are helpful as a means of showing how an example or quote in literature Supports an idea or interpretation.

Example + **Verb** + **Explanation or Significance**
(CD) + **(CM)**

You may use the above in a sentence as a general formula that may need modified to fit each situation.

Example from The Pearl: The act of hurling the pearl into the sea suggests that the beauty of the soul cannot be bought.
(Concrete Detail) **verb**
(Commentary)

Example from The Once and Future King: Arthur's hint of caution to Lancelot and Guenevere regarding Mordred confirms that he had suspected their affair all along; he had pretended not to know for their sake and for the sake of the kingdom.

Active Verbs

Note of Caution: Only use the verbs you're familiar with unless you take the time to examine the definition in the dictionary. **This is NOT a list of synonyms.** Each word has specific usage patterns that are unique to its meaning.

Literary Essay	Report or Persuasive Essay that refers to an expert's opinion or research studies	Report or Persuasive Essay that describes beginnings, causes, effects, etc.	Persuasive Essay that refers to the possibilities of what ideas can do, create, or assist with	Report or Persuasive Essay that involves laws or legal proposals
Alludes to Attests Clarifies Confirms Conveys Denotes Depicts Determines Displays Emphasizes Entails Establishes Exemplifies Explains Exposes Expounds Highlights Hints Illustrates Implies Connotes Indicates Portrays Represents Reveals Shows Signifies Substantiates Suggests Typifies Underscores	Analyzes Assumes Concludes Confirms Considers Construes Deduces Deliberates Demonstrates Examines Explores Identifies Imparts Indicates Maintains Manifests Misconstrues Observes Perceives Pinpoints Presumes Questions Reasons Refers Remarks Scrutinizes Speculates Substantiates Supports Supposes Theorizes Upholds Validates Verifies	Advances Affects Compels Discovers Empowers Forces Generates Ignites Impacts Imposes Incites Includes Influences Initiates Initiates Commences Instigates Introduces Involves Kindles Launches Leads to Presents Pressures Promotes Prompts Provokes Results in Sparks Stimulates Triggers Yields	Accomplishes Achieves Aids Alleviates Ameliorates Assembles Assists Attains Attempts Augments Builds Constructs Delivers Develops Discourages Emits Encourages Engenders Enhances Enriches Establishes Expands Facilitates Grants Improves Increases Manufactures Offers Produces Progresses Provides Reaches Supplies Transforms	Authorizes Allows Permits Sanctions Licenses Documents Consents Forbids Prohibits Disallows Endorses Bans Secures Guarantees Bars Outlaws Inhibits Hinders Prevents Precludes Thwarts Averts Defends Protects Safeguards Guards Neglects

Proper Punctuation Usage

This is a brief revisiting of punctuation you should know but may be using incorrectly. In regards to the Diploma, the marker will want to see you using punctuation properly with a variety of syntax demonstrating your skills as a writer.

; The Semicolon

- ✓ There are basically two uses for the semicolon. The first is to **connect two complete sentences to form one long sentence.**

Example: This could be one sentence; this could be another one.

- ✓ **Unless** you use a **conjunction** to connect these sentences such as and or but.

Example: This could be one sentence and this could be another one.

- ✓ You can also use the semicolon as a **super comma** when you have three or more items that would normally be separated by a comma except that each item already has a comma in it.

Example: On our holiday we visited Calgary, Alberta; Victoria, British Columbia and Toronto, Ontario.

: The Colon

- ✓ Used **formally or emphatically** to introduce a **series, list or quotation.**

Example: The students were asked to bring specific supplies to class: pens, paper, pencils, dictionary, thesaurus and coffee.

- ✓ When **extra emphasis** or **formality** is desired, a colon can be employed to introduce a **word, a phrase, or a clause.**

Example for word: There is one thing a student cannot do without: effort.

Example for phrase: Her goal was easily stated: an 80% on the Diploma Exam.

Example clause: Don't underestimate the most important advice: never ignore the importance of caffeine.

' The Apostrophe

- ✓ To show **omission** of letters.

Example: I'm (I am), they're (they are), isn't (is not).

- ✓ To show **possessive** of singular and plural noun's.

Example: Rhonda's dictionary or the students' assignment.

COMMON MISTAKES/CONFUSION: Do not use an apostrophe with possessive pronouns as they already indicate ownership.

Example: yours, his, ours, theirs, its *DO NOT confuse the meaning of it's (it is). It's an awesome course! But you have to apply yourself to appreciate its value.

Do not use an apostrophe for plurals.

Example: Their dog's bark was so loud it sounded like ten dogs howling.

, The Comma

- ✓ To separate a **list** of items.

Example: They could use poetry, short stories, plays, novels or film to respond to the exam question.

- ✓ To separate **phrases or clauses**.

Example: Although he wanted a better mark, he wasn't able to attend the course.

- ✓ Separate two independent clauses that are connected by a conjunction (linking words) such as but, yet, when, nor etc.

Example: They wanted to take the course but their financial situation would not allow it.

- ✓ Separate a **noun or noun phrase**.

Example: James Cameron, one of the most financially successful filmmakers of the century, comes from Canada.

COMMON MISTAKES/CONFUSION called the COMMA SPLICE: A mistake often made where a writer links two complete sentences with a comma.

Example of Splice: The students completed the exam, once they finished writing they wanted to get a coffee. Correct : The students completed the exam. Once they had finished they wanted to get a coffee.

Guidelines for Critical Essay Writing

Before you submit your essay to your instructor, it is important to check that you have fulfilled the guidelines for critical essay writing.

Formal language Only

- Avoid cliches.
 - Example: "method in his madness"
"by leaps and bounds"
"in this day and age"
- Avoid slang.
 - Example: "square"
"far out"

Avoid "I"

- Reserve "I" for personal writing. Critical/analytical writing requires you to remain objective, omitting personal views and bias.
-

Present the Facts

- In critical writing base your arguments on facts. You cannot make assumptions unless these can be supported by factual information from the literature.
-

Quotation Marks

- Use quotation marks to enclose chapter headings, titles of articles, short stories, and short poems.
 - Use quotation marks to set off direct quoted material from the text. If the quoted material has quotation marks change these quotation marks to singles and place double quotation marks around the entire quoted material.
-

Contractions

- Avoid contractions. A contraction is a word where one or more letters have been replaced by an apostrophe.
Example: don't
Use a contraction only if it is part of the quoted material.
-

Apostrophe

- When there is ownership, an apostrophe must be added to indicate this.
 - the car's tires
 - the girl's coats

- the sun's rays
- the teachers' room
- a day's wage
- The owner is indicated by what appears before the apostrophe. "The teachers' room" indicates there is more than one teacher.
 - Joint Ownership
"Have you seen Joyce and Greg's new camper?"
 - Individual Ownership
"John's and Marie's expectations of marriage couldn't have been more different."
 - Indefinite Ownership
Someone's raincoat has been left behind.
 - If Noun is Plural and Ends in "s," Add Only an Apostrophe
For five hours' work Marvin's pay was \$22.50.

If noun is singular and ends with a "s" or "z" sound, the possessive may be formed by adding just an apostrophe. When the singular noun is a one-syllable word, however, the possessive is usually formed by adding both an apostrophe and "s."

It's = it is

- It's doesn't show possession.
- Its is a possessive pronoun.
 - Example: Its color is radiant.
The dog licked its wound.

Avoid "you" or "we"

- Be specific and concise.
- Look at these examples. Which one is more compelling?
 - No: It is my opinion that smoking causes cancer.
Yes: Smoking causes cancer.
 - No: This writer believes that something must be done about this problem.
Yes: Something must be done about this problem.
 - No: In this play, we see Blanche as a tragic victim of circumstances.
Yes: In this play, Blanche is a tragic victim of circumstances.

Omission of Words in Quoted Material

- Use three spaced periods (ellipsis) to indicate an intentional omission. An ellipsis indicates an omission of one or more words within a sentence or quotation. If the omission ends with a period use four periods. Ordinarily, you do not use an ellipsis at the beginning or the end of a quotation.

Changing or Adding Words to Quoted Material

- Use square brackets [] to indicate that you have changed or added something in the quoted material. Normally, you should not change anything. However, sometimes you have to change or add a letter or a word to make the quotation fit grammatically into your sentence.
 - Original: He walked to the store.
 - Quotation: He told me that [h]e walked to the store.
-

Introducing Quoted Material

- After a word group introducing a quotation, chose a colon, a comma, or no punctuation at all, whichever is appropriate in context.
 - Colon:
If a quotation has been formally introduced, meaning with a full independent clause (sentence) not just "he said" or "she remarked" use a colon.
 - Comma
If a quotation is introduced with an expression such as "he said" or "she remarked" – or if followed by such an expression- a comma is needed.
 - When a quotation is blended into the writer's own sentence either a comma or no punctuation is appropriate, depending on the way the quotation fits into the sentence structure.
-

Placement of Punctuation With Quotation Marks

- A comma or period always goes inside the quotation marks. The rule never varies.
 - Some praised the performance as "excellent," and others thought it was only "fair."
 - An interesting method of approaching the story "A Cap for Steve" is to compare it with Morley Callaghan's "The Little Business Man."
 - The semi-colon and the colon always come outside quotation marks.
 - Read E.B. White's "Walden"; it is, I think, his best essay.
 - A question mark, exclamation point, or dash comes outside quotation marks unless it is part of the quotation.
 - What is meant by "dog eat dog"?
 - Our play was obviously a "bust"!
 - Did she say, "I have enough money"?
 - She asked, "Have I enough money?"
 - A single question mark comes inside quotation marks when both the non-quoted and the quoted elements are questions.
 - Who said, "Have I enough money?"
-

Parallelism

- If two or more ideas are parallel, they should be expressed in parallel grammatical form. Single words should be balanced with single words, phrases with phrases, clauses with clauses.
 - Wrong: David is responsible for stocking merchandise, all in store repairs, writing orders for delivery, and sales of computers.
 - Right: David is responsible for stocking merchandise, repairing items in the store, writing orders for delivery, and selling computers.

Diction (word choice)

- Work on broadening your vocabulary to build greater precision in what you write.
 - A key characteristic of good style is the ability to make every word count so focus on trying to find the best word to say exactly what you mean.
-

Sentence Variety

Do not pack too many ideas into one sentence. Ideas gain emphasis when they are separated into several shorter sentences. Sentences should vary in structure and length to avoid monotony.

Supporting Details

Provide many details to support your arguments. The more details the stronger your discussion.

Tense

- Generally, present tense is used in literary analysis. The present tense helps readers focus on ideas or characters from literature that are "alive" for you, the writer.
 - Be consistent with the tense. Avoid tense shifts.
 - Wrong: Alice Munro writes about a girl who lives on a farm. The girl liked to help her father.
 - Right: Alice Munro writes about a girl who lives on a farm. The girl likes to help her father.
-

Plagiarism

- All material in your writing derived from other sources must be acknowledged whether directly quoted or paraphrased (put in your own words). Otherwise, you are plagiarizing.
- Plagiarism (using someone else's work as if it is your own) is a serious moral, academic, and legal offence and if detected, usually results in serious consequences.

PART V: PAST TOPICS & DIPLOMA PREPARATION

What to do Prior to the Exam?

Mr. T. Bonner



Preparation

THEMATIC SUBJECTS OF PREVIOUS DIPLOMA EXAMS
ELA 30-1

- Jan 1984: approaches to life; risk-taking or seeking comfort/security
June 1984: overcoming/avoiding/being unable to control circumstances
Jan 1985: will to survive and endure; positive forces of life are reaffirmed despite conflicts with destructive or threatening forces
June 1985: self-awareness begins to develop when external events present individuals with new information
Jan 1986: how people are affected by and respond to the prevailing conditions, attitudes or values of their society
June 1986: individuals are affected by and act in response to the attitudes and values of their families
Jan 1987: characters are influenced by illusion and/or disillusionment
June 1987: personal quests of characters, motivations for the quests, the manner in which the characters deal with the situations they encounter in the course of their quests, and the outcomes of their quests
Jan 1988: human isolation
June 1988: the struggle to maintain identity through commitment to a belief, cause, or goal
Jan 1989: turning points
June 1989: external or internal limitations on people's lives
Jan 1990: self-discovery
June 1990: individuals who are outsiders within a society
Jan 1991: an ideal influences behavior
June 1991: influence of imagination in people's lives
Jan 1992: individuals respond to challenge
June 1992: individual choices
Jan 1993: desire to escape
June 1993: individual responses to significant dilemmas
Jan 1994: human isolation and its effect on individual lives
June 1994: influence of dreams, goals, or ideals in individual lives
Jan 1995: the effect of adversity on the human spirit
June 1995: the individual in the face of threatening forces
Jan 1996: the impact of significant experience
June 1996: the individual in the midst of conflict
Jan 1997: risk-taking
June 1997: ruling passion
Jan 1998: an individual's response to challenge
June 1998: turning points
Jan 1999: personal resourcefulness
June 1999: the pursuit of ideals
Jan 2000: the significance of an individual's perspective
June 2000: perseverance
Jan 2001: an individual's ability to adapt to situations; adaptation
June 2001: circumstances that compel us to respond
Jan 2002: characters' responses to unfamiliar situations
June 2002: individuals overcoming adversity
Jan 2003: characters' responses to the varied behaviors and/or beliefs of others; individual differences
June 2003: characters' responses to difficult situations; hardships

Jan 2004: significance of our memory of the past
June 2004: significance of determination in our lives

- Jan 2005: the pursuit of self-fulfillment
 June 2005: the desire for independence and the need for security
 Jan 2006: the effect an individual's perspective has on personal beliefs
 June 2006: the role that self-preservation plays when individuals respond to competing demands
 Jan 2007: the role self-respect plays when an individual responds to injustice
 June 2007: the significance of an individual's attempt to live unconstrained by convention or circumstances

Diploma Exam (June 08) Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about how acts of courage develop and nurture personal integrity.
Diploma Exam (January 09) Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the ways in which individuals struggle to restore honor and certainty.
Diploma Exam (June 2009) Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the significance of idealism and truth in an individual's life.
Diploma Exam (January 2010) Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the ways in which individuals pursue or compromise happiness.
Diploma Exam (June 2010) Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the ways in which individuals take responsibility for themselves or others.
Diploma Exam (January 2011) Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the conflict between pursuing a personal desire and choosing to conform
Diploma Exam (June 2011) Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the role adversity plays in shaping an individual's identity.

TOPICS:

risk-taking / daring / courage / non-conformity / individuality / acceptance / resignation / cowardice / conformity / confrontation / resistance / fighting back / exploring alternatives / avoidance / escapism / surrender / defeatism / choices revealing of beliefs, attitudes, values, personality / will to survive / endure / triumph; affirmation of human spirit / learning experiences altering a person's perception of himself or the world / self-discovery/ inner satisfaction / fulfillment / self-respect / external reward / success / acceptance / approval / influence of society's conditions, attitudes, values on an individual / illusion / dreams / ideals / perfection / reality / disillusionment / disappointment / adaptation / the quest: striving / searching / seeking challenges / exploring possibilities / the haven: seeking security / familiarity / comfort / safety / freedom: absence of external restraint / individuality / integrity / spontaneity / imprisonment / limitation / inhibition / conformity / isolation / alienation / separation / aloneness / identity (struggle to find or maintain) / commitment / beliefs / causes / goals / personal resolve / determination / endurance in the face of opposition / challenge / conflict / significant experience / threatening forces / adversity / dilemma / turning points / choices / opportunities / gaining knowledge / limitations / strengths / personal longings / imagination / ruling passions/ Responding to individual differences / responses to hardship / memories of our past / determination / self-fulfillment / desire for independence and need for security / new perspectives / self-preservation / the role self-respect plays when an individual responds to injustice / an individual's response to the constraints of convention or circumstance / the interplay between fear and foresight when individuals make life-altering choices / how acts of courage develop and nurture personal integrity

ELA 30-1 Major Grouping of Past Diploma Topics

Human wants, needs, qualities, and situations (Internal Forces)

- Personal resolve/resourcefulness/courage/determination
- Commitment to our goals/ideals/dreams
- Self-respect/personal integrity/self-preservation
- Human isolation/desire to escape
- The will to survive/endurance/perseverance/adaptation
- Quest for tolerance/wisdom/acceptance/independence/security
- Dealing with our limitations/fears/foresight
- Imagination/memories of the past/illusion vs. reality
- Self-discovery/identity/individual perspective/self-fulfillment
- Nature and effect of ruling passions

External Forces and Influences

- Threatening forces
- Significant experiences
- Adversity on the human spirit
- Societal influences
- Influential people
- Being in the midst of conflict/turmoil/hardships
- Unfamiliar experiences
- Family pressures
- Constraints of convention or circumstance
- Injustices

Means of Achieving Goals

- Dealing with dilemmas/competing demands
- Risk taking
- Making life-altering choices
- Coping with turning points
- Having compassion or seeking it out
- Relying on others for safety/security/assurances/comfort
- Aspiring to remain true to personal honour
- Being compelled to respond
- Responding effectively/appropriately to challenge(s)
- Acting in response to individual attitudes and values
- Overcoming/avoiding/being unable to control circumstances

English 30-1

Diploma Topics to Consider...

Consider how the effect of a new perspective has been reflected and developed in a text you have studied. Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator(s) about the effect an individual's perspective has on personal beliefs.

Consider the ways in which redemption is achieved in a text you have studied. Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator(s) about the significance in the pursuit of redemption.

Consider the nature of a character or group that intentionally dissembles in order to advance a specific agenda. Discuss the nature of deceit or misrepresentation as studied in a text.

Consider the significance of a journey by a character in a text you have studied. Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator(s) about the significance of his/her journey.

Consider how the effect of the past has been reflected and developed in a text you have studied. Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator(s) about the effect of the past on an individual's present and/or future.

Consider how success and failures have been reflected and developed in a text you have studied. Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator(s) about the role of triumphs and losses on an individual's journey.

Consider the nature of equality. Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator(s) regarding the nature of equality and its significance to an individual and/or group.

Consider the nature of beauty. Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator(s) regarding the perceptions of beauty as it contributes to an individual's ability to appreciate life.

Consider an individual's desire for success. Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator(s) regarding the motivation that drives an individual's ambition.

Keywords to consider in a diploma topic:

pursuit, challenge, compromise, conflict, struggle, maintain, progress, develop, significant, effect, cause, result, consequence, relate, compare, contrast, defines, opposes, role, nature... etc.

PREPARING FOR THE DIPLOMA EXAM (PART A: Written Response)

1. Review

- Choose two or three selections of literature or film that you enjoyed from the course. Be sure the selections are flexible to allow you to write on almost any possible topic. (FOR THE EXAM DO NOT WRITE ON ALL THREE; THIS IS IN PREPARATION FOR CHOOSING THE MOST APPROPRIATE SELECTION ONCE YOU SEE THE ACTUAL EXAM TOPIC)
 - Reread these selections and make summary notes. These notes should include:
 - name of selection and author's first and last name (correctly spelled)
 - names of the characters (correctly spelled)
 - key characteristics of the protagonist or narrator including brief, vivid illustrating quotations
 - key features of any significant character foils, including quotations
 - significant details of setting with well-chosen quotations to illustrate
 - brief summary of central conflict, both literal and symbolic
 - list of any important symbols, images, metaphors; including key quotations
 - brief statement of theme(s), with illustrating quotations
 - Memorize the details. Be prepared to connect these details to insightful ideas relevant to the topic.
 - Reread previous essays you have written; pay attention to both weaknesses and strengths.
 - Reread various sample essays to review further details, organizational patterns, smooth transitions, variety in sentence structure, variety in vocabulary.
- ### 2. Test Yourself
- Test your memory by constant review of summaries and selections.
 - Test your ability to write a Thesis/Controlling idea relevant to a variety of topics using all of your chosen selections. Remember, your thesis must express theme about the topic.
 - Test your ability to organize quickly by outlining several essays on several topics using a variety of selections. Each outline should include the thesis and the topic sentences for each subsequent paragraph, each one focusing clearly on some facet of the thesis. This is the most important test of all. If you cannot do it in the calm of the present, imagine how you will feel when your immediate future is dependent on the outcome!

- Test your ability to expand upon theme, as you will need to do in a conclusion. Remember, the conclusion is the last thing the markers will read before assigning a grade. Don't disappoint them!
 - Write, write, write. Through all your review and testing of yourself, do not simply stare at selections or at blank sheets of paper. Only by actually putting pen to paper will you discover what you need to know about your readiness to write quickly on any topic.
3. Find and read your BULLETIN (the handout with notes of interest regarding the Diploma Exam, Parts A and B).
 4. Review the Pilot exam/previous exams kept on file at the school
 5. Preview *Samples of Students' Writing* (see your teacher for these); they include evaluations and explanations of the marking criteria.
 6. Review the marking guides that will be used to assess your assignments. Be familiar with the evaluator's criteria.
 7. **Optional:** set up an appointment to discuss your literature of choice with your instructor. Bring your review charts and we can discuss specific elements/details that you may want to explore in the Diploma Exam. (Please don't leave this until the last minute.)

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE WRITTEN EXAM:

- Have your dictionary, thesaurus, pens (bring more than 2 blue or black ink pens), liquid paper, and your ID card (if necessary) in an obvious location where you will have to trip over these supplies to get out the door of your house. Nothing will rattle you more than having to hunt for this stuff under your bed the morning of the exam, except perhaps forgetting it altogether! So be prepared. (The Part B portion of your exam; the multiple choice, requires that you only use an HB pencil).
- Lay out comfortable, loose clothes so that you do not have to make major fashion decisions in the morning.
- Because you have reviewed well ahead of this night, you need not cram. Please read over your summary notes and be in bed by nine o'clock at the latest. There is nothing more valuable you can bring to an essay exam than a well-rested mind.
- Set two alarm clocks. Being late will make you feel frazzled.

ON THE DAY OF THE EXAM:

- Eat a nutritious, light breakfast. If you eat nothing, your brain won't work; if you eat too much, your brain may fall asleep during the exam.
- Plan to arrive at school at least half an hour before the exam
- Be calm. Avoid last minute, desperate cramming.

DURING THE EXAM:

- Remain calm and plan carefully.
- Read the whole exam--both the minor (Personal Response to Texts) assignment and the major (Critical/Analytical Response) assignment sections--before beginning any part of it.
- Begin with the part of the exam that makes you feel most comfortable so that you get off to a positive start.
- Underline the purpose of the assignment. Make sure you know what is asked for. Think about what literature or film selection (from the ones that you have reviewed) best fits the topic presented on the exam.
- Take a risk if it presents itself - wit, imagination, humor, style, form.
- **YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL ASSIGNMENTS.** Budget your time. This is essential. Make sure you complete all assignments. Use the suggested time given for each section of the exam.
- **Personal Response to Text Assignment (40%)** You will be given a topic and some combination of poetry, fiction, non-fiction, photographs, or artwork, and you will be asked to make a personal response by discussing – in prose – your ideas and impressions. There will likely be a variety of selections. You must respond to at least ONE of the texts on the exam. You do not have to respond to all texts presented; but at least one must be addressed. This is a crucial aspect of this assignment; there must be a direct link with your response and the text(s) given on the exam. If you do not make the connection your response could be judged insufficient. You will be asked to choose a prose form for your response. For a prose form you might choose a brief essay, a news article, newspaper editorial or column, a letter, or a diary entry and any of these might include narrative (storytelling), exposition (discussion or commentary), or argument. The choice will be yours, and the markers will be assessing your choice. The markers will be looking for a prose form that fits your ideas and expresses your ideas clearly. Whatever form you choose, you must fully develop your ideas. I would also make reference to the texts by quoting directly (Imbedding the references using italics is useful). You might also make reference to your own experiences. (*The Key* 30-1)
- Under the **Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Texts** you will be asked to explain how you made your choice. You will be given considerable freedom in responding. The examiners have stated that point form, or a mind map – or indeed, any suitable format – will be acceptable. Once again, this step is designed to help you through your ideas. The markers may use what you write here in grading your work. One of the factors that will guide you in your choice is that your choice must be a *literary text of sufficient length and complexity to ensure the*

presence of significant supporting detail. This step is designed to help you think about what you are doing. The examiners are encouraging you to make a thoughtful transition from the first assignment to the second. You are choosing a piece of literature that will allow you to develop the ideas that you will have already begun to work with. In telling the markers *how* you made your choice, you are also making yourself aware of what you are doing and why you are doing it. You are being guided to think more clearly. (*The Key 30-1*)

- **Critical and Analytical Response to Literature** (60%) is the second assignment. This assignment is linked to the first assignment. You will develop the ideas and impressions from the first assignment with reference to one or more works of literature that you have read and studied in your 30-1 course. The requirements of the assignment make it likely that your prose form will be some variation of the standard five-paragraph essay. You will likely choose to write introductory and concluding paragraphs and three or more body paragraphs. You may refer briefly to the texts included in the exam, but you must concentrate your attention on other texts that you have studied. (*The Key 30-1*)
- A planning page is part of the assignment. Under **Initial Planning**, you will be asked to name your texts and authors. If you are using a movie version of a play or book, make that clear.
- Of the time you spend on the major essay, at least ten minutes should be devoted to planning, since careful planning will save you time in the long run. Take special care with your thesis/theme/controlling idea, making sure it focuses explicitly on a theme relevant to the topic. (If your essay is judged off-topic, it may be assigned a zero).
- The controlling idea is basic to the essay. It is simply the familiar topic, or theme. (In a paragraph, the controlling idea is called the topic. In literature, the controlling idea is called the theme. In an essay, it is called the thesis statement.) The controlling idea is what a piece of writing is about; everything in a well-structured, well-organized work refers to the controlling idea. (*The Key 30-1*)
- **Do not choose more than 1 or 2 pieces of literature** to write about. The topic given will be general enough to apply to a great deal of literature studied in English 30-1. So, choose one of the most relevant pieces of literature that you have prepared. Also, make sure your topic sentences reflect the focus in the controlling idea. Don't spend all your time on the introduction so that you have to rush your conclusion later. Remember, your conclusion should make your marker feel like saying, "Wow!" when he/she puts your paper down.
- A conventional but usually foolproof introduction is the "funneled" type which moves from the general statement to a specific thesis by the last

sentence of the opening paragraph. The introduction must suggest a direction or attitude, in other words, a specific thesis.

- Include vivid details throughout your assignments. These details will make your writing clear, valid, and individualistic. Quote judiciously. Several quotations--say, one or two brief ones per paragraph in the major essay--will create an impression of conscientiousness. Over-quoting, however, will make it appear you have nothing of your own to say.
- Be selective in detail. Don't fall into plot summary; you will be severely penalized for this transgression. Make sure every detail is clearly tied to the point of a given paragraph. At the same time, you need to include enough detail so that even a reader unfamiliar with a particular selection can make sense of your essay.
- Strive for confident, fluent, natural expression. Write as quickly as possible so that your natural voice comes through--rather than that tortured one you imagine English teachers want to hear. Don't go overboard with a thesaurus or with enormously long sentences. (At the same time, avoid a succession of short, choppy sentences, and a preponderance of too ordinary word choices). Strive for variety in both diction and syntax (sentence structure). The odd "propriety" or "spontaneity" or "juxtaposition" (spelled correctly) might make a good impression; so will a correctly used semicolon.
- Use transitions between paragraphs and between ideas within a paragraph
- Leave time to proofread. Numerous errors (incomplete sentences, comma splices, failure to use the apostrophe in possessives, spelling mistakes) will bias the markers against your paper. Markers are instructed to be stringent about mechanics. **Please ensure that you have spelled the character's and author's names correctly throughout your essay.**
- Make sure you have identified the authors and selections of literature you intend to use (there is a space requesting this on the exam)
- In your minor essay (Personal Response to Literature), be lively and concrete. Do not write page after page of vague generalizations. Respond to the topic clearly and specifically, in an organized fashion.
- Have a well developed introduction (remember a paragraph is approximately 5-10 sentences). Have a conclusion that ties your ideas together and does not contradict the opening paragraph.
- Do not over-glorify the author of chosen literature.
- Do not try to write a rough and a good copy. This is a waste of time. Spend all of your time writing the finished copy. Be as neat as possible. If you use liquid paper, do not forget to make your corrections. Writing that is difficult to read may lead a marker to confuse sloppiness with dim-wittedness and to penalize your paper accordingly. Give yourself every advantage possible. If you leave out a word, write it in neatly above with

a carot (^) to indicate the addition. If you leave out a whole section, give the marker polite instructions to "Please turn to p. 6 for an added paragraph. Thank you." The marker will appreciate your good manners and follow clear directions.

- If you are typing your papers, you will still need to proofread your work carefully. Save your work often, be familiar with all word processing details, and ensure that both of your essays are in fact yours. No names can appear on your paper, ID numbers only. **Format your work using an easy to read 12 or 14 point font such as Times New Roman. Double space your final copy. Staple your final printed work to the pages indicated for word-processed work for each section. Hand in all work. Indicate in the space provided on the back cover that you have attached word-processed pages.**
- Never be chatty with the markers in your essay. Don't write personal information, jokes, doodles, swear words, slang, clichés, or apologies (i.e. "I never finished reading *Hamlet*, but I guess I'll try my best, here goes...")
- **Never, ever** begin your essay with, "In this essay I am going to talk about..." Be more creative and intelligent sounding.
- Strong voice and tone, unusual point of view, different characters from common selections, and of course, insight are things welcomed by markers.
- Have some effective adjectives and phrases in mind for tone/style, e.g. sardonic, existential, cynical, fastidious, terse, direct, sententious, impassioned, ornate, plodding, harmonious
- Underline or italicize titles of longer works (*Hamlet*, *Death of a Salesman*, *The Bean Trees*) and use quotation marks for shorter works and poems ("Boys and Girls", "The Rocking Horse Winner")
- Think of a creative title for your major essay and remember not to underline it.
- **Finally, I want you to do well, your parents want you to do well, and the markers want you to do well. Knock our socks off with the perceptiveness of your mind, the brilliance of your detail, and the fluency of your style!**

ENGLISH 30-1 REVIEW

Literary Selections

Title: _____

Author: _____

Genre: _____

Main Characters

Minor Characters

Significant Details:

Setting:

Brief Plot Summary (1-2 sentences):

Symbols:

Motif (recurring theme/symbol/object):

Style/Tone/Author's Techniques:

irony:

Theme(s):

Useful quotations:

ENGLISH 30-1 REVIEW

Literary Selections

Title: _____

Author: _____

Genre: _____

Main Characters

Minor Characters

Significant Details:

Setting:

Brief Plot Summary (1-2 sentences):

Symbols:

Motif (recurring theme/symbol/object):

Style/Tone/Author's Techniques:

irony:

Theme(s):

Useful quotations:

Process to prepare for the exam:

1. Link common thematic concepts from past topics list
2. Select appropriate literature- that which covers multiple broad themes
3. Develop a thesis/thematic focus (a general idea to prove)
4. Generate support for the focus with precise quotations/evidence
5. **KNOW** a minimum of three diverse texts to cover a wide range of concepts and when appropriate memorize meaningful quotations (details that could be applicable to a variety of concepts).

Diploma Concept:	Literary Text:	Thesis/Thematic Focus:	Supportive Details:	Supportive Details:	Supportive Details:

NOTES:

APPENDIX

Exemplars (Sample Essays & Responses) & Rationales

PERT EXEMPLARS



More Writing Exemplars and rationales can be found at:

<http://education.alberta.ca/admin/testing/diplomaexams/examples.aspx>

"The written responses in these documents are examples of diploma examination writings that would receive scores of Satisfactory (S), Proficient (Pf), or Excellent (E)."

Please use the above link for any Creative Responses, as none have been provided in this package.

PERSONAL RESPONSE TO TEXTS ASSIGNMENT

Suggested time: approximately 45 to 60 minutes

You have been provided with three texts on pages 1 to 4. In “Swing Valley,” by Frank Gaspar, the speaker reflects on a time when he and his companions experienced the joy of a momentary release from gravity. In the excerpt from “Home Place,” by Guy Vanderhaeghe, Gil MacLean’s adult son Ronald has returned to the security of the physical space that shaped his youth. Garry Winogrand’s photograph from 1962 captures a moment in a young couple’s visit to the zoo.

The Assignment

What do these texts suggest to you about the ways in which individuals pursue or compromise their happiness? Support your idea(s) with reference to one or more of the texts presented and to your previous knowledge and / or experience.

In your writing, you must

- use a prose form
- connect one or more of the texts provided in this examination to your own ideas and impressions

from HOME PLACE

It was Gil MacLean's speculation that his son married only to get his hands on land. Not land of Darlene's, she was a waif and a pauper and had none, but his land, Gil MacLean's land. He never entertained the idea that Ronald might have married out of loneliness, or lust, or any feeling of the remotest kin to either. Just land. That was why he was sometimes troubled, wondering what share of responsibility was his to bear for Ronald's current unhappiness. Maybe he ought to have transferred the title sooner, but he had never trusted the boy's judgment. Events appeared to have confirmed his suspicions. Ronald had his own farm now, a wedding present. A married man needed land, so his father gave him the farm that the MacLeans had always called the "home place." It gave Gil satisfaction to see it pass from father to son and he thought it might bring Ronald luck.

The home place consisted of the original quarter Gil's father had homesteaded, the pre-emption, and another 320 acres picked up cheap from a Finnish immigrant who went to pieces when his wife ran off on him. Over the years the MacLean family acquired other holdings but the home place was special. Situated in a valley, it was a mix of rich bottom land and steep, wooded hills. In the spring, down by the river, blizzards of gulls floated in the wake of tractor and disk, pursuing easy pickings, while hawks rode the air high above the lean hills and, shrieking, fell to plunder these lazy storms of white birds. To Gil it had all been beautiful. It was all he had ever wanted, to possess that place and those sights. A day spent away from the farm made him restless, cranky. Returning to it, even after the briefest absence, he acted oddly, dodging through the wires of a fence in his city clothes to wade about in his crop, hands running back and forth lightly over the bearded heads the way another man might absent-mindedly stroke a cat. Or he might suddenly strike off for the hills with all the energy and purpose of someone hurrying off to keep an appointment, tie flying over his shoulder.

His wife used to say: "Gil's gone off to satisfy himself that nobody so much as shifted a cup of dirt on this place when he was away."

What Gil never confided to his wife was that he felt more present in the land than he did in his own flesh, his own body. Apart from it he had no real existence. When he looked in a mirror he stood at a great distance from what he regarded, but with the land it was different. All that he had emptied of himself into it, he recognized.

The road to the home place ran due east without deviating a hair, rising and falling regularly as a sleeper's breath as it made its way over a succession of bare hills. The emerging sun drew his eyes into a squint when he topped a rise; the blue shadows in the hollows forced them wide again. In the back of the truck the slither and clatter of iron shoes was unremitting. The colt was either highly strung or lacked balance. If it lost its footing and fell it would be a task to get on its feet again; the box was narrow and there was little room for manoeuvring. He'd have to go back and get Ronald out of bed to help him.

Turning Ronald out of bed was not an easy job. Despite his son's difficulties falling asleep, once he was gone he wasn't likely to stir. Often he didn't wake before noon. Gil, on the other hand, roused to the slightest sound. That first night the gritty scraping of the shoes on the stairs had been enough to jerk him out of a dreamless sleep. He'd never been

one to lock doors, he had only himself to thank that a night intruder was climbing up to him. It was like the television and its stories of grinning madmen invading houses and arming themselves with drapery cords and butcher knives to strangle and stab. The old man bunched up his pillow and held it out before him, ready to parry the first knife thrust. The footsteps, however, went on past his door. Only when the toilet flushed did he realize it had to be Ronald.

He simply shook in bed for several minutes, too angry and too relieved to ask himself what his son might be up to. Finally he grew calm and curiosity prodded him out into the hallway to investigate. The light was on in Ronald's old bedroom and the door stood ajar.

Ronald was lying flat on his back on the bed, staring up at his model airplanes. As a teenager, even as a young man, he had exhibited little interest in anything other than building models of airplanes from kits, squeezing tubes of glue, pasting on decals, and painting engine cowlings with brushes whose tips he sucked into needle points. The models had never been removed. Forty or more of them hung suspended from the ceiling on fine wires; his room was almost exactly as he had left it when he chose Darlene. Flying Fortresses, Mustangs, Zeros, Spitfires, Messerschmitts, a whole catalogue of war planes dangled there. The light in the bedroom was also as harsh, pitiless, and glaring as it had ever been. When Ronald was fourteen he had unscrewed the bulb in the ceiling fixture and replaced it with a more powerful one. He also dispensed with the shade because he wanted the models hanging beneath the light bulb to cast their shadows on his bedspread and linoleum in the way fighter planes and bombers passing between sun and earth print their images on country lanes and city squares. These shadows were repeated everywhere about the room, and in their midst lay Ronald, gazing up into the strong light, gazing up at undercarriages and silhouettes.

"What's all this, Ronald?" his father said. "This is a hell of a time to pay a visit. It's past two."

Ronald said: "I can't stand it. I can't sleep there no longer." He kept his eyes fixed on the planes as he spoke.

Gil knew there was talk going around town about his son and his daughter-in-law, all of it unfortunate. Darlene had come stamped with the word trouble; he'd seen it from day one. The old man sighed and took a seat on the straight-back chair beside the dresser. Ronald was not exactly the forthcoming type, he was prepared to wait him out.

After a considerable stretch of silence his son said: "I should never have left." Gil knew what he meant. Ronald wasn't saying he ought not to have left Darlene; he was saying he should not have abandoned this room and the comfort and solace of those planes that could not fly.

Guy Vanderhaeghe

10 all caps.
YOUTHFUL AMBITIONS - ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ → Avoid see sucking up.

“Home place” by Guy Vanderhaeghe is a well-written excerpt that cannot help but evoke a strong sense of pity and understanding within the reader. It serves well to demonstrate the happiness and comfort that comes from familiarity. Such is the case with Gil MacLean, a traditional farmer who has spent his entire life in love with the land where he lives. His whole life was based around “the farm that the MacLeans had always called the ‘home place.’” The earth was an extension of Gil’s own life, an extra limb that held as much significance as an arm or a leg. It is clear from the authors’ depictions that Gil was exceedingly proud of the land he possessed, and not at all comfortable being away. In this way, it seems that his own happiness is connected to his homestead. It is described as being more recognizable to him than even himself; his life, his love, and his passions were all for the land that he, and his father’s before him, worked and possessed. Gil makes the assumption that it is the same for his son, Ronald, claiming, “He never entertained the idea that Ronald might have married out of loneliness... just land.” This contributes to the establishment of traditional values within Gil. He believes in a cycle: A man will own the land, work it, come to love it, and pass it along to his son. In this way he expects to create his son’s happiness for him, and perhaps this is what causes Ronald to attempt to pursue his own contentment. Evidence within the excerpt suggests that he get married and moved out, to follow his own dreams and establish independence from the joy that links his father to the homestead. Yet, the life he created for himself is not a happy one. Troubles at home drive him to continually return to the one place where he feels security – his father’s home. Gil is curious at this, at first. This is a new idea for him. He had never left his home; he was happy with his life. This alien concept of discontentment with life drives him to question his son. The eventual reply of, “I should never have left,” is swift to spark comprehension into his mind. It is comparable to the times he had to leave his farm, even for a day, and he could not help but feel restless and nervous. Ronald failed to find happiness in his

Stopping present tense corrections

Always present tense for lit.

nice parallel structure

intro comma

own wanderings, and thus is drawn back to where his heart has always been. He is matured, and finally understands his father's connection to the land he loves.

While I was growing up, my father tried many things to spend time with me. He spent so much effort to discover mutual interests, and ascertain an activity we could be happy doing together. I, in youthful arrogance, often shrugged him off, choosing to spend time with friends, or chase my own trivial interests. This continued as I grew older – I became a prodigal son, scoffing at my father and attempting to make my own happiness independent of him. This continued well into high school, until I finally had the insight to step back and review the life I led. I was not happy with what I found: poor choices in friends, a pessimistic personality, and strained relations with my father. I became overwhelmed with sadness and, like the prodigal son, began undoing my own mistakes in an attempt to reconcile the less-than-satisfactory life I had unwittingly chose. I have had to make difficult choices, and sacrifice some guilty pleasures, but I now find myself in a place where I can pursue a positive relationship with my father, and make up for years of lost time. The pleasant surprise is that I have been able to find happiness in that – the father-son bond I avoided while growing up has been unlimitedly beneficial for me.

PERFECT personal example

A bit short

Guy Vanderhaeghe makes a good point about young people and the pursuit of happiness. Youth who are unhappy with their lives harbor a tendency to pursue the things they claim to be passionate about. Often these passions are misguided, youthful ambitions, spawned by emotion or ignorance, which can lead them along a road to their own downfall. When they experience this sadness, they will be like moths in dark – drawn towards the light and warmth of the familiarity of their former lives.

↳ Very nice ~~idea~~ figurative lang →

Make more of the universal implications.

TRY TO FILL THE PAGE -

Nice!

PERSONAL RESPONSE TO TEXTS ASSIGNMENT

Suggested time: approximately 45 to 60 minutes

You have been provided with three texts on pages 1 to 4. In David Barber's poem "The Lather," the speaker recounts how a young man sees himself fulfilling his obligation to his father. In the excerpt from David Guterson's novel *Snow Falling on Cedars*, Hatsue Imada and her mother Fujiko are reconciled after Hatsue accepts responsibility and makes a choice. Taken in 1955, William Klein's photograph captures two youths whose lives intersect.

The Assignment

What do these texts suggest about the ways in which individuals take responsibility for themselves or others? Support your idea(s) with reference to one or more of the texts presented and to your previous knowledge and/or experience.

In your writing, you must

- use a prose form
- connect one or more of the texts provided in this examination to your own ideas and impressions

Fold and tear along perforation.

The following excerpt is set in an American relocation camp shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Because of their Japanese ancestry, the Imada family was compelled by law to report for registration and relocation. Hatsue Imada's mother, Fujiko, has just read a letter to Hatsue from Ishmael Chambers which was opened by Sumiko, Hatsue's sister. Both Hatsue and Ishmael are eighteen.

from SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS

When the door had shut she reached behind her and handed Hatsue the letter. "Here," she spat. "Your mail. I don't know how you could have been so deceitful. I'll never understand it, Hatsue."

She had planned to discuss the matter right there and then, but she understood suddenly that the strength of her bitterness might prevent her from saying what she really meant. "You will not write again to this boy or accept his letters," she said sternly from the doorway.

The girl sat with the letter in her hand, tears gathering in her eyes. "I'm sorry," Hatsue said. "Forgive me, Mother. I've deceived you and I've always known it."

"Deceiving me," said Fujiko in Japanese, "is only half of it, daughter. You have deceived yourself, too."

Then Fujiko went out into the wind. She walked to the post office and told the clerk there to hold all mail for the Imada family. From now on, she herself would come for it. It should be handed to her only.

That afternoon she sat in the mess hall and wrote her own letter addressed to the parents of the boy Ishmael Chambers. She told them about the hollow tree in the woods and how Ishmael and Hatsue had deceived the world for a number of years successfully. She revealed to them the contents of the letter their son had written to her daughter. Her daughter, she said, would not be writing back, now or at any time in the future. Whatever had been between them was over, and she apologized for her daughter's role in it; she hoped that the boy would see his future in a new light and give no more thought to Hatsue. She understood, she wrote, that they were only children; she knew children were often foolish. Still, both of these young people were culpable and must look to themselves now, examine their souls, consider this a matter of conscience. It was no crime to find oneself attracted to another, she wrote, or to believe what one felt was love. The dishonor lay instead in concealing from one's family the nature of one's affections. She hoped that the parents of Ishmael Chambers would understand her position. She did not wish for any further communication to pass between her daughter and their son. She had expressed her feelings clearly to her daughter and asked her not to write to the boy or accept his letters in the future. She added that she admired the Chambers family and had great respect for the *San Pedro Review*. She wished them well, all of them.

She showed this letter to Hatsue when it was folded and ready to go in its envelope. The girl read it over twice, slowly, with her left cheek resting on her left hand. When she was done she held it tightly in her lap and looked blandly at her mother. Her face, strangely, was drained of emotion; she had the look of one exhausted from the inside, too tired to feel. Fujiko saw that she had gotten older in the three weeks since they'd left San Pedro. Her daughter was suddenly grown up, a woman, weary from the inside. Her daughter had suddenly grown hardened.

"You don't have to send this," she said now to Fujiko. "I wasn't going to write him again anyway. I was on the train, coming down here, and all I could think about was Ishmael Chambers and whether I should write him a letter. Whether I loved him anymore."

"Love," spat Fujiko. "You not know about love. You—"

"I'm eighteen," replied Hatsue. "I'm old enough. Stop thinking of me as a little girl. You have to understand—I've grown up."

Fujiko removed her glasses carefully and, as was her habit, rubbed her eyes. "On the train," she said. "What you decide?"

"Nothing, at first," said Hatsue. "I couldn't think very clearly. There were too many things to think about, Mother. I was too depressed to think."

"And now?" said Fujiko. "What now?"

"I'm done with him," said Hatsue. "We were children together, we played on the beach, and it turned out to be something bigger. But he isn't the husband for me, Mother. I've known that all along. Anyway I wrote him, I said that whenever we were together it seemed like something was wrong. I always knew, deep inside, it was wrong, I felt it down inside somewhere—this feeling like I loved him and at the same time couldn't love him—I was always confused, every day. He's a good person, Mother, you know his family, he's really a very good person. But none of that matters, does it? I wanted to tell him it was over, Mother, but I was *leaving* ... it was all *confused*, I couldn't get the words out, and, besides, I didn't really know what I felt. I was confused. There was too much to think about. I needed to straighten it all out."

"And is it straighten out now, Hatsue? Is it straighten?"

The girl was silent for a moment. She ran a hand through her hair and let it fall, then the other hand, too. "It's straight," she said. "I have to tell him. I have to put an end to it."

Fujiko took her letter from her daughter's lap and ripped it neatly down the middle. "Write your own letter," she said in Japanese. "Tell him the truth about things. Put all of this in your history. Tell him the truth so you can move forward. Put this *hakujin*¹ boy away now."

David Guterson

¹ *hakujin*—white

Recognition

generally avoid word files



In the excerpt from the novel, Snow Falling on Cedars, David Guterson explores the idea of the interplay of a parent's responsibility to their child and a child to themselves. As the story unfolds to the reader, Fujiko, Hatsue's mother, reads a letter sent to her daughter from Ishmael Chambers. Fujiko finds out that her daughter has been involved with this boy for a period of time and that she has been deceived by Hatsue. Her immediate reaction is bitterness and anger. Although Hatsue responds with definite remorse, Fujiko's extreme disappointment in her daughter becomes apparent when she says, "Deceiving me, is only half of it, daughter. You have deceived yourself too." This suggests that Fujiko is not only upset that Hatsue has neglected her responsibility to family but that she has a deep understanding of the type of reputation that the nature of Hatsue's relationship will surely bring. Fujiko's natural reactions, like writing a letter to the Chambers to expose their children, expose her commitment to being responsible for her child. Nonetheless, the real issue at hand that she begins to recognize is that her daughter is responsible for herself, she is "suddenly, a grown up woman." Fujiko's revelation is that in order to act responsibly for someone else, sometimes the best answer is to let them be responsible for themselves.

Abt

Everyone in this world moves along their own journey of life. As a young girl, I identify with the hardships of growing up and accepting mature responsibility for my thoughts and my actions. Needless to say, the hardest part of growing out of adolescence is recognizing obligations we have as young adults. Not only is this hard for me as an individual with my own beliefs and desires but it is hard for my parents. Our parents often show that if they could walk us through every step of life, they would

* TRY FOR CONTROLLING MEASURES *

love to do so but they eventually realize that the ways in which adolescence learn is by their own experience. Life is a journey with obstacles where we learn our own lessons and gain understanding of our individual selves. Frequently, our decisions reflect responsibilities we may have as parents or adults that are difficult to recognize but must, for the good of ourselves and others.

Even though I have never experienced the specific conflict in the excerpt, I have been faced with competing responsibilities to my family and myself. As a young girl, I was very intelligent. Growing in my knowledge and strengths, my parents had decided my destiny before I could. Because I am quite argumentative and able to use logic and reason to evaluate a situation, my family has always been encouraging of me to pursue a law career. For the longest time I had agreed to this idea and felt excited that my family felt so proud of me. My parents told everyone, "Our girl is going to be such a good lawyer!" In the past two years, the terrific idea of becoming a lawyer has worn off. My desire for teaching young children has left me with the responsibility to use that gift and stay true to whom I want to become. Being in my grade twelve year, I have been looking into in the Bachelor of Education programs instead of arts. Hiding this from my parents, was the only option in order to avoid their disappointment. Finally, a few weeks ago, I mentioned the idea when the topic of school was mentioned that I would like to pursue a degree in education. My parents, seemed to take it as a joke, shaking it off as silly, temporary aspiration. Upon discovering that I have applied to universities for the Bachelor of Education program, disappointment did follow. I felt as though I had let down my family's high expectations for me, and my responsibility to be the type of person they wanted me to be. After a while, I realized that had I not remained true to myself, I would

feel much worse in the long run. Eventually, as my family discovered my passion for children they began to understand the responsibility I have to myself as well. This particular event has is significant as it has taught me ^{Naense} a lot about the complexity of responsibilities and the necessity as parent – which I will one day be, to allow your children to grow on their own.

Responsibility can be complicated. An important aspect to remember is that responsibilities may change. The most important aspect in beginning to reconcile these possibly conflicting responsibilities is to recognize them for what they are, in order to continue to grow as a person. Recognition that individuals will be consistently faced with these competing responsibilities between self and others are essential in understanding human tendencies.

Well written!
 CRITICAL SECTION IS A BIT ON THE SHORT SIDE, BUT YOU PURPOSEFULLY EXPLORE THAT SECTION.

PERSONAL MOVES TO E RANGE

English Language Arts 30-1, June 2010
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient-1 (Pf)

Initial Planning

To which of the provided texts are you responding? What is the connection between the text(s) and your response?

Know Falling on Cerhirs

Parents + realization that children must learn
for themselves

What idea do you intend to explore and how does it address the topic?

~~Hatsue's obligations to herself, to decide
how she feels, and how to act on it~~

Fujiko's obligation as a mother, to allow her
daughter to act on her own decisions + Hatsue's individual
resp. to herself + being true to herself + making
this decision alone.

State your choice of prose form. Choose from prose forms that you have practised in English Language Arts 30-1. You may respond using a personal, creative, or analytical perspective. Do NOT use a poetic form.

Personal response essay.

English Language Arts 30-1, June 2010
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient-1 (Pf)

1. ~~Hatsue + responsibility to herself~~ regardless
of ~~what her mother thought~~.

Fujiko + resp. to her daughter.
allowing her to learn her own
lessons + act on her decisions.

2. ~~life experience~~ → ~~leaving my family +~~
~~study abroad / stay at home~~.

Q. East vs. West none

~~Q. Q. Q. Q.~~
Although ~~individuals~~ people sometimes
find ~~it~~ difficult in accepting
~~responsibility~~, individuals
must learn to accept
their obligations to accept
to themselves ~~and~~ others.

English Language Arts 30–1, June 2010
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient–1 (Pf)

Acceptance

Growing up is no easy task. Everybody knows that, and yet, parents still have trouble accepting some of the difficulties we face as adolescents. The basic problem of it all, is that eventually, we all need to start thinking for ourselves. Our parents would love to walk us through each step in life, but then we would never learn. It is a test in life, to learn lessons on our own, and gain individual meaning. Often, responsibilities to ourselves play a large role in the decision making process. Although people sometimes find difficulty in accepting responsibility, individuals must learn to accept their obligations to themselves and others.

In the excerpt from the novel, Snow Falling on Cedars, by David Guterson, the idea of personal responsibility becomes apparent. Fujiko, Hatsue's mother, has read a letter addressed to her daughter from Ishmael Chambers, an eighteen-year-old boy. Upon this reading, she discovers that her daughter has been secretly involved with this boy for quite some time. Initially, she is shocked and disappointed, telling Hatsue that she has been deceiving her family, and that "she had deceived herself too". This comment suggests that her mother thinks she knows more about this kind of relationship than her daughter does, and that by keeping her emotions hidden, Hatsue has neglected her responsibilities to her family. After telling Hatsue that she is never to write to Ishmael again, or even to accept his letters, Fujiko goes on to write to Ishmael's parents, exposing the young couple's deceitful secret. This action shows Fujiko's attempt to remain true to her obligation as a mother. In her mind, she is saving her daughter from developing an undesirable trait by exposing the nature of their relationship. Additionally,

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient-1 (Pf)

when Fujiko finally shows Hatsue the letter, she begins to realize that her daughter is eighteen, and that she is a woman now. This revelation is demonstrated in Fujiko's thoughts when she discovers "her daughter was suddenly grown up, a woman". This particular revelation installs a feeling understanding in Fujiko's heart, she now knows of the struggle Hatsue has been dealing with, and that she is a lot older than she first realized. When Hatsue finally confides in her mother that she is done with Ishmael, and has come to this decision after extreme consideration, Fujiko rips up the letter she has just finished writing. "Write your own letter", she tells Hatsue, "put all of this in your history". These final words from Hatsue leave the impression that she has finally accepted her daughter's newly found responsibility to herself, and has decided to nurture this, instead of opposing it.

Although I have never been faced with the trials described in the excerpt, I have experienced a situation in which my personal responsibilities were competing with my responsibilities to my family. My mother was born and raised in Quebec, and for as long as I can remember, my future involved post-secondary education in Montreal. However, as I got older, I became less and less sure of this idea. Entering grade twelve, my final year of high school, I knew a decision was going to need to be made. Having half my family in Quebec has always been a great experience. Every summer, my family and I would take a trip out east, to visit and catch up. I love it out there, I truly do. My parents have always told me that they were planning to retire in Montreal, and that they would shortly follow my departure. The pressure was overwhelming. Every single member of my family talked about my moving to Montreal as if it

English Language Arts 30-1, June 2010
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient-1 (Pf)

were an established fact, and not a simple possibility. As much as I love Quebec, I was not sure whether or not I was ready to leave my friends and community here in Edmonton. I felt as though I had no say in the matter, and when I brought up the idea of staying, my family simply laughed it off. Eventually, this grew to be too much for me. I needed to take action. I decided that, along with my applications to numerous eastern universities, I would also apply to local institutions. I told myself, if I got accepted at the University of Alberta, I would stay here to continue my education. My family did not know about my application. When received a letter explaining that I had been given conditional acceptance into the Bachelor of Arts program ^{at} ~~and~~ the University of Alberta, my parents were anything but excited. They were shocked to say the least, and hurt that I hadn't informed them of this decision. Eventually, the truth came out, and I told them that I felt my responsibility to myself, was greater than the obligations thrust upon me by my family. Initially, they were angry, but when I turned eighteen, they slowly began to realize that I was becoming an adult, and that I needed to make these decisions on my own. This event has been one of the most significant in my life, and I have learnt a great deal about responsibility because of it.

Responsibility is a funny thing, and it is not hard to become consumed by it. One important detail that must never be overlooked, is the fact that the acceptance of change in obligations is necessary to grow as a person. Recognition that individuals will consistently be faced with competing responsibilities is crucial in understanding human nature. The balance between these responsibilities, however, is one to be cherished when found.

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English Language Arts 30–1 June 2010
 Personal Response to Texts Assignment

EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT–1

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p>Ideas and Impressions (Pf)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student’s exploration of the topic is purposeful. • Perceptions and/or ideas are thoughtful and considered. • Support is specific and strengthens the student’s ideas and impressions. <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>The student begins the response with an exploration of the <i>Snow Falling on Cedars</i> excerpt, emphasizing the point of view of Fujiko. The student establishes a sympathetic tone toward Fujiko, with an interpretation which casts her letter to the Chambers family as an “attempt to remain true to her obligation as a mother.” This perception is a thoughtful and considered treatment of an older character, which is sustained through to the end of the paragraph, when the student examines Fujiko’s act of ripping the letter: “she has finally accepted her daughter’s newly found responsibility to herself, and has decided to nurture this, instead of opposing it.”</p> <p>The student then ties in a personal experience similar to Hatsue’s situation. Although going to university in a different province than the family’s expectations of Québec is not a perfect parallel, the student observes that “my personal responsibilities were competing with my responsibilities to my family.” The family’s response to the student’s application, “They were shocked to say the least, and hurt that I hadn’t informed them of this decision,” heightens the similarity between the student and Hatsue and contributes to an exploration of the topic that is purposeful. The student’s observations about “the struggle Hatsue has been dealing with” and that “Every summer, my family and I would take a trip out east, to visit and catch up. I love it out there, I truly do” effectively highlight the difficulty of their respective positions and provide support which is specific and strengthens the student’s ideas and impressions. The student’s exploration of this experience, summed up in the concluding ideas, “Responsibility is a funny thing, and it is not hard to be consumed by it,” “individuals will consistently be faced with competing responsibilities,” and the “balance between these responsibilities, however, is one to be cherished when found,” is thoughtful and considered.</p>

English Language Arts 30–1 June 2010
 Personal Response to Texts Assignment

EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT–1

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p>Presentation (Pf)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The voice created by the student is distinct. • Stylistic choices are specific and the student’s creation of tone is competent. • The unifying effect is capably developed. <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">Pf</p>	<p>The student creates and sustains a voice that is distinct throughout the response, as in: “I decided that, along with my applications to numerous eastern universities, I would also apply to local institutions.” The student’s creation of tone is competent, a personal but not informal approach, as the reader can see in lines such as: “Additionally, when Fujiko finally shows Hatsue the letter, she begins to realize that her daughter is eighteen, and that she is a woman now” and “My parents have always told me that they were planning to retire in Montreal, and that they would shortly follow my departure.” The student also shows an ability to make stylistic choices that are specific in sentences such as: “Upon this reading, she discovers that her daughter has been secretly involved with this boy for quite some time” or “This comment suggests that her mother thinks she knows more about this kind of relationship than her daughter does, and that by keeping her emotions hidden, Hatsue has neglected her responsibilities to her family.”</p> <p>The student’s response begins and closes with an effective discussion of growing up and accepting responsibility, framing the treatment of Hatsue’s situation and the student’s own experience in a larger exploration. Additionally, a sustained formal tone is used whether the student is exploring the excerpt or the personal experience involving family and university, and this consistency of tone contributes to a unifying effect which is capably developed.</p>

English Language Arts 30-1, June 2010
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent-1 (E)

Initial Planning

To which of the provided texts are you responding? What is the connection between the text(s) and your response?

Snow Falling on Cedars. There is a strong connection between me and Hatsue. We are two young adults ready to take responsibility for our future and decisions, while our parents still see us as immature or not ready to become independent. In the end, Hatsue's mother gives the responsibility to her daughter, while I contemplate if my parents made the right decision in doing the opposite.
What idea do you intend to explore and how does it address the topic?

A parent's responsibility to their child. When should they give responsibility and let their children go their own way? Were my parents right in planning my future out for me? Do parents have the right to take responsibility for their child when he/she is choosing their own future?
^{to individuals}
^{to others} ^{university/life path}

State your choice of prose form. Choose from prose forms that you have practised in English Language Arts 30-1. You may respond using a personal, creative, or analytical perspective. Do NOT use a poetic form.

Personal Analytical

English Language Arts 30–1, June 2010
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent–1 (E)

The balance between a parent's control over their child and the child's individualism and personal choice is a fine balance which slowly tilts to the latter as the child grows older. When people are young, they are in need of a guidance figure; they often need to follow the instructions of a person who has greater wisdom and experience in life. However, there comes an age where young people need to undertake responsibilities; they need the power to make their own decisions which can result in the progression of their maturity or in unforeseen consequences which they alone must take accountability for. In *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson, Fujiko Imada, the mother of Hatsue, attempts to put an end to the relationship between Hatsue and Ishamael Chambers, a white male of the same age. Fujiko wrote a letter to the parents of Ishamael, claiming the relationship could no longer continue between the two of them. Fujiko wrote "that they were only children", and she knew that children were often foolish, blinded by the new feelings of attraction which they have started to develop towards others; feelings which sometimes sway children into making irresponsible choices in their relationships, without fully thinking about the potential consequences or thinking about if the relationship is truly about love. Too commonly, children won't think at all, and just act in response to their raging hormones. For these reasons, parents feel they have to intervene, take responsibility for their children, and end what they are gambling is not true love. In *Snow Falling on Cedars*, Hatsue, an eighteen-year-old, takes responsibility for herself after her mother notices the look of exhaustion Hatsue displays, seeing it as a reflection of maturity and of thought put towards the issue. In the final paragraph provided, Fujiko finally passes the torch to her daughter. The act of ripping the letter she wrote and telling

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English Language Arts 30–1, June 2010
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent–1 (E)

her daughter to take responsibility for herself by writing her own one, is symbolic of her mother giving the authority to her daughter, consenting that her daughter can decide what is best for herself. It is necessary for all individuals to go through such development; such is the manner of the vicissitudes of life. However, what qualities in their children do parents look for to see if they are ready to undergo their rite of passage? It is irresponsible to give an under-experienced child full responsibility for themselves, while it is just as irresponsible to infringe upon a mature child's decisions for their future. Such is the crisis I find myself in, a battle for authority over my life between myself and my overprotective parents.

I don't blame them wholly, I realize their tight grip upon my circumstances is merely a result of their sympathy and care; they still believe they know what is best for me better than I do for myself. However, if you want your child to ever become a fully independent and responsible individual, you have to give them the experience that comes from making wrong decisions. In the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "good judgment comes from experience and experience comes from bad judgment". You learn more when reflecting upon what you did wrong than reflecting upon what you did right.

Ever since I was a child, I have wanted to be an artist. I love spending my time pouring over random and sometimes absurd projects. My parents noticed this when I was less than five years old; I had an unnatural talent for art. During my childhood, I was involved in countless art courses and clubs, but only as long as I kept an A average in school. This was until I told my parents I wanted to be an artist when I grew up. At first,

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English Language Arts 30-1, June 2010
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent-1 (E)

they acknowledged my bold statement with a generic "that's nice". When I told them I was being serious, and when they saw that look of utter sincerity in my declaration, my father, a banker, prohibited me from continuing in art, and immersed me into a strictly educational school.

They spoon-fed me my future, and although I had feelings of deprivation, I still believed that they were doing what was best for me at the time. After all, I was only ten years old. Yet as I aged, that idealized whited-sepulchre that is Royal Bank Plaza--that which is my parent's vision of my future (and their expectation of my future), was starting to corrode, and its thin layer of white paint was starting to peel. A year ago, I foresaw my future there, one where my success in life would be measured by the number of floors I had to go up each morning. I hated it. I hate the constrains of a boxed-in job where you can only move vertically, but never outside and never around. And now, I regret more than ever letting them decide which university program I will be attending next year. Business. No art minors are allowed with my full course schedule. There will be little opportunity for me to express my creativity in the way that I do it best. I don't know if art is the appropriate career path for me, but I know that I will not belong where my parents intend me to be. I will accept the fact that at ten years old, they still have authority to decide what is best for me. Yet at seventeen and eighteen, what kind of child will you raise if you parent them to an extent that gives that child no decision, no responsibility for their right choices, wrong actions, or even inactions?

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English Language Arts 30–1, June 2010
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent–1 (E)

In the words of Walston, "life is the art of drawing without an eraser." You can't go back in time and get rid of something you aren't proud of doing. You can only draw yourself a new course that deviates when you feel you're going the wrong way. I diverged from my path when I was ten years old, and have been leaving a trail of what might make my parents proud, but I see as a failure to myself. As I move away from my parents, the freedom I will be given will be incomprehensible to me; while ensuring I kept my academics at their standard, I fell way behind in personal independence and in taking responsibility for myself. I don't know what to expect in life after I tell them I'm going to take the responsibility for my future, I don't even know if my choices will be correct. I only know that I will be making these right and wrong choices, and that independence is, to me, wealth beyond digits.

English Language Arts 30–1, June 2010
 Personal Response to Texts Assignment

EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT–1

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p>Ideas and Impressions (E)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student’s exploration of the topic is insightful. • Perceptions and/or ideas are confident and discerning. • Support is precise and aptly reinforces the student’s ideas and impressions. 	<p>The student explores the topic insightfully, recognizing that “a fine balance” exists between parental control and “the child’s individualism and personal choice.” Although most people, when young, are “in need” of guidance and “the instructions of a person who has greater wisdom,” the student observes that “there comes an age where young people need to undertake responsibilities; they need the power to make their own decisions.” The student’s conclusion that maturity can only result when there is a shift in responsibility from parent to child and, more importantly, when there is an acceptance of “unforeseen consequences” frames an insightful exploration.</p> <p>The student’s explication of the excerpt from <i>Snow Falling on Cedars</i> and the use of precise support reinforce the initial metaphor of a shifting balance of control and responsibility between parent and child as Fujiko must initially take responsibility for Hatsue’s behaviour with Ishmael because children are “often foolish” and make “irresponsible choices.” This understanding juxtaposed with the idea that Fujiko “finally passes the torch to her daughter” when Hatsue assumes control of her own life by taking on the responsibility for writing to Ishmael is discerning. The student’s perception that the “ripping of the letter” by Fujiko is “symbolic” of her “giving the authority to her daughter, consenting that her daughter can decide what is best for herself” is confident. The student then relates the personal experience of having “a battle for authority over my life between myself and my overprotective parents,” which is a battle between the parental expectations of a “spoon-fed” future in banking and the student’s desire “to be an artist.” The student precisely parallels the opening premise by acknowledging that an initial acquiescence to “my parent’s vision” had shifted over time as the “idealized whited-sepulchre that is the Royal Bank Plaza” had started to “corrode.” The student’s refusal “to blame them wholly” for their attempts to control the student’s future, and the subsequent uncertainty as to whether “art is the appropriate career path for me” or even “if my choices will be correct,” demonstrate the recognition of ambiguity inherent in crucial life choices when individuals take responsibility for themselves in defiance of parental expectations. The conclusion that ultimately only the individual can make “these right or wrong choices, and that independence is, to me, wealth beyond digits” is mature and insightful.</p>

E

English Language Arts 30–1, June 2010
 Personal Response to Texts Assignment

EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT–1

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p>Presentation (E)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The voice created by the student is convincing. • Stylistic choices are precise and the student’s creation of tone is adept. • The unifying effect is skillfully developed. <p style="text-align: center;">E</p>	<p>The metaphoric and figurative language evident in “A year ago, I foresaw my future there, one where my success in life would be measured by the number of floors I had to go up each morning,” “I hate the contrains of a boxed-in job where you can only move vertically, but never outside and never around,” and “I diverged from my path when I was ten years old, and have been leaving a trail of what might make my parents proud, but I see as failure to myself” demonstrates the creation of a convincing voice.</p> <p>Stylistically, the student convincingly melds an analytic examination of the text with a personal account through a variety of techniques such as precise choices of diction as in “feelings which sometimes sway children,” “parents feel they have to intervene, take responsibility for their children, and end what they are gambling is not true love,” and “such is the manner of the vicissitudes of life”; the use of rhetorical questions as in “However, what qualities in their children do parents look for to see if they are ready to undergo their rite of passage?” and “Yet at seventeen and eighteen, what kind of child will you raise if you parent them to an extent that gives that child no decision, no responsibility for their right choices, wrong actions, or even inactions?”; and the purposeful variation of sentence length as in “I hated it” and “Business.” The student’s creation of tone is adept, evident in: “Too commonly, children won’t think at all,” “You learn more when reflecting upon what you did wrong than reflecting upon what you did right,” and “You can’t go back in time and get rid of something you aren’t proud of doing.”</p> <p>The unifying effect is skillfully developed through the student’s seamless transition from the literary excerpt to a personal life experience. The student begins by applying the central idea of taking control over one’s life (and the requisite acceptance of the consequences that go with such decision-making) to the excerpt and then adeptly traces that pattern in the personal narrative, concluding with the acknowledgement that an uncertain future crafted by the individual’s own hands is preferable to a predictable future imposed by well-intentioned parents.</p>

NOTES

CARL EXEMPLARS



More Writing Exemplars and rationales can be found at:

<http://education.alberta.ca/admin/testing/diplomaexams/examples.aspx>

"The written responses in these documents are examples of diploma examination writings that would receive scores of Satisfactory (S), Proficient (Pf), or Excellent (E)."

Please use the above link for to see the full range of responses. You can use them to compare your work from class, and see how to move up scoring categories

Example:

Character – Miss Brill – lives in a fantasy world –
imagines she lives a glamorous life, and important part
of the lives of others

Goal – contentment, escape from isolation of her real life

Conflict/obstacle – mocked by a young couple

Realization/Resolution – sees herself as others see her,
realizes the loneliness and emptiness of her life and is
devastated.

Themes – reality vs. illusion, desire for
companionship/struggle to belong

Thesis Statement – Miss Brill lives in an imaginary
world where she experiences a sense of contentment as
she imagines herself an important part of other people's
lives. She is eventually forced to face the gloomy reality
of the life she truly lives, and her feelings of contentment
and self worth are destroyed.

Character/ goal

Conflict

Realization/ result

Controlling idea stated explicitly – allowing imagination
to blur one's reality can lead to both positive and
negative consequences

2. Create an introductory paragraph

If you have difficulty with writing an introduction, here is a simple first-paragraph template that you might find helpful.

- Write a sentence that introduces the topic and text(s) you will be using.
- Write several sentences that explain the topic and present your thesis statement, including the order of the evidence you will be supporting.

Example: Introductory Paragraph

In the short story "Miss Brill," Katherine Mansfield depicts an elderly woman who lives within a fantasy world created by her imagination. She resorts to this to escape from the isolation and loneliness of her real world, and, by so doing, her life becomes more interesting and fulfilling. In her fantasy world, she experiences a sense of contentment as she imagines herself as an important part of other people's lives and as possessing a life better than those around her.

Introduces the topic imagination, and the text selected

Unfortunately, her fragile world is shattered, forcing her to face the gloomy reality of the life she truly lives. Her feelings of contentment and self-worth are destroyed once she realizes the emptiness and loneliness of her real world.

Thesis statement - opinion with the three supports identified as:
 1. *She experiences a sense of contentment*
 2. *She imagines herself an important part of others' lives.*
 3. *Her fragile world is shattered.*

- 8- Explore alternative beginnings to find the one that works best for the idea that you are developing. The *first sentence* is an important sentence because it introduces the mood and tone of your writing.

3. Create your developing paragraphs

The *first support* for the thesis is the main idea of **Body Paragraph A**, the *second support* for the main idea of **Body paragraph B** and the third support is the main idea of **Body Paragraph C**. Both follow the same pattern as **Body Paragraph A**.

Each developing paragraph contains the following elements:

- An effective introductory and topic sentence that focuses on the aspect of support for the thesis that you will be developing in this paragraph.
- Development of your supporting idea by explaining it in a few sentences. To bring power to your position, you must include concrete *evidence* from the text(s). Direct quotations are only useful if they precisely support your idea. Direct reference to events, character traits, literary symbols etc. are all considered useful evidence.
- *Explain* your interpretation of the evidence in detail. The markers will be looking for evidence of your thinking. You need to demonstrate your intellect, your thinking, and your ability to interpret literature to the marker.
- *Elaborate* by specifically, and overtly *connecting the information* in this paragraph to your thesis.
- A *transition sentence* must be considered. Transitions are necessary between paragraphs. They can happen at the end of paragraphs or in the introduction to a new paragraph.

Example: Developing paragraph A

Miss Brill is content and happy to live within her fantasy world; a world wonderful within her own mind. This world affords her delightful routines which, on most occasions, brings her to the Jardins Publiques where she enjoys the surroundings of nature, music, and people. On one particular Sunday afternoon, she dresses up for her outing, completing her ensemble with her fox fur piece; a piece she has had for a long time and which she is proud of. From her position on a park bench, she watches and internally comments on what she sees. Miss Brill is a keen observer of the people around her and she weaves what she sees and hears into imaginative, glamorous events. She notices an elderly gentleman in a velvet coat, and a woman with knitting in her lap. She is disappointed that they are not speaking as she had become quite expert "at listening to people's conversations, as though she wasn't listening." She turns her attention to other people and their activities around her. As she sits, she does not ponder her own solitary life as she is happy to enjoy the splendor of the day.

Topic sentence clearly identifies the first support: she experiences a sense of contentment.

Specific details from the story to demonstrate her contentment

Concluding sentence

Example: Developing Paragraph B

Ironically, as Miss Brill observes the other people—especially those occupying benches and chair—she fails to see the parallel between herself and them. [She notes that Sunday after Sunday, the same people are drawn to the park and something is “funny” about all of them.

Transition and topic sentence that clearly identifies the second support: imagining herself as superior to others, and an important part of their lives

They were odd, silent, nearly all old, and from the way they stared, they looked as though they’d come from dark little rooms or even cupboards. She perceives these people as being different; as being “less” than what she is. As well, she does not see herself as being rejected like the violets the young woman throws away or like the woman in the ermine toque is being carelessly cast

Support, including symbols of her rejection but she ironically does not perceive

aside by the man in the suit. [Even more sad is that Miss Brill, wearing her own fur piece, cannot see her own image mirrored in the woman who appears to be as shabby as the ermine toque she wears. Miss Brill, rather, imagines herself as being superior to these people; an intricate part of the stage performance that is re-enacted in the park each week. She fantasizes that her absence would be noticed if she were not present, so integral is her role. She takes delight in this fantasy and envisions telling the old gentleman to whom she reads that she is not a mere English teacher, but an actress. She is enthralled by this fantasy and feels as though she is one with all the members of the company. Her imaginary world is, indeed, fulfilling.]

Concluding sentence

Example: Sample Paragraph C

Despite her excitement with her imaginary world, Miss Brill overhears a conversation which completely shatters her illusions and alters her life. A boy and girl, in love, sit near her, and Miss Brill prepares to listen. The boy wishes to kiss the girl but she insists that she cannot let him because of that stupid old thing at the end there. The girl then begins to giggle at the poor soul wearing the fur that looks like a fried whiting (fish). Miss Brill is shattered when she realizes that the young couple are mocking her. She leaves the park, not bothering to stop for her ritualistic slice of honey cake, and hurries home. Once inside, she realizes how dark her room is, like a cupboard. Her world is no longer bright and splendid, but depressing and stark in reality. This reality is even more bleak when compared to the imaginary world of her fantasies. Her fur piece symbolizes the shabbiness of her life, and as she replaces it in the box, she imagines she hears something crying. Although she seeks loneliness of her life is devastating

Transition and topic sentence that clearly identifies the third support: her fragile world is shattered.

Support, including symbolism of her dark room and fur piece.

Concluding sentence

4. Create a Concluding Paragraph

- Generalize your thesis beyond the text(s) to explicitly connect your controlling idea to the assignment topic
- *Summarize* your major points
- End with a strong sense of closure.

Example: Concluding Paragraph

In “Miss Brill,” Mansfield emphasizes both the positive and negative effects of the imagination, and what results when imagination is allowed to blur one’s view of reality. Initially, Miss Brill is content living within the parameters of her fantasy world. Feelings of fulfillment are deepened as she perceives herself as being integral to the “performance” and the people around her; she views her own life as being “more” than what it truly is. When her illusion is shattered, however, the harshness of the reality she is compelled to face is devastating.

Topic sentence explicitly states the controlling idea as a generalization beyond the text and connects to assignment topic

Summary of report and significance of support.

Thoughtful observation connected to resolution/effect on character

Alternate Way of Writing a Critical/Analytical Response

There are many ways of creating an effective critical/analytical response. The sample presented below contains the elements necessary for organizing an effective response (introduction, controlling idea, developing paragraphs, topic sentences, concluding sentences, supporting evidence and concluding paragraph) but uses a different method of development. It was written in response to the following topic:

Consider how the **pursuit of self-fulfillment** has been reflected and developed in a literary text or texts you have studied. Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator(s) about an **individual’s attempt to secure the satisfaction of self-fulfillment**

An Explication of a Student Essay in Critical Analysis.

Here we will be doing (a particular kind of) *critical examination of a* expository/argumentative essay. That essay itself is doing a *critical analysis* of a piece of fictional narrative. (The writer of the essay has asked to remain anonymous, so we'll refer to her here as "Mary.")

[Keep in mind that criticism, in the sense in which we are using the term, is not synonymous with "fault-finding." See the general discussion of critical analysis.]

In the left-hand column below you will see how Mary notices what some of the moves are by which Katherine Mansfield went about setting up the situation we are confronted with in her story "Miss Brill." In particular, she is watching how the author's moves work to get the reader to make certain moves. In the course of her calling attention to the features of the story that "work" to produce certain effects, she has occasion as well to call attention to the conventions the author takes for granted that readers will be working under if they are to produce these effects (infer these meanings, have these reactions) on the basis of the facts she chooses and arranges to construct what the narrator explicitly conveys.

In the right-hand column you will see me doing a particular kind of critical analysis (in the most general sense of the term) of Mary's essay. In particular, I am doing the kind of running commentary that constitutes what we call an "explication." Notice that the order of my points there is dictated by the order in which the features commented upon unfold in the essay that is their subject. This is the mark of explication. Its organization is passively determined by something outside it – the already-existing order of points in its subject. In writing an explication we don't have to confront the problems of organization that "higher forms" of exposition must solve: I just took over (followed) the organization that was already embodied in Mary's essay. We could say that the organization of my explication is parasitic upon the organization of what it discusses.

This is not the case with Mary's essay itself. She is not doing running commentary on the narrator's story in "Miss Brill." *She is showing how the point of view by which the story is disclosed to the reader contributes to the overall theme of the piece.* This confronts her with three basic tasks. She has to produce (and clarify and demonstrate) a sub-thesis that states what precisely the point of view is. She has to commit herself to a statement (another sub-thesis) about what the story's theme is (or at least about what some essential part of it is). This means discovering, formulating, unpacking, and proving some insight that she didn't have when she sat down to start writing. And she has to shape the particular way in which she develops each of these theses in such a way that we can see how the features of point of view that she's calling attention to make possible the features of the theme she's calling attention to. *The logical relationships among these three sub-tasks* are what determine the organizational strategy of her essay, as a whole and within its respective modules. What does

not determine the organizational strategy is the plot of Mansfield's story. Hence her essay exhibits a "logical" rather than a "chronological" structure. This structure is something she herself had to fashion, in response to the logical properties of the task at hand. She had to assume the responsibility for actively making it.

Before getting into the detailed explication provided below, read the essay itself all at one go. Ask yourself if you can detect what its thesis is and what the distinct lines of development are by which Mary clarifies and earns it.

When you are done, return here, and work through the frames carefully. Always read all the way through a box on the left-hand side before proceeding to the corresponding comments in the right-hand column. When you turn your attention to the right-hand column, you'll make best use of the comments if you don't read them all at once, but instead work carefully back and forth, refreshing your sense of exactly what each comment points to before thinking your way through it.

When you come to the comment following the first paragraph, you'll need to have a fresh sense of what was said both in the original paragraph and in the comments upon it. Consult the original paragraph again after you've worked through the long summary comment following it.

This is rather dense stuff, so you may want to take a rest from time to time.

<i>Mansfield's "Miss Brill"</i>	<p>← When you've finished writing your essay, give some careful thought to fashioning an appropriate title. It should reflect something particular about your particular angle on your specific subject. Just one example: "Inside an Outsider: The Pathos of Loneliness in Mansfield's 'Miss Brill'".</p>
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<p>This short story is narrated in the third person from the point of view of the limited omniscient narrator who primarily acts as the voice of the story's protagonist, Miss Brill. By telling the story through the eyes of the protagonist, Mansfield is able to convey to the reader the protagonist's loneliness and the lack of self-awareness. She offers no explanation as to the Miss Brill's past, leaving it to the readers to draw their own conclusions. At the same time the author provides XX illuminating</p>	<p>← Right on. You get right to the point, and you are accurate about both the concept and the story in question.</p> <p>← Now you've turned your opening insight to account by posing & answering the question "So what?" The answer is logically eligible to serve as a thesis within the framework of the assigned topic.</p> <p>← You point out how the author's adoption of these means to that end affects the activities the reader is</p>
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insights into the protagonist's character and lifestyle that effectively communicate to the reader the theme of this short story. The central theme of "Miss Brill" is the pain of loneliness, and inadvertent attempts to experience life through the experiences of total strangers.

called upon to undertake – i.e, how it defines the reader's task. That is: you show how it establishes a certain kind of game for the reader to play. (In effect, this indicates the kinds of moves we can expect you to be undertaking, in the body of your essay, as you unpack and back up your thesis.)

← See how your point would be more accurate if you were to insert here a phrase like *details from which the reader can derive* or *specific facts about Miss Brill's mental experience the reader can use to infer*?

← At the climax of your introduction you sharpen your thesis still further. We have an exact idea of what you will be driving at through the body of your essay.

From the beginning of the narrative it becomes apparent that Miss Brill is starving for warmth and companionship. She tenderly caresses her fur as if it were a beloved pet when she rubs "the life into the dim little eyes" (p.50) of the old fox boa. Another sign of Miss Brill's need for companionship is evident in her perception of the music which the band is playing at the Jardins Publiques: "It was like some one playing with only the family to listen (p.50)." Despite of her loneliness, she is considering herself a part of this family that the band is entertaining with its music. But in reality she is more of an observer, a voyeur, and not an active participant in life as it unfolds at the Jardins Publiques. She is looking forward to eavesdropping on other people's conversations, believing herself to be quite an expert in remaining unnoticed. Miss Brill adopts a more critical, at times even hostile, attitude toward the women that she observes in the park than toward their male companions: she views the man who shares her "special" seat as "a fine old man," while the woman is "a big old woman (p.50)." When she recollects the events of the previous Sunday at the park, she

← Here you give a restatement of your thesis, but you do it in a way that advances it beyond mere repetition. "Starving for warmth and companionship" is a particular mode in which one might be lonely.

← You then back this up with an example. And, in fact, the one you feature at just this juncture is a gesture on Miss B's part that speaks especially to the "warmth" idea ("fur") in connection with the companionship idea ("pet"), intensifying each in that the "pet" is not only not a real person but dead, an effigy.

← You proceed to give an additional example. This one requires to be developed in steps, and you undertake each. You promise something more and anchor it in a specific fact. Then you provide a citation to anchor that characterization in turn. Then you explain, in two parts ("Despite....But...."), how this detail establishes the point you promised.

← Now you set out to give still a third example. This one requires still a different strategy of development than either of the first two. Moreover, your move into it flows smoothly from what you've

remembers a patient Englishman with the difficult to please wife, whom “Miss Brill wanted to shake (p.50).” These observations of the women carry perhaps a note of envy that she feels toward the women who have male companionship.

just nailed home in respect of the second example. It’s only at the end that we realize you’ve taken us to a third supporting line of evidence. Your second sentence in this section ups the ante, since it raises the anxiety in us that you may be wandering from the point (or that we may not be getting your drift). This drives us forward to look for clues as to how this might be on-point after all. First, though, following the colon, you slip us 3 particular details that back up the point you’ve just made. And then you serve up the confirmation we’ve been looking for →

← You show us what ties all these together (a disposition to feel envy).

← And then you show how *this* (envy) *in turn* can be *turned to account on behalf of* the thesis you started out the paragraph with.

When we think back over the paragraph as a whole, three things stand out:

It is unified. There is nothing there that does not serve the topic sentence (which in turn is a specific twist the essay’s thesis overall)

It is richly developed. Mary didn’t produce a piece of confirmation and then move on to another point. She showed how to get to the same point from two additional other sorts of starting points (the last of which, in fact, is a “staging area” she gets to from three distinct particular points in turn)

It is coherent. We don’t lose our way in the trees as we go through the forest. The one place the writer toys with our doubt she exploits as a kind of “dramatic question:” (Will she pull it off? Or will she drive over the cliff?) This suspense she then proceeds directly to resolve in a way that provides us the satisfaction of reassurance as an underlining of the point she makes that recoups the venture. Part of what serves this coherence is a *pleasing overall strategy of deployment of the evidence* that she has discovered she is able to give. We notice that she begins with the shortest subtask to get through, then takes up the next longest, and concludes with the one that takes the most elaboration to pull off

This has the effect of communicating the thoroughness of her thesis’ grounding in the facts of the story: we appreciate that it not only runs close to the surface *but also* runs more widely and deeply through (behind) the explicit facts of Miss Brill’s consciousness that the narrator directly acquaints us with.

The fact that we can confirm the notions we start with suspecting only by going deeper into the texture of the facts’ implications connects with the fact that the point of view of the story is so contrived as to afford us a double vision: we get to participate “directly” in Miss Brill’s

consciousness of the scene; and, on reflection, we are enabled to understand some aspects of what that signifies that Miss Brill herself is screening out of that experience, because they are too painful — namely the intensity of the pain of loneliness that is driving her to these delightful attempts to “connect.” We are thus invited to become aware of an irony: what motivates (and thus explains) her conscious experience is something that is not a part of this conscious experience, something that that experience excludes (until the epiphany at the story’s end). (Note, by the way, that there are some points here that Mary could have explicitly incorporated into her analysis.)

Mary's organizational strategy is thus not only pleasing (from small to big, from the easier to pull off to the harder to pull off) but *implicitly supports in a subtle way the overall thesis of her essay*, about how the point of view serves the story’s theme.

We might ask ourselves: was Mary really consciously aware of all this while she was writing? She may well have been. This is a pretty deft piece of writing, and there's no reason we shouldn't suppose that the author of it was not deliberately working with these factors in mind. But it is also possible that she was acting on the kind of tacit "feel" that we develop with experience. The organizational strategy works for any reader who is responding to the overall structure of the paragraph as a whole, and it's hard to imagine a writer being able to craft a paragraph like this without working from a sense of how the entire paragraph unrolls. Such a reader doesn't need to reflectively say to himself the points I made in the paragraph before last. The "feel" of the paragraph can communicate those ideas to us "tacitly."

But it *is* crucial that we be the kind of reader that can register such a progression (small to large, obvious to subtle) in the deployment of successive pieces of evidence on behalf of a claim. If we are the kind of reader who can only attend to one thing at a time, we are not yet ready even to register structure. Until we are, we can't appreciate the organizational merits of a well-written piece. Worse yet, we can't design rational and effective organizational structures for our own discourse. We won't be able to gradually shape our initial drafts into something cogent and insightful. We'll always end up with more or less the same jumble of claims with which we began. More on this later on.

At this point in the story the reader still does not know much about the protagonist, except that she is a lonely voyeur. Then one of her observations about the “odd, silent, nearly all old people, and from the way they stared they looked as though they’d just come from dark little rooms or even – even cupboards! (p.51)” whom she sees every Sunday at the park hints to the reader that she might be one of those people. The pieces of the puzzle, of course, fall into place at the end of the story, when the protagonist’s room is described as “the little dark room-her room like a cupboard (p.52).” This is the conclusion of the story, when Miss

← This turns out to be an effective transition. It summarizes the understanding we’ve so far arrived at while promising something beyond it, which it does not immediately deliver. It tells us what sort of thing to be on the look-out for, and thus shapes our attention in a relevant way for what’s down the pike. [Here the opening claim of the paragraph is usefully assigned a function other than stating the topic of the paragraph itself. Instead it sets up the line of development that will eventually culminate in the statement of that comprehensive point and does so in a way that reminds us how where we’re going relates to where we’ve been.]

Brill is able to see herself and her surroundings in the new light. **Her new self-awareness is brought about by** disparaging remarks of the young lovers who refer to Miss Brill as “that stupid old thing (p.52),” and to her precious fur as “a fried whiting (p.52).” This is Miss Brill’s moment of epiphany. **She is as old as the other park-goers, her fur is a pitiful necklet, and she foregoes her usual Sunday slice of honeycake. In spite of her newly found self-awareness, Miss Brill still denies some of her own emotions when “she thought she heard something crying (p.52)” at the very end of the story. The tears are obviously her own.**

← Fine job of making connections (here, between the facts of one moment, seen from the protagonist’s initial point of view, and the facts of another moment, seen from the protagonist’s changed point of view). And in each node (between which the connection runs) the writer provides the concrete details that establish her specific point. Finally, the particular connection you’ve decided to mention here is relevant to her overall concerns.

← Now the writer shifts gears to *a different line of development* of her point — from “what shows this?” to “how did it come to be?” (What, in the plot, makes this changed vision plausible for the character? That’s a concern we have since we’re playing under the rules of “realism..” Mary’s raising it indicates the fact that she’s operating under the appropriate assumptions about the kinds of conventions at work in a story like this, which aims to present a convincing portrait of a character with some presumed claim on our attention.)

← [Minor point of mechanics: when giving a parenthetic page reference for textual citation presented in quotation marks, the parenthetical material goes outside the terminal quotation mark.]

← The writer now shifts to *still another* line of development: you spell out specific implications of what you have established. (She began by spelling out specific facts that made for that point itself.) That is: she now asks “So what?”

← She concludes her characterization of Miss Brill’s final state of awareness by noting its limitations — a point of connection with, a hold-over from, where the protagonist was at the beginning.

- Mary is thus striving both for precision in capturing the state of affairs itself and for relationship to what it developed out of.
- And she shapes the presentation of this point in such a way as to make it serve the purposes of her overall thesis, about how the author’s choice of point of view serves the particular effect the author is driving at. Here: once

again, the reader is able both to *share Miss Brill's experience*, and to *go beyond it to an understanding of it that is not a part of it*. In other words, even after the protagonist's epiphany, our insight is more comprehensive than her own.

- [Note, by the way, that the thrust of this sentence might be made clearer at the outset if Mary were to insert something like "And yet" at the beginning.]
- Another thing Mary's final sentence accomplishes: in a different (and more sharply focused) way than at the outset of this paragraph, the reader is shown how where we've just arrived relates to where we'd been before.

The comments on Mary's essay should drive home the point that "critical attention" in our sense of the term is not a matter of looking for flaws. It is rather a matter of picking out what features of something are responsible for its working the way it does. (If something is not working well, we come to notice that, too, of course. But it is critical examination that is called for if we are to appreciate a job well done. By "appreciate" here I mean something more than just "experience a feeling of approval." I mean to *have a clear rational understanding of why something works*.)


Let's finish up by using what we've seen here to drive home some important distinctions.


Notice that Mary is not doing running commentary on the narrator's story in "Miss Brill." In accordance with the assignment, she is *showing how the point of view by which the story is disclosed to the reader contributes to the overall theme of the piece*. This confronts her with three basic tasks. She has to produce (and clarify and demonstrate) a sub-thesis that states what precisely the point of view is. She has to commit herself to a statement (another sub-thesis) about what the story's theme is (or at least about what some essential part of it is). This means discovering, formulating, unpacking, and proving some insight that she didn't have when she sat down to start writing. And she has to shape the particular way in which she develops each of these theses in such a way that we can see how the features of point of view that she's calling attention to make possible the features of the theme she's calling attention to. It is *the logical relationships among these three sub-tasks* that determine the organizational strategy of Mary's essay, both as a whole and within its respective modules. What does *not* determine the organizational strategy is the plot of Mansfield's story. Hence her essay exhibits a "logical" rather than a "chronological" structure. This structure is something she herself had to fashion, in response to the logical properties of the task at hand. She had to assume the responsibility for actively making it.

Sample Critical Essay*

* Here, the analytical essay or literature composition is referred to as a *critical response* essay (not to be confused with a *reader's response* essay, which is the type of essay you will write for the minor assignment and which is referred to in this course as a *response* essay).

The essay below was written in response to the following question:

 **The power of imagination may influence an individual in either a positive or a negative manner. Literature offers many examples of the ways in which imagination acts as an influence in individual lives.**
Write a composition based on literature you have studied that examines the influence of imagination in people's lives. *What idea does the author develop regarding human imagination?*
Provide specific details from the literature to support and develop your controlling idea.

 Remember that a good critical response essay should be clear to the reader even though the reader has not read the piece of literature being discussed. You will likely enjoy an essay more if you too have read the selection. However, all of the author's ideas should be clear to you even if you are not familiar with the literature that is being discussed.

A good introductory paragraph for this type of assignment includes the following:

✧ a clear thesis that indicates the topic of the assignment and presents an insightful idea about that topic which the rest of the essay will prove or develop

✧ the name of the author, the title of the piece of literature being discussed, and the genre of the literature (form of literature: e.g. novel, short story, modern drama, poem)

✧ a clear indication of how the thesis will be developed or proven in the rest of the essay

Read the first paragraph of the essay and consider how well the author has fulfilled these requirements in the introductory paragraph.

★ What is the thesis? What insightful idea about the topic dilemma will this essay develop?

★ What is the title, who is the author, and what is the genre of the piece of literature that will be discussed in this essay?

★ Can the reader correctly predict how the thesis will be developed?

★ What suggestions, if any, would you make to the writer to improve his introduction?

The author has used three supporting paragraphs to develop the thesis. Each supporting paragraph should be built around a central idea that clearly relates to and develops the thesis that is proposed in the introductory paragraph. Read the thesis and each of the supporting paragraphs.

★ What is the central idea of each supporting paragraph?

★ Do all of the other details in that paragraph clearly relate to that idea?

★ Does the main idea of each paragraph clearly serve to develop the thesis of the essay?

★ Which supporting paragraph is the strongest? Why?

★ Which supporting paragraph is the weakest? Why?

★ What suggestions would you offer to the writer about his supporting paragraphs?

The purpose of the concluding paragraph of a critical response for this type of assignment is to remind your reader of your thesis !! that is, what idea did you set out in your introductory paragraph to prove or develop? There are many different ways for a writer to achieve this purpose in the conclusion. Recall the thesis that the author set out in the introduction. Then read the concluding paragraph.

★ How well does this conclusion serve to remind the reader of the thesis of the essay?

★ What suggestions would you make to the writer about his concluding paragraph?

Although a title is not absolutely essential, it can be an important asset for your essay. A good title for this type of assignment indicates that the writer has a clear understanding of the assigned topic. What do you think would be a good title for this essay?

[Introduction] Individuals often use imagination to escape from the unpleasantness of life, however when individuals become reliant on imagination the outcome may be detrimental. **[Generalization]** In the short story "Miss Brill," Katherine Mansfield explores how the overuse of imagination can have a negative effect on an individual. **[Literature Specific]** In order to escape her mundane existence Miss Brill creates a fantasy world that allows her to be content, and even think of herself as better than others, yet once her world dissipates, she finds the world more bleak and lonely than ever. **[Thesis Statement]**

[Body - Supporting Paragraph 1] Miss Brill is content with the fantasy world in which she believes herself to live. Not recognizing that her life is wonderful only within her mind, she is perfectly happy. She follows a delightful schedule, which includes going to the Jardins Publiques to enjoy the band and watch the other people in the park. On one

particular day she is especially happy, because she has decided to wear her fur !! a wonderful little rogue that rests on her shoulders, biting its tail. She sits on a bench in the park, and absorbs the surroundings, which are bright and pleasant. She notices everything around her; even that the conductor of the band is wearing a new coat. She sits near a fine old man in a velvet coat and a woman with a roll of knitting on her embroidered apron, and, disappointed that she can not hear any conversation from them, happily recalls other conversations she has heard. She watches as two young girls walk away, with a pair of soldiers, and thinks of them. She does not ponder her own solitary life, or the fact that she is sitting there on the bench alone, but is happy and content to enjoy the beauty and splendor of the day.

[Body - Supporting Paragraph 2] While Miss Brill sits on the bench and observes other people, she does think of herself in comparison to them. Yet it is not really herself that she compares, but the person she imagines herself to be. Thus, when she makes the comparison, she thinks she is better than the other people around her. She is not getting rejected like a woman in an ermine toque is rejected by a gentleman in gray. Nor is she throwing away flowers that a young boy picked up for her, as she saw another woman do. In her opinion, Miss Brill sees herself as better than these people. She sees the other people in the park as merely dark shadows that look like they came out of rooms, "rooms like a cupboard." She thinks of herself as being much better than these poor creatures. In fact, not only does she think of herself as superior to other people in the park, but she also thinks that she is an intricate part of all this action that she is avidly watching. She views herself as an actress who is merely playing a role here in the park. This fantasy of hers not only allows her to see herself as an important part of the action, but also as a more important person in general. She is delighted with this new twist to her fantasy, and anticipates informing the elderly man that she reads to. She looks forward to the shock and delight that he will feel when he discovers that she is just not an ordinary teacher, but an actress who took time to read to him. This new fantasy entralls her. Her imagination races as she ponders all the new things that this insight to the importance of her life could mean.

[Body - Supporting Paragraph 3] Yet even in the growth of her fantasy world, Miss Brill hears something that completely shatters her fantasy and changes her life. As she is sitting on the bench, a boy and a girl come by and sit near her. The boy wishes to kiss the girl, but she insists that she can not let him, because they are in public. Not only that, but she sees the poor creature with the fur that looks like a "fried whiting" that is sitting on the bench. Miss Brill hears this, and realizing that these youngsters are speaking about her, is shattered. She leaves the park quickly and hurries home. She does not even stop at the bakery to buy a piece of honey cake, which was normally part of her routine. Rather, she hurries back to her room that she now recognizes is more like a cupboard than a room. The world around her is no longer the wonderful, bright place that is had been before. It is now the depressing and drab reality that Miss Brill is suddenly forced to recognize. Since she has been so abruptly forced to recognize this reality, it seems even worse than it may have been had she not imagined all her fantasies. She now must recognize her only friend the fur, is really shabby, and places it back in the box. Closing the box she remains sitting on the bed and thinks "she hear[s] something crying." Her fantasy has been shattered, and now the bleakness and loneliness of her life have been fully exposed to her. In order to protect herself she must retreat further into her imagination, where she can no longer recognize her own emotions.

[Conclusion] Miss Brill uses imagination to cope with the monotony of her drab existence, however it becomes detrimental when she is forced to face reality, and she chooses to retreat further into her fantasy as her only means of survival. **[Restatement of Thesis]** Ironically, in Katherine Mansfield's story, "Miss "Brill," what the protagonist has used to protect her, ultimately destroys her. **[Learned]** While imagination can be life-enriching, if it supersedes reality, it is destructive. **[Generalization]**

English Language Arts 30-1
Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment, January 2008

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

Initial Planning

You may use this space for your initial planning. This information assists markers in identifying the text you have chosen to support your ideas. The markers who read your composition will be very familiar with the literary text you have chosen.

Literary Text and
Text Creator

“On a Rainy River”
by Tim O'Brien

Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text
Suggested time: 10 to 15 minutes

Briefly explore your reasons for selecting the literary text as support for your response. Markers will consider the information you provide here when considering the effectiveness of your supporting evidence.

I chose this text because in the short story Tim O'Brien had to make a few life altering choices. Tim had looked at all the pros and cons of each decision and also had lots of fear and foresight in each decision.

Sometimes ~~we~~ individuals are faced with conflict or obstacles that they don't agree with, but
Additional space is provided for *Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text* on page 18. “I was a coward, I went to war”
“All of us, ~~we~~ I suppose, like¹⁷ to believe that in a moral emergency we will behave like [heroes].”

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Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment, January 2008

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text

Planning

Theme - Sometimes people are faced with conflict or obstacles, but are willing to sacrifice in which they don't believe in, though but are obliged to go against their will.

Thesis - Life altering decisions are evident in when Tim O'Brien decides to go to Canada, ~~after~~ ~~he~~ ~~stops~~ at the Tip Top Lodge, and decides to go to war.

Interplay - action and reaction; interaction.

Topic Sentence #1 - Tim O'Brien takes a big step in his life when he makes the decision to flee to Canada.

Topic sentence #2 - Tim decides to make a stop at the Tip Top Lodge, where he decides to take a rest.

Topic Sentence #3 - Tim deciding to go to war.

Conclusion - Memorable close - sometimes in life you have to go against what you believe, just to live a successful life.

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

Critical Response

Life Altering

Life is full of major decisions that are life altering and are very important in one's future. These great decisions help develop a person internally and help shape them for the real world. Sometimes people are faced with conflict or obstacles that they do not agree with, but are obliged to go against their will. In the short story "On a Rainy River," by Tim O'Brien we are shown the interplay between making these life altering decisions. The life altering decisions are evident when Tim O'Brien decides to flee to Canada, stopping at the Tip Top Lodge, and deciding to go to war.

Tim O'Brien takes a big step in his life when he makes the decision to flee to Canada. When Tim receives his draft letter back in Worthington, Minnesota he is absolutely petrified about the fact that he has to go to war in Vietnam. At this time in Tim's life he is working at a pig factory and has just become a young adult. He is unsure with what he should do, because he does not even believe in why his country is fighting in this war. The fact of going to war and killing resembles Tim's job at the pig factory, and how the pigs are slaughtered every day. "All of us, I suppose, like to believe that in a moral emergency we will behave like [heroes]." Some people are not exactly suited for war, and it can be very demoralizing when faced with the fact that you could easily die. Tim has enormous amounts of fear when faced with question whether to go to war or not. Tim ends up deciding to not go to war, and to flee to Canada. This is a big decision that impacts Tim's life enormously.

Secondly, Tim stops at the Tip Top Lodge, where he decides to take a rest. The decision to stop along the way at the Tip Top Lodge did not seem like a big decision. Tim decided to spend a few days there, and met an amazing man eighty one year old man, Elroy

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Berdahl. When Elroy and Tim first met, Elroy knew Tim was in trouble and was fleeing the war. He never confronted or asked Tim about anything that Tim was doing. He just knew that Tim was in trouble and he was there to help. Tim spent quite a few days there helping Elroy, and just letting time pass while he thought about his decision to run away from his hometown. The decision to stop at the Tip Top Lodge has not seemed to be a difficult one, though it sure proved to be life altering. Elroy Berdahl was one of the greatest things that happened to Tim. He had given Tim a whole new foresight on life, and made Tim realize many things in life. Tim now wondered if he did make the right decision to flee the war, and not just to go on with life and fight in something he didn't believe in.

Tim's most drastic life changing decision came when he decided to go to war. Elroy had taken Tim out on his boat northward near the Canadian border fishing. Elroy was an intelligent man, and was going to see if Tim really was going to flee the war and go to Canada. Elroy stopped the boat and started fishing, while Tim started to contemplate whether to jump out and swim to Canada, or to stay and end up going to a war he didn't believe in fighting. As Tim keeps on thinking about this enormous decision, he becomes very emotional. He fears everything about the war and also feels terrible that he will be deserting his country and hometown if he leaves to Canada. Elroy finally starts of the Evinrude engine, and heads back for the Tip Top Lodge. Tim decided not to desert his country and people. Though, he decided to go to war for something he did not believe in. "I was a coward, I went to war." Tim looked forward at the decision he had made, but knew he still did not believe in the war he was fighting for.

Sometimes people are obliged to go against their wills, when faced with conflict or obstacles. Tim's decision to go to Canada and to stop at the Tip Top Lodge changed his whole

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

life. Otherwise Tim might have not ended up going to war, and who knows where his life would have taken him. It is important to look at all the different positives and negatives when faced with life altering decisions. Sometime's in life you have to go against in what you believe, just to live a successful life.

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EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p>Thought and Understanding (S)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas are relevant and straightforward, demonstrating a generalized comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic. • Literary interpretations are general but plausible. <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>The student begins with the straightforward idea “Life is full of major decisions that are life altering and are very important in one’s future”. Ideas linking the short story “On The Rainy River” to the difficulty of making significant decisions are relevant: “Sometimes people are faced with conflict or obstacles that they do not agree with, but are obliged to go against their will”.</p> <p>The student points to fear in the statement “Tim has enormous amounts of fear when faced with question whether to go to war or not” and foresight in “Tim looked forward at the decision he made, but knew he still did not believe in the war he was fighting for”. The student demonstrates a generalized comprehension of the topic and the interplay of fear and foresight in: “He fears everything about the war and also feels terrible that he will be deserting his country and hometown if he leaves to Canada”.</p> <p>The literary interpretations such as “Some people are not exactly suited for war, and it can be very demoralizing when faced with the fact that you could easily die”, “When Elroy and Tim first met, Elroy knew Tim was in trouble and was fleeing the war” and “He had given Tim a whole new foresight on life, and made Tim realize many things in life” are general but plausible.</p>

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EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p>Supporting Evidence (S)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support is general, adequate, and appropriately chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in an acceptable way but occasionally may lack persuasiveness. • A reasonable connection to the student’s ideas is suitably maintained. <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">S</p>	<p>Support is general as in “When Tim receives his draft letter back in Worthington, Minnesota he is absolutely petrified about the fact that he has to go to war in Vietnam” and “Tim spent quite a few days there helping Elroy, and just letting time pass while he thought about his decision to run away from his hometown”. The student’s choice to include the quotation from the short story “All of us, I suppose, like to believe that in a moral emergency we will behave like [heroes]” is appropriately chosen to reinforce the recognition that “Some people are not exactly suited for war, and it can be very demoralizing when faced with the fact that you could easily die”. Thus, a reasonable connection between the ideas “He just knew that Tim was in trouble and he was there to help” and “Elroy Berdahl was one of the greatest things that happened to Tim” and “Tim decided not to desert his country and people. Though, he decided to go to war for something he did not believe in” is suitably maintained. The student’s presentation of such details as “The fact of going to war and killing resembles Tim’s job at the pig factory, and how the pigs are slaughtered every day” and “Elroy finally starts of the Evinrude engine, and heads back for the Tip Top Lodge”, while appropriate to the discussion, lacks persuasiveness as there is little development or connection to the student’s subsequent ideas.</p>

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EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p>Form and Structure (S)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A straightforward arrangement of ideas and details provides direction for the discussion that is developed appropriately. • The unifying effect or controlling idea is presented and maintained generally; however, coherence may falter. <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">S</p>	<p>A straightforward arrangement of ideas and details such as “The life altering decisions are evident when Tim O’Brien decides to flee to Canada, stopping at the Tip Top Lodge, and deciding to go to war”, “He is unsure with what he should do, because he does not even believe in why his country is fighting in this war”, and “Tim’s most drastic life changing decision came when he decided to go to war” provides direction for the discussion that is developed appropriately.</p> <p>The controlling idea that “Sometimes people are obliged to go against their wills, when faced with conflict or obstacles” is presented and maintained generally. The student creates a unifying effect by establishing the challenge facing Tim, “Tim has enormous amounts of fear when faced with question whether to go to war or not”, examining the nature of his dilemma, and suggesting that Elroy helps Tim to come to a conclusion, “He had given Tim a whole new foresight on life, and made Tim realize many things in life”; however, coherence does falter regarding how exactly Elroy is “one of the greatest things that happened to Tim”.</p>

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EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p>Matters of Choice (S)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diction is adequate. • Syntactic structures are straightforward, but attempts at complex structures may be awkward. • Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a conventional composition with an appropriate voice. <p align="center">S</p>	<p>Diction is adequate as demonstrated in “we are shown the interplay between making these life altering decisions”, “Tim has enormous amounts of fear”, and “This is a big decision that impacts Tim’s life enormously”.</p> <p>Syntactic structures are straightforward as in “Elroy was an intelligent man, and was going to see if Tim really was going to flee the war and go to Canada” and “As Tim keeps on thinking about this enormous decision, he becomes very emotional”. Attempts at complex structures are occasionally awkward as in “Elroy stopped the boat and started fishing, while Tim started to contemplate whether to jump out and swim to Canada, or to stay and end up going to a war he didn’t believe in fighting” and “Sometime’s in life you have to go against in what you believe, just to live a successful life”.</p> <p>Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of an appropriate voice as in “These great decisions help develop a person internally and help shape them for the real world” and “The decision to stop at the Tip Top Lodge has not seemed to be a difficult one, though it sure proved to be life altering”.</p>

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EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p>Matters of Correctness (S)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.• There may be occasional lapses in control and minor errors; however, the communication remains clear. <p style="text-align: center;">S</p>	<p>The writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics: “At this time in Tim’s life he is working at a pig factory and has just become a young adult” and “It is important to look at all the different positives and negatives when faced with life altering decisions”.</p> <p>Occasional lapses in control appear in sentences such as “Tim decided to spend a few days there, and met an amazing man eighty one year old man, Elroy Berdahl”; however, communication remains clear.</p>

Discuss the Interplay between Fear and Foresight in “Horses of the Night” by Margaret Laurence



Every one of us needs hope to persist, but, once we fail, it is sometimes difficult to regain our willingness to reach for success. Through the short story *Horses of the Night*, by Margaret Laurence, we can see that Chris starts as a hopeful person, one who tries hard to achieve his goals, but, because of his lack understanding of reality and the circumstances that might be beyond his control, he fails. Even before Chris becomes a mental casualty of the horrors of war, he abandons reality to live in an imaginary world, a world where things are usually what he expects them to be, even though his expectations are unrealistic. The literature reinforces that people’s ability to understand the consequences of their choices is mainly affected by their ability to cope with fear and the willingness to retry. Chris, even before he is “shell-shocked” in World War II, does not seem able to comprehend the interplay between fear and foresight that accompanies the decisions so many of us make.

Knowing reality often makes us realize the risks; therefore, knowing the risks can sometimes cause us to hesitate in taking actions. As a result, we frequently either lose the opportunities that are offered to us or we are wildly successful after we decide that we should pursue them. Chris, however, does not always realize what reality is, and this disconnection from it leads him to make choices that are often, unfortunately, doomed. For example, he chooses to sell things, such as vacuum cleaners and magazine subscriptions, that people in the time in which the story is set, the Depressed 1930's, can not afford. He is determined but, because he lacks a firm grasp of the reality in which he finds himself, can not always interact with it or people effectively. Chris has no chance to choose between being a successful person and failing in various opportunities because he is divorced from the interplay between caution and determination; thus, he cannot be considered to be capable of making decisions the way that those who have a better understanding of reality are.

After a failure, it is hard to regain hope. Therefore, this failure can prevent us from trying again. Chris, after all the unsuccessful jobs, illustrates this. Instead of bothering to practically try, he decides to "focus on [his dreams] with [his] whole mental powers" and pretends that they are real. Laurence is saying through Chris that people often lose trust in themselves or become fearful that they will fail. However, she is also saying that many people do not or can not think about the interplay between fear and foresight; they focus only on their present state, if they are able to focus at all, so they have little or no comprehension of or regard for the consequences ahead. In other words, Laurence is saying that we need to be capable of deciding what is realistic in order to make sound decisions. If we do not have that ability, we will have no place to go. Chris does not lose all of his hope, but he does seem to place it in opportunities and jobs that are inherently hopeless. Thus, he is trapped, perhaps without realizing that he is, so he does not know how to deal with his problems, other than day-dreaming about them excessively and unrealistically. It is hard, or almost

impossible, for a person to persist without being hopeful, and Chris' methods of attempting to maintain hope are, ironically, counter-productive.

Laurence is also asserting that hope, a realistic hope, is vital to our ability to cope with fear and utilize foresight: having hope will help us defeat any obstacle that gets in our way. Even if our present situations are dreadful, we will overcome them if we are hopeful. Being positive will provide us with a chance to reach our goals. It also prevents fear from taking control of us. Therefore, fear cannot affect how we make life-altering choices and our foresight will be strengthened. For example, Chris, after he goes back to Shallow Creek, has his hope fade when he realizes that the entire dream of attending university and being a civil engineer will never come true. Then, when he enters the War, fear makes him act violently, and this violence causes him to withdraw. This withdrawal prevents him from seeing the consequences of choosing not to "live inside [his body] any more" (p. 300). Through the character of Chris, Laurence emphasizes that it is important to control our fear because fear can turn us into people who have no foresight, and, in the end, people who have no hope. This is disastrous for Chris, and it is disastrous for humanity.

Through *Horses of the Night*, especially the character Chris, Margaret Laurence shows that fear and foresight have a close relationship and that they affect each other intrinsically. We need to have a clear understanding about that relationship. Fear must be overcome to strengthen our foresight and, thus, help us make better choices. It sometimes seems impossible for fear not to affect us, but, as long as we are not paralyzed by it, we have the potential to succeed; if we can see the consequences of our actions, we are going to make better choices in life, and we are, therefore, going to make better lives, both for ourselves and those around us.