

# Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing

English Language  
Arts 30–1

From the January 2009 Diploma Examination

- Personal Response to Texts Assignment
- Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

This document was written primarily for:

Students	✓
Teachers	✓
Administrators	✓
Parents	✓
General Public	✓
Others	

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This document includes the valuable contributions of many educators. Sincere thanks and appreciation are extended to the following Standards Confirmers: Rhonda Anderson-Steffes, Sandra Babik, Savio Barros, Laurie Chomany, Scott Gibson Dodd, Christine Nездoly, Cam Tully, Cat Turner.

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions made by members of the Humanities Unit and the Document Design and Desktop Publishing Unit of Learner Assessment, Alberta Education.

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We would be pleased to hear from you.

## *Introduction*

The written responses in this document are examples of English Language Arts 30–1 Diploma Examination writing that received scores of Satisfactory (S), Proficient (Pf), or Excellent (E). These sample responses are taken from the January 2009 administration. Along with the commentaries that accompany them, they should help you and your students to understand the standards for English Language Arts 30–1 Diploma Examination writing in relation to the scoring criteria.

The purpose of the sample responses is to illustrate the standards that governed the January 2009 marking session and that anchor the selection of similar sample responses for subsequent marking sessions in 2009. The sample papers and the commentaries were used to train markers to apply the scoring criteria consistently and to justify their decisions about scores in terms of each student’s work and the criteria.

The sample responses included in this document represent a very small sample of successful approaches to the assignments.

## *Selection and Use of Sample Papers*

The teachers on the Standards Confirmation Committee for the January 2009 marking session selected the examples of student responses included here. They also wrote the commentaries that discuss the students’ writing in terms of the scoring criteria used for marking.

During their preparation for the January 2009 marking session, markers reviewed and validated the standards represented by these sample responses. Markers then used these sample responses as guidelines for marking the written-response sections of the January 2009 English Language Arts 30–1 Diploma Examination.

## *Cautions*

### **1. The commentaries are brief.**

The commentaries were written for groups of markers to discuss and apply during the marking session. Although brief, they provide a model for relating specific examples from student work to the details in a specific scoring criterion.

### **2. Neither the scoring guide nor the assignments are meant to limit students to a single organizational or rhetorical approach in completing any diploma examination assignment.**

Students must be free to select and organize their materials in a manner that they feel will enable them to best present their ideas. In fact, part of what is being assessed is the final effectiveness of the content, the form and structure, and the rhetorical choices that students make.

The student writing in this document illustrates *just a few of the many* successful organizational and rhetorical strategies used in January 2009.

We strongly recommend that you caution your students that there is *no preferred approach* to an assignment except the approach that best accomplishes the student writer's goal of effectively communicating his or her own ideas about the topic.

We advise you not to draw any conclusions about common patterns of approach taken by students.

**3. The sample papers presented in this document must not be used as models for instructional purposes.**

Because these papers are illustrations only, and because they are sample responses to a set topic, students must be cautioned not to memorize the content of any of these assignments or to use them when completing classroom assignments or when writing future diploma examinations.

The *approaches* taken by students at the *standard of excellence*, not their words or ideas, are what students being examined in the future should consider emulating. In fact, it is hoped that the variety of approaches presented here will inspire students to experiment with diction, syntax, form, and structure as a way of developing an individual voice and engaging the reader in ideas and forms that the student has considered.

Examination markers and staff at Alberta Education take any possibility of plagiarism or cheating seriously. The consequences for students are grave.

**4. It is essential that you consider each of these examples of student writing in light of the constraints of the examination situation.**

Under examination conditions, students produce *first-draft writing*. Given more time, students would be expected to produce papers of considerably improved quality, particularly in the dimensions of Presentation, Matters of Correctness, and Writing Skills.

**5. For further information regarding student performance on the Part A: Written Response, access the **English Language Arts 30–1 Assessment Highlights** for January and June 2009.**

*January 2009*

# ***English Language Arts 30–1***

## ***Part A: Written Response***

***Grade 12 Diploma Examination***

### ***Description***

**Time: 2½ hours.** This examination was developed to be completed in 2½ hours; however, you may take an additional ½ hour to complete the examination.

Plan your time carefully.

**Part A: Written Response** contributes 50% of the total English Language Arts 30–1 Diploma Examination mark and consists of two assignments.

- **Personal Response to Texts Assignment**  
*Value* 20% of total examination mark
- **Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment**  
*Value* 30% of total examination mark

**Recommendation:** Read and reflect upon the whole examination before you begin to write. Time spent in planning may result in better writing.

***Do not write your name anywhere in this booklet. Feel free to make corrections and revisions directly on your written work.***

### ***Instructions***

- Complete the Personal Response to Texts Assignment first. The Personal Response to Texts Assignment is designed to allow you time to think and reflect upon the ideas that you may also explore in the Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment.
- Complete **both** assignments.
- You may use the following print references:
  - an English and/or bilingual dictionary
  - a thesaurus
  - an authorized writing handbook
- Space is provided in this booklet for planning and for your written work.
- Use blue or black ink for your written work.

### ***Additional Instructions for Students Using Word Processors***

- Format your work using an easy-to-read 12-point or larger font such as Times.
- Double-space your final copy.
- Staple your final printed work to the pages indicated for word-processed work for each assignment. Hand in all work.
- Indicate in the space provided on the back cover that you have attached word-processed pages.

## PERSONAL RESPONSE TO TEXTS ASSIGNMENT

**Suggested time: approximately 45 to 60 minutes**

Carefully read and consider the texts on pages 1 to 4, and then complete the assignment that follows.

### SETTING UP THE DRUMS

The tools of music: this is where it first  
emerged from noise and how it  
stays in touch with clutter  
and how it gets back to the heart –  
that single-stroke kachunker with its grab, give,  
grab. He is bringing the kitchen,  
the workshop, screwing wingnuts and attaching  
brackets, placing the pedals like accelerators,  
setting up the stands for snare and high hat like decapitated  
wading birds. How music will make itself walk  
into the terrible stunned air behind the shed  
where all the objects looked away. Now the hollow bodies,  
their blank moons tilted *just asking for it*, and back and  
back to the time you missed the step  
and dropped the baby and your heart leapt out  
to catch it, for all those accidents that might have  
and that happened he floats the ride and then  
suspends the crash above the wreckage like its flat  
burnished bell.  
Unsheathes the brushes that can shuffle through the grass  
or pitter like small rain. All this hardware to recall  
the mess you left back home  
and bring it to the music  
and get back to the heart.  
He sits on the stool  
in the middle of your life  
and waits to feel the beat. To speak it  
and keep it. Here we go.

*Don McKay*

“Setting Up the Drums” from *Apparatus* by Don McKay © 1997. Published by McClelland & Stewart Ltd.  
Used with permission of the publisher.



*When Jack Hawthorne was twelve years old and working on the family farm, he accidentally ran over and killed his younger brother David, age seven, who was riding, without parental approval, on the cultipacker, a two-ton farm implement that Jack was pulling with a tractor.*

### **from REDEMPTION**

But for all his mother and her friends could do for him—for all his father's older brothers could do, or, when he was there, his father himself—the damage to young Jack Hawthorne took a long while healing. Working the farm, ploughing, cultipacking, disking, dragging, he had plenty of time to think—plenty of time for the accident to replay, with the solidity of real time repeated, in his mind, his whole body flinching from the image as it came, his voice leaping up independent of him, as if a shout could perhaps drive the memory back into its cave. Maneuvering the tractor over sloping, rocky fields, dust whorling out like smoke behind him or, when he turned into the wind, falling like soot until his skin was black and his hair as thick and stiff as old clothes in an attic—the circles of foothills every day turning greener, the late-spring wind flowing endless and sweet with the smell of coming rain—he had all the time in the world to cry and swear bitterly at himself, standing up to drive, as his father often did, Jack's sore hands clamped tight to the steering wheel, his shoes unsteady on the bucking axlebeam—for stones lay everywhere, yellowed in the sunlight, a field of misshapen skulls. He'd never loved his brother, he raged out loud, never loved anyone as well as he should have. He was incapable of love, he told himself, striking the steering wheel. He was inherently bad, a spiritual defective. He was evil.

So he raged and grew increasingly ashamed of his raging, reminded by the lengthening shadows across the field of the theatricality in all he did, his most terrible sorrow mere sorrow on a stage, the very thunderclaps above—dark blue, rushing sky, birds crazily wheeling—mere opera set, proper lighting for his rant....

... At night he'd go out to the cavernous haymow or up into the orchard and practice his French horn. One of these days, he told himself, they'd wake up and find him gone.

He used the horn more and more now to escape their herding warmth. Those around him were conscious enough of what was happening—his parents and Phoebe, his uncles, aunts, and cousins, his mother's many friends. But there was nothing they could do. "That horn's his whole world," his mother often said, smiling but clasping her hands together. Soon he was playing third horn with the Batavia Civic Orchestra, though he refused to play in church or when company came. He began to ride the Bluebus to Rochester, Saturdays, to take lessons from Arcady Yegudkin, "the General," at the Eastman School of Music.

Yegudkin was seventy. He'd played principal horn in the orchestra of Czar Nikolai and at the time of the Revolution had escaped, with his wife, in a dramatic way....

"Redemption" from THE ART OF LIVING AND OTHER STORIES by John Gardner. Copyright © 1974, 1976, 1977 and 1981 by John Gardner. Reprinted by permission of Georges Borchardt, Inc. on behalf of the Estate of John Gardner.

One day a new horn he'd ordered from Germany, an Alexander, arrived at his office—a horn he'd gotten for a graduate student. The old man unwrapped and assembled it, the graduate student looking on—a shy young man, blond, in a limp gray sweater—and the glint in the General's eye was like madness or at any rate lust, perhaps gluttony. When the horn was ready he went to the desk where he kept his clippings, his tools for the cleaning and repair of French horns, his cigars, photographs, and medals from the Czar, and pulled open a wide, shallow drawer. It contained perhaps a hundred mouthpieces, of all sizes and materials, from raw brass to lucite, silver, and gold, from the shallowest possible cup to the deepest. He selected one, fitted it into the horn, pressed the rim of the bell into the right side of his large belly—the horn seemed now as much a part of him as his arm or leg—clicked the shining keys to get the feel of them, then played. In that large, cork-lined room, it was as if, suddenly, a creature from some other universe had appeared, some realm where feelings become birds and dark sky, and spirit is more solid than stone. The sound was not so much loud as large, too large for a hundred French horns, it seemed. He began to play now not single notes but, to Jack's astonishment, chords—two notes at a time, then three. He began to play runs. As if charged with life independent of the man, the horn sound fluttered and flew crazily, like an enormous trapped hawk hunting frantically for escape. It flew to the bottom of the lower register, the foundation concert F, and crashed below it, and on down and down, as if the horn in Yegudkin's hands had no bottom, then suddenly changed its mind and flew upward in a split-second run to the horn's top E, dropped back to the middle and then ran once more, more fiercely at the E, and this time burst through it and fluttered, manic, in the trumpet range, then lightly dropped back into its own home range and, abruptly, in the middle of a note, stopped. The room still rang, shimmered like a vision.

“Good horn,” said Yegudkin, and held the horn toward the graduate student, who sat, hands clamped on his knees, as if in a daze.

Jack Hawthorne stared at the instrument suspended in space and at his teacher's hairy hands. Before stopping to think, he said, “You think I'll ever play like that?”

Yegudkin laughed loudly, his black eyes widening, and it seemed that he grew larger, beatific and demonic at once, like the music; overwhelming. “Play like *me*?” he exclaimed.

Jack blinked, startled by the bluntness of the thing, the terrible lack of malice, and the truth of it. His face tingled and his legs went weak, as if the life were rushing out of them. He longed to be away from there, far away, safe. Perhaps Yegudkin sensed it. He turned gruff, sending away the graduate student, then finishing up the lesson. He said nothing, today, of the stupidity of mankind. When the lesson was over he saw Jack to the door and bid him goodbye with a brief half-smile that was perhaps not for Jack at all but for the creature on the bench. “Next Saturday?” he said, as if there might be some doubt.

Jack nodded, blushing.

*John Gardner*

120 km/hr, 1975



www.saudek.com

*Jan Saudek*

Saudek, Jan. *120km/hr*; 1975. © Jan Saudek / [www.saudek.com](http://www.saudek.com).

## **PERSONAL RESPONSE TO TEXTS ASSIGNMENT**

**Suggested time: approximately 45 to 60 minutes**

You have been provided with three texts on pages 1 to 4. One interpretation of the poem “Setting Up the Drums” suggests Don McKay’s poem explores how music can restore one’s perspective. In the excerpt from “Redemption,” guilt overwhelms Jack Hawthorne and his uncertainty fuels his desire to escape. The photograph by Jan Saudek captures a young person balanced on a level-crossing gate.

### **The Assignment**

**What do these texts suggest about the ways in which individuals struggle to restore honour and certainty? 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

## Personal Response to Texts Assignment

### *Initial Planning*

Your initial planning will assist markers in identifying the text or texts to which you are responding.

For each text you will reference, briefly identify the central idea that is most relevant to what you intend to explore.

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Briefly identify what idea you intend to explore.

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State your choice of prose form. You may respond using a personal, creative, or analytical perspective. Do not use a poetic form.

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**CRITICAL/ANALYTICAL RESPONSE TO LITERARY TEXTS ASSIGNMENT**  
**Suggested time: approximately 1½ to 2 hours**

Do *not* use the texts provided in this booklet for the Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment. Choose from short stories, novels, plays, screenplays, poetry, films, or other literary texts that you have studied in English Language Arts 30–1. When considering the works that you have studied, choose a literary text (or texts) that is meaningful to you and relevant to the following assignment.

**The Assignment**

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

*In your planning and writing, consider the following instructions.*

- Carefully consider your *controlling idea* and how you will create a strong *unifying effect* in your response.
- As you develop your ideas, support them with appropriate, relevant, and meaningful examples from your choice of literary text(s).

## Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

### *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

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### *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.

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# *English Language Arts 30–1 Part A: Written Response Standards Confirmation*

## *Background*

For all diploma examination scoring sessions, Learner Assessment staff use a process of standards confirmation to establish and illustrate expectations for students' work in relation to the scoring criteria and to ensure scoring consistency within and between marking sessions. Because there are several diploma examination administrations and scoring sessions each school year, the standards must remain consistent for each scoring session in the school year and, similarly, from year to year.

Standards for student achievement start with both the demands of the Program of Studies for Senior High School English Language Arts and the interpretation of those demands through learning resources and classroom instruction. These agreed-upon standards are also exemplified in the kinds of tasks and the degree of independence expected of students. All these complex applications of standards precede the design, development, and scoring of each diploma examination.

The Standards Confirmation Committee is composed of experienced teachers from representative regions of the province. These teachers work with the Learner Assessment staff responsible for the development, scoring, and results-reporting for each diploma examination. Teacher-members participate over a two-year period and are required to serve as group leaders or markers during at least one of the subsequent marking sessions.

There are two essential parts to applying standards at the point of examination scoring: the expectations embedded in the scoring criteria and the examples of students' work that illustrate the scoring criteria within each scoring category. The scoring categories and scoring criteria are available to teachers and students via the 2008/2009 English Language Arts 30–1 Information Bulletin. During each of the January and June marking sessions, example papers selected by members of the Standards Confirmation Committee are used to train markers. Subsequent to each marking session, the example papers that received scores of Satisfactory (S), Proficient (Pf), and Excellent (E) are posted on the Alberta Education website at [www.education.alberta.ca](http://www.education.alberta.ca) in the documents entitled Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing.

During the standards confirmation process,

- the appropriateness of the standards set by the examination in relation to students' work is confirmed
- student responses that clearly illustrate the standards in the scoring categories and the scoring criteria are selected and are used when training markers
- rationales that explain and support the selection of sample papers in terms of the scoring categories, scoring criteria, and students' work are written



# *Impressions from Standards Confirmation January 2009*

## *Personal Response to Texts Assignment*

### *Preparing to Mark*

- When marking a response, markers consciously return to the **Focus** section of the scoring criteria to reorient themselves to the distinction between the two scoring categories. Markers take care to read the students' comments in the *Initial Planning* section, wherein students might indicate their reasoning and intention in choosing a particular prose form.
- Markers review the texts provided in the assignment and reread the prompt and assignment at the start of each marking day. Markers expect that the students' ideas and impressions are informed by the details within the text(s) and the contextual information presented in the preamble. Standards Confirmers found that many students employed greater specificity when using details from the text(s) or, alternatively, when "fleshing out" the text(s) with their own imaginative details.

### *Choice of Prose Form*

- Standards Confirmers observed that many students have developed more confidence in dealing with the strengths and constraints of different prose forms and have often opted to use explicit reference to a text or texts within a creative response. When the markers considered the student's creation of **voice**, the focus was on "the context created by the student in the chosen prose form." Markers also carefully considered the effectiveness of "the student's development of a **unifying effect**." These distinctions are especially significant when assessing creative responses.

### *Explicit Reference to Text*

- Standards Confirmers found that students making explicit references to the texts did so with varying degrees of plausibility relative to the historical context established in the response, and that imaginative details that may not have accurately reflected historical fact were understandable. Frequently, markers recognized that, with varying degrees of originality, the fiction created by the student paralleled one or more of the texts provided. Similarity between the premise of the narrative or the student's personal experience and the other texts was understandable given classroom practice and the nature of the assignment.

### *Implicit Reference to Text*

- As in the past, some students did not explicitly support their ideas "with reference to one or more of the texts presented." In some responses, an obvious parallel to the text(s) was apparent, whereas in others, an implicit understanding of and connection to the text(s) were evident in the presentation of ideas. The student's exploration of ideas and impressions, however, must address the question in the assignment, and markers must be able to identify the student's inferences and the implicit relationship between the topic, the texts, and the

student's ideas and support. Standards Confirmers observed that, with varying degrees of success, students have found creative ways of *explicitly* representing the relationship linking topic, text reference, and ideas regardless of the chosen prose form. Standards Confirmers suggested that markers might occasionally need to read a student's work more than once to appreciate what a student has attempted and, in fact, accomplished.

### ***Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment***

- In the Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment, students employed a number of approaches to fulfill the assignment. The assignment demanded that students choose their literature judiciously to address the ideas that the text creators develop regarding “the ways in which individuals struggle to restore honour and certainty.” Students chose from a wide variety of literary texts, including film, to support their ideas. Where students elected to use more than one text, Standards Confirmers noted that students did so with varying degrees of familiarity and specificity. In these, as in all cases, markers considered the student's treatment of the texts, the selection and quality of evidence, and how well that evidence was integrated and developed to support the student's ideas.
- Standards Confirmers observed that most students considered the implications of the full assignment and demonstrated an understanding of the significance of the ways in which individuals struggle to restore honour and certainty. Some students appropriately used a creative approach to organize and express their ideas in a critical and/or analytical manner.

### ***Reminders for Markers***

- Check for the literary text(s) selection in the Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment *before* beginning to mark the paper, especially given the increasing number of new texts appearing in student responses in the examination. Students assume that markers have recently taught the literary text(s).
- Markers must consider the student's comments presented in the Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text(s) when assessing the scoring category of Supporting Evidence. Some students reveal thoughtful awareness of their purpose in choosing a particular text.

# Examples of Students' Writing with Teachers' Commentaries

English Language Arts 30–1  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment, January 2009

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

## Initial Planning

Your initial planning will assist markers in identifying the text or texts to which you are responding.

For each text you will reference, briefly identify the central idea that is most relevant to what you intend to explore.

The train. And feeling remorse. A young boy wanting to feel reputable once again.

Briefly identify what idea you intend to explore.

The boy sitting by the train. Remorse.

State your choice of prose form. You may respond using a personal, creative, or analytical perspective. Do not use a poetic form.

creative (Narrative)

English Language Arts 30-1  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment, January 2009

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

*Planning*

Rick → young boy involved in car crash.  
Girl friend Mary dies. Town blames  
him wants to get away.

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

A Rose for a New Beginning

I could remember every detail of Mary. She was the kind of girl that when she entered a room, everyone would stop instantly just to capture a glimpse of her. She had silky brown hair, so long that it almost grazed the small of her back. Her eyes were chocolate brown, and people often said when you looked into them you could almost see right into her. Those were the good memories. The memories that didn't haunt me everyday. Not many people are unfortunate enough to watch their most loved one die in there cold shaky arms. I remember watching her gasp for her last breath of air while holding the back of her head trying to stop the bleeding. I knew the roads were icy that night but I insisted on catching the late show so that the we could be away from our parents and finally be alone.

After that night, I had lost faith in almost everything. I stopped attending church, and rarely made an appearance at school. Most days I would walk bare foot across town and all the way across the sparsely grassed fields and sit by the railroad tracks where Mary and I used to go to have picnics and talk. I could feel the bottom of my rough feet get cut in by the jagged rocks which scattered the fields, but I didn't care. It made me feel closer to the earth which made me feel closer to Mary. I'd just sit there waiting for a train to come by. I knew I wouldn't graduate if I continued skipping school like this, but not graduating seemed simple compared to facing my class mates whom frowned upon me everyday. A week after Mary's death I decided that it was important to return back to school, I could feel all the eyes starring at me, and blame shot through every vein in my body. From that point on I decided that I would avoid school as much as possible.

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

Sometimes as I watched the train I wished I could just jump on it and get out of this town which had shown nothing but hatred towards me. I wondered if anyone would even notice, or if people would be relieved to see me go. Other times I contemplated jumping in front of the train and ending this misery right away. But I knew Mary wouldn't want that.

I was tired of school, I was tired of my home, I was tired of my life. All I could pay attention too was my parents staring at me with sympathy. It had been two years since Mary's death and they still looked at me with the same painful look. One time my mother had said to me, "Awe hunny, at some point your going to have to move on." Move on! Move on! How could I possibly move on? I watched her struggle for her last words, I felt her shake from the cold, I was the reason for her death!

There was a full moon one night, but I could barely see it because dark heavy clouds covered the sky. Rain trickled down my window, and I imagined the rain to be Mary's tears as she looked down on me. In the reflection of the window I could see a tear drip down from the corner of my left eye and slowly creep towards the crease of my nose. I slowly crept open the window careful not to make a sound and began to make my way to the train tracks.

I could feel my clothes getting soaked by the pouring rain and my clothes becoming heavier by the second. I began to run faster and faster, as if I was trying to run away from my life. I finally stopped by the railroad crossing, there was no train in sight, and chances are a train wouldn't be passing anytime soon. I lay down in the sticky mud, my arms and legs spread out as if I was a star, and I could feel the rain pelt down on my face and body. "I love you Mary! I'm so sorry." I screamed as loud as I possibly could. Hoping maybe she would hear. Tears and rain

English Language Arts 30–1  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment, January 2009

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

drops ran down my skinny face. Maybe she would forgive me and make me feel certain again. I heard no reply. I was just about to get up when I glanced over by my right shoulder. A small pink rose was emerging from it's bud. Mary forgave me, she knew I loved her, and she knew I didn't want this tragic event to happen.

" A new beginning" I whispered gently, as I began to make my way back home.

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Ideas and Impressions (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s exploration of the topic is generalized.</li> <li>• Perceptions and/or ideas are straightforward and relevant.</li> <li>• Support is adequate and clarifies the student’s ideas and impressions.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>The student’s <b>exploration of the topic</b> through a creative narrative about a young man coming to terms with the death of his girl friend <b>is generalized</b>, as in “After that night, I had lost faith in almost everything,” “I knew I wouldn’t graduate if I continued skipping school like this, but not graduating seemed simple compared to facing my class mates whom frowned upon me everyday,” and “All I could pay attention too was my parents starring at me with sympathy. It had been two years since Mary’s death and they still looked at me with the same painful look.” The immediate restoration of honour for the narrator after seeing the “pink rose” by the railroad crossing is abrupt. The student’s <b>straightforward perceptions</b> about the boy’s grief and guilt are evident in “I could feel all the eyes starring at me, and blame shot through every vein in my body. From that point on I decided that I would avoid school as much as possible.” The student <b>adequately supports</b> the idea of the narrator yearning to escape his pain as illustrated in “I wondered if anyone would even notice, or if people would be relieved to see me go. Other times I contemplated jumping in front of the train and ending this misery right away.” The narrator concludes with the <b>straightforward and relevant</b> hope that “Maybe she would forgive me and make me feel certain again.” The “small pink rose” offers that assurance, and the narrator makes his way home confident of “‘A new beginning.’” This transformative moment <b>clarifies the student’s idea</b> that honour and certainty can be restored.</p>



**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Presentation (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice created by the student is apparent.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices are adequate and the student’s creation of tone is conventional.</li> <li>• The unifying effect is appropriately developed.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>The <b>voice created by the student is apparent</b>, as in “She was the kind of girl that when she entered a room, everyone would stop instantly just to capture a glimpse of her,” “Most days I would walk bare foot across town and all the way across the sparsely grassed fields and sit by the railroad tracks where Mary and I used to go to have picnics and talk,” and “‘I love you Mary! I’m so sorry.’ I screamed as loud as I possibly could.” <b>Stylistic choices are adequate</b>, as in “‘Awe hunny, at some point your going to have to move on.’ Move on! Move on! How could I possibly move on?” The <b>student’s creation of tone is conventional</b> in such imagery as “Rain trickled down my window, and I imagined the rain to be Mary’s tears as she looked down on me. In the reflection of the window I could see a tear drip down from the corner of my left eye and slowly creep towards the crease of my nose” and “I lay down in the sticky mud, my arms and legs spread out as if I was a star, and I could feel the rain pelt down on my face and body.” <b>The unifying effect of the narrative is appropriately developed</b>, constructed through the consistent sentiment regarding Mary’s death, as in “I could feel the bottom of my rough feet get cut in by the jagged rocks which scattered the fields, but I didn’t care. It made me feel closer to the earth which made me feel closer to Mary” and through nature imagery, as in “There was a full moon one night, but I could barely see it because dark heavy clouds covered the sky.” A bouncing or shifting chronology in such phrases as “After that night,” “Most days,” “A week after Mary’s death,” “It had been two years since Mary’s death,” “There was a full moon one night,” although not unexpected in first draft writing, in this case defines the unifying effect as primarily satisfactory.</p>

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment, January 2009

Example 1 Scored Proficient (Pf)

*Planning*

- Jack is angry at self
- Completely destroyed
- Image of being as good as Yegudkin allow him an opportunity to restore his honour (value) and certainty in his value to anyone at all.

Example 1 Scored Proficient (Pf)

Living life with honour is something that everyone in this world can take pride in. It allows a person to do many things in their lives such as acting confidently and being certain about their actions. If a person loses their honour, they will likely be devastated as honour is an important value for countless people. The journey to regain this honour can be treacherous and testing, but if it is regained the person will be rewarded by regaining their confidence and certainty.

In the excerpt from “Redemption”, Jack Hawthorne is overwhelmed with guilt and sorrow after he kills his brother. This event isolates him from his family and friends and strips him of his honour. When working on the farm he is presented with a lot of time to think about the incident. This only further deteriorates Jack’s honour in his opinion, because he replays the event in his head and believes himself to be a monster. He believes he has no value to the world and therefore has no honour to live for. Jack’s only joy is playing the French horn, which at first he only does by himself but eventually joins an orchestra and begins to take lessons. After seeing his horn teacher, Arcady Yegudkin, play a new horn with extreme proficiency, Jack is driven to achieve the same level of skill.

Becoming a skilled horn player is the process that Jack thinks will allow him to regain his honour and value to society. Being a prestigious horn player would allow him to show his

Example 1 Scored Proficient (Pf)

value to his family, friends and community. For him, his honour and self-respect would be regained because the overriding image of himself by others would be a skilled musician, and not a person who accidentally killed his brother. Furthermore, Jack's own opinion of himself would change because he would be able to stop thinking of himself as evil and see himself as a devoted student of the art of music. The type of honour that is presented in this excerpt is one that allows a person to be proud of who they are as people, to have pride in their lives and be confident and certain in their actions. This is what Jack Hawthorne wants to achieve by striving to become as good as his music teacher.

After a terrible incident, it may be hard to regain a person's lost honour but is possible and it is highly beneficial for them to do so. Honour is certainly a value that is important to many people. It allows them to act confidently, take pride in who they are and what they are doing, and create an image of dignity for themselves. The ideal of honour in a person's life is definitely one that should be present, and regained if lost.

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT–1**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Ideas and Impressions (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s exploration of the topic is purposeful.</li> <li>• Perceptions and/or ideas are thoughtful and considered.</li> <li>• Support is specific and strengthens the student’s ideas and impressions.</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>Pf</b></p>	<p>The student begins the <b>exploration of the topic</b> by referencing the three components of the prompt with a <b>purposeful</b> discussion about how “It [honour] allows a person to do many things in their lives such as acting confidently and being certain about their actions” and that the “journey to regain this honour can be treacherous and testing, but if it is regained the person will be rewarded by regaining their confidence and certainty.” The student’s argument focuses first on Jack’s feelings of guilt and worthlessness and then moves to <b>purposeful</b> assessment of how playing the French horn may provide opportunity for Jack to reclaim his honour and certainty. The student’s understanding that the accident “isolates him [Jack] from his family and friends and strips him of his honour” is <b>thoughtful</b>, and the <b>idea</b> that Jack “believes he has no value to the world and therefore has no honour to live for” is a <b>considered</b> assessment of Jack’s situation. The student synthesizes the text in a sensible way by acknowledging that becoming “a skilled horn player” will allow Jack “to regain his honour and value to society.” The <b>idea</b> of the “journey to regain this honour” is explored <b>thoughtfully</b> by the student: “For him, his honour and self-respect would be regained because the overriding image of himself by others would be a skilled musician, and not a person who accidentally killed his brother.” <b>Support is specific and strengthens the student’s idea</b> by identifying the moment when Jack shifts from obsession with the past to consideration of a better future: “After seeing his horn teacher, Arcady Yegudkin, play a new horn with extreme proficiency, Jack is driven to achieve the same level of skill.” The student further defines this motivation of “striving to become as good as his music teacher” as a means to regain his honour.</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT–1**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Presentation (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice created by the student is distinct.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices are specific and the student’s creation of tone is competent.</li> <li>• The unifying effect is capably developed.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p><b>The voice created by the student is distinct</b> in sentences such as “When working on the farm he is presented with a lot of time to think about the incident. This only further deteriorates Jack’s honour in his opinion, because he replays the event in his head and believes himself to be a monster” and “Being a prestigious horn player would allow him to show his value to his family, friends and community.” <b>Stylistic choices are specific</b> as in the diction of “treacherous and testing” and “confidence and certainty” and in the parallelism in the sentence, “Furthermore, Jack’s own opinion of himself would change because he would be able to stop thinking of himself as evil and see himself as a devoted student of the art of music.” Such sentences as “Jack’s only joy is playing the French horn, which at first he only does by himself but eventually joins an orchestra and begins to take lessons” and “It allows them to act confidently, take pride in who they are and what they are doing, and create an image of dignity for themselves” help to <b>create a competent tone. The unifying effect is capably developed</b> by establishing Jack’s initial state of mind as one “overwhelmed with guilt and sorrow after he kills his brother.” The examination of Jack’s journey to reclaim some purpose and pride is demonstrated in the middle of the response, “Becoming a skilled horn player is the process that Jack thinks will allow him to regain honour and value to society” and is summarized with the final concluding statement, “The ideal of honour in a person’s life is definitely one that should be present, and regained if lost.”</p>

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Example 2 Scored Proficient (Pf)

*Initial Planning*

Your initial planning will assist markers in identifying the text or texts to which you are responding.

For each text you will reference, briefly identify the central idea that is most relevant to what you intend to explore.

- \* "Drums" - music can restore you, absolve you
- \* "Redemption" - you want to escape, start fresh and regain honour/certainty through isolation
- Photo - find the balance between dishonour and honour, certainty and uncertainty

Briefly identify what idea you intend to explore.

When we have done something we regret, we try to escape it. We try to run away, isolate ourselves and gain an understanding. This is usually with the case with something horrific, that forces us to question our certainty of who we are.

State your choice of prose form. You may respond using a personal, creative, or analytical perspective. Do not use a poetic form.

~~continue~~ short story continuation of "Redemption"  
Yegorokin relates to Jack

Example 2 Scored Proficient (PF)

True to their agreement Jack came the following Saturday. Despite the despair Jack felt in the pit of his stomach everytime he remembered saying, "You think I'll ever play like that?"; and the reaction it <sup>had</sup> garnered from his mentor; Yegudkin soon ~~had <sup>took</sup> ~~and taken~~~~ Jack under his wings. The two quickly became very close friends and confided in one another. Though Jack continued to conceal the story of <sup>the</sup> accident; and distanced himself ~~even~~ even further from his family.

One day however, while teaching Jack chord progressions Yegudkin inadvertently raised the subject.  
"Jack. tell me about your family." It seemed like a simple enough question to ask during a quick break from playing. Jack however, offered no reply and instead proceeded to change the mouth piece on his horn. When Yegudkin repeated the question and added, "Do you have any brothers?" Jack slammed his horn down and stormed out of the room.



Example 2 Scored Proficient (PF)

Yegudkin sat puzzled for a few moments, as though reflecting on what he had said. Before he could decide to follow Jack or leave him be, Jack returned to the room. It looked as though he had been crying, but ~~from~~ it was hard to tell what had happened to him, because he calmly sat down, picked up his horn and requested that the lesson continue.

"Jack, I'm sorry if I offended,"  
~~"It's fine, let's just play already!"~~ interrupted Jack.  
~~The two began to play, but Yegudkin could~~  
"Jack, I'm sorry if I offended..."

"It's fine, can we just play, please?" interrupted Jack. Jack started up, but Yegudkin just sat and watched as his pupil played and a river of ~~te~~ torrent of tears began to roll down his face. He motioned for Jack to stop, but ~~he~~ Jack continued playing, striking ~~notes~~ ~~bet~~ chords between sobs. It continued like this for what seemed like ages until Yegudkin finally, and through much physical force, wrested the horn from Jack's hands.

Jack tried vigorously to wrench it back from his master, but after numerous failed attempts he collapsed ~~on the~~ to the ground sobbing profusely.

Example 2 Scored Proficient (Pf)

Yegudkin left the room, and returned ten minutes later with two cups of tea. He handed one to Jack who was now sitting with his back propped up against the wall; wiping the remaining tears from his face. Jack drank the tea thankfully as Yegudkin sat down beside him. Before his mentor could enquire as to what happened, Jack interjected with, "Have you ever done something so horrible that it completely changed everything in life that you were certain of, and ~~me~~ made you so ashamed of yourself you ~~could barely~~ couldn't stand the face you saw in the mirror?"

Before Yegudkin could enquire as to just what it was that Jack had done, Jack completely and utterly poured his heart out to his mentor. He told him everything, About his brother's death, his guilt, his self-isolation from his family; nothing was held back.

After hearing all this, Yegudkin made his reply. "Jack my boy," he said calmly, "we are all confronted by the demons of our pasts. We have all done things that make us doubtful about who we are. We have all done things

Example 2 Scored Proficient (PF)

that made our blood run cold. We have all been ashamed of ourselves at one point or another. The key to life is finding the absolution of and the balance with our pasts and present."

Jack looked up from his tea, and a smile crossed his face as his mentor continued

"Now from what you just told me, you have no reason to hold yourself guilty. Your brother's death was not something you wanted; and the fact that you feel this much emotion proves that you really did, and still deeply love him. You have to forgive yourself from the mistakes of your past, and balance them with your present and future. Then and only then will you find yourself, and regain your former confident self."

Jack stood up, and helped his mentor to his feet. After this revelation and vicissitude in his life, he would never dwell in darkness and would let the past be the past; though he would never forget it.

After he finished this thought, he and Yegorokin began to play

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT–2**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Ideas and Impressions (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s exploration of the topic is purposeful.</li> <li>• Perceptions and/or ideas are thoughtful and considered.</li> <li>• Support is specific and strengthens the student’s ideas and impressions.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p><b>The student’s purposeful exploration of the topic</b> is clearly stated on the planning page: “When we have done something we regret, we try to escape it. We try to run away, isolate ourselves and gain an understanding. This is usually the case with something horrific, that forces us to question our certainty of who we are.” The student offers a creative short story that continues the action of the excerpt from “Redemption.” On the following Saturday, when Yegudkin “inadvertently raised the subject” of Jack’s family, Jack attempts to isolate himself as he did with his family in the previous months. As a result of Yegudkin’s compassion and his persistence, Jack reveals his “horrible” mistake and attendant guilt. This plot device allows the student to express <b>thoughtful ideas</b> through the sage mentor Yegudkin: “You have to forgive yourself from the mistakes of the past, and balance them with your present and future.” This theme is <b>thoughtful and considered</b>. The student references all three texts to explore the restorative elements of music, the attempt to “start fresh and regain honour/certainty” and to “find the balance between dishonour and honour, certainty and uncertainty.” The student’s exploration of the topic and the texts remains <b>thoughtful</b>, as in the summation: “After this revelation and vicissitude in his life, he would never dwell in darkness and would let the past be the past, though he would never forget it.” <b>Support is specific</b> in terms of characterization and emotional details, as in “Yegudkin sat puzzled for a few moments” and “‘Jack my boy,’ he said calmly, ‘we are all confronted by the demons of our pasts. We have all done things that make us doubtful about who we are.’” These details <b>strengthen the student’s impressions</b>.</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT–2**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Presentation (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice created by the student is distinct.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices are specific and the student’s creation of tone is competent.</li> <li>• The unifying effect is capably developed.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p><b>The student creates a distinctive voice</b> in differentiating between the narrator, Yegudkin, and Jack. Sentences describing Jack such as “Jack slammed his horn down and stormed out of the room” and ones embodying the wisdom of Yegudkin “The key to life is finding the absolution of and the balance with our pasts and present” demonstrate <b>competence</b> in the creation of character and dialogue. The strength of this paper is <b>the specific stylistic choices of diction and syntax. Word choices are specific</b>, as in “absolve,” “garnered,” “inadvertently,” and “interjected.” The variety of sentence structure, sentence fragments, periodicity, and parallelism all help to <b>create a competent tone</b>: “Before Yegudkin could enquire as to just what it was that Jack had done, Jack completely and utterly poured his heart out to his mentor. He told him everything. About his brother’s death, his guilt, his self-isolation from his family; nothing was held back.” <b>The unifying effect is capably developed</b>. The story begins one week after the excerpt ends with the <b>competent</b> characterization of Yegudkin and Jack. The second paragraph establishes the conflict. The story’s conclusion is <b>capably</b> prepared for by Yegudkin’s calm absolution of Jack’s guilt: “Your brother’s death was not something you wanted; and the fact that you feel this much emotion proves that you really did, and still deeply love him.” Jack’s speedy reconciliation to his past is evident in the line “he would never dwell in darkness,” and the crisp return to the discipline of music “he and Yegudkin began to play,” implies the restoration of honour will come through music and friendship.</p>

English Language Arts 30–1  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment, January 2009

Example 1 Scored Excellent (E)

*Initial Planning*

Your initial planning will assist markers in identifying the text or texts to which you are responding.

For each text you will reference, briefly identify the central idea that is most relevant to what you intend to explore.

Redemption by: John Garner  
- Jack's struggle to restore meaning to his life through his music, to create a new honour after the tragedy.

Briefly identify what idea you intend to explore.

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State your choice of prose form. You may respond using a personal, creative, or analytical perspective. Do not use a poetic form.

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Example 1 Scored Excellent (E)

*Planning*

Intro - how individuals use an alternative means to create and restore meaning to their life; the struggle to escape torment through unique expression which consumes their very existence. Introduce "Redemption" by John Gardner and the character Jack.

Paragraph 1: Discuss how guilt or a 'turning' point can shatter one's perspective, and destroy their perceptions. Discuss Jack's tragedy in the story.

Paragraph 2: Discuss how an alternate source (music) is used to restore balance to life, to re-create a sense of certainty. Relate to "Redemption", and to real life, a common form of coping.

Conclusion: sum up central ideas, relate constantly to "Redemption" and to real life and how people deal in tough situations to restore normality to their lives.

Example 1 Scored Excellent (E)

The Power of Expression

Life is a journey involving many struggles and challenges. Sometimes incidents can occur which shatter the very perceptions and boundaries an individual lives by. Due to the remarkable aspect of human nature which encourages recovery and adaptation, each individual must learn how to deal with a challenging situation in an appropriate manner. The character Jack Hawthorne in the novel excerpt from Redemption struggles to re-create a sense of balance and meaning in his life after a life-changing tragedy. His attempt to restore certainty to his life is manifested through his gift and passion for music, merely one possible creative outlet for pain. However, each individual must discover his own method of coping; his own unique form of expression to return a sense of normality and sanity to life.

There are many ways in which an individual's world can be crushed or seemingly obliterated. It could be a gradual decline, a recession into psychological torment, or one surreal and drastic event that changes an individual's life forever. Such a catastrophe can shatter the very perceptions one has on life, and can alter their presence permanently. This is what happened to Jack Hawthorne in the story excerpt from Redemption written by John Gardner. In an unpredictable accident, Jack ran over his younger brother with a farming implement and killed him. This terrible tragedy caused Jack's entire world to come crashing down around him in a cacophony of suffering and pain. His perceptions about himself were greatly altered, as he inflicted great mental punishment upon himself for this accident. "He was incapable of love, he told himself, striking the steering wheel. He was inherently bad, a spiritual defective. He was



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Example 1 Scored Excellent (E)

evil.”-quoted from Redemption by John Gardner. This self-punishment and harsh judgment of oneself can seriously damage a person permanently. Jack knew he needed something to pull him out of his figurative hell, to save him from the torment that was killing his spirit.

An unrelated, alternative source is often the only way one can recover from such a tragedy. Jack found his passion in music, in the playing of the French Horn. He dove into the rich harmonies and haunting melodies of the French Horn with his entire being, drowning his pain in a glorious swirl of notes and rhythms. Music became his escape; the only way to mute his suffering enough to control it. Music was Jack’s savior, but it could have been anything. There are many possible outlets that serve as the crucial keys in unlocking a tormented soul from the depths of despair. These creative forms of expression are necessary in order for an individual to surface from their personal torments and create a sense of certainty and balance in their life. It may seem like the only restoration of honor, when one feels as though they have erred beyond repair.

When a life-altering event occurs in an individual’s life, one is left with two choices: to give in to the pain, to allow it to consume one’s self; or to seek to overcome it through alternative means. The first choice leads only to sadness and loss, to a decline into the darkest depths of the mind, to a place where there is no hope of recovery. The second option offers a glimmer of hope; a chance to be saved from depression, to introduce a new meaning and significance to one’s life. A great tragedy can never be entirely erased, yet it can be conquered enough to allow life to continue. Jack Hawthorne from the novel excerpt Redemption by John Gardner chose the

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Example 1 Scored Excellent (E)

second route. He discovered his saving grace in the form of music, by playing the French Horn. The memory of his brother and the terrible accident of his death will always be with Jack, as well as the sense of guilt he placed upon himself. Yet through the miraculous expression of music, he is able to be reconciled with his guilt, to hold it at bay enough so that it will not consume him. Although Jack still has a long way to go on his struggle for self-discovery and acceptance, his music will lead him out of his pain and into a new era. His life will regain meaning and assurance, and he will be able to feel honorable again. Hope is not lost for Jack, due to the power and magnificence of such a seemingly frivolous thing; music.

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT–1**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Ideas and Impressions (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s exploration of the topic is insightful.</li> <li>• Perceptions and/or ideas are confident and discerning.</li> <li>• Support is precise and aptly reinforces the student’s ideas and impressions.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">E</p>	<p>Recognizing the impossibility of complete freedom from guilt and acknowledging that a “great tragedy can never be entirely erased,” the student offers an <b>insightful exploration of the topic</b>. The student notes that “through the miraculous expression of music, he [Jack] is able to be reconciled with his guilt, to hold it at bay enough so that it will not consume him.” This measured assessment of the extent of Jack’s redemption is <b>insightful and confident</b>. The <b>perception</b> that “each individual must learn how to deal with a challenging situation in an appropriate manner” is augmented by the statement that “each individual must discover his own method of coping; his own unique form of expression to return a sense of normality and sanity to life.” These ideas culminate in the <b>confident and discerning</b> assertion that “These creative forms of expression are necessary in order for an individual to surface from their personal torments and create a sense of certainty and balance in their life.” Selecting details with <b>precision</b> from the author’s description of Jack as “incapable of love,” “inherently bad,” and “a spiritual defective,” the student extends these perceptions: “Jack knew he needed something to pull him out of his figurative hell, to save him from the torment that was killing his spirit” and “He discovered his saving grace in the form of music, by playing the French Horn.” Such <b>support is precise</b>. The astute observation “Music became his escape; the only way to mute his suffering enough to control it” <b>aptly reinforces the student’s ideas and impressions</b>.</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT–1**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Presentation (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice created by the student is convincing.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices are precise and the student’s creation of tone is adept.</li> <li>• The unifying effect is skillfully developed.</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>E</b></p>	<p><b>The voice created by the student is convincing</b>, as shown in such sentences as “This terrible tragedy caused Jack’s entire world to come crashing down around him in a cacophony of suffering and pain” and “He dove into the rich harmonies and haunting melodies of the French Horn with his entire being, drowning his pain in a glorious swirl of notes and rhythms.” <b>Stylistic choices</b> such as “His attempt to restore certainty to his life is manifested through his gift and passion for music, merely one possible creative outlet for pain” and “Yet through the miraculous expression of music, he is able to be reconciled with his guilt, to hold it at bay enough so that it will not consume him” <b>are precise</b> and effective. <b>The student’s creation of tone is adept</b> as reflected in sentences such as “It could be a gradual decline, a recession into psychological torment, or one surreal and drastic event that changes an individual’s life forever” and “There are many possible outlets that serve as the crucial keys in unlocking a tormented soul from the depths of despair.” The student <b>skillfully develops the unifying effect</b> by exploring the challenges and the limitations involved in the struggle to restore honour in the aftermath of tragedy and to achieve some “sense of certainty and balance” in a person’s life. Through examining the passion for music as “one possible creative outlet for pain,” the student evaluates Jack’s “struggle for self-discovery and acceptance.” This investigation culminates in the convincing conclusion, “Although Jack still has a long way to go on his struggle for self-discovery and acceptance, his music will lead him out of his pain and into a new era. His life will regain meaning and assurance, and he will be able to feel honorable again.”</p>

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Example 2 Scored Excellent (E)

*Initial Planning*

Your initial planning will assist markers in identifying the text or texts to which you are responding.

For each text you will reference, briefly identify the central idea that is most relevant to what you intend to explore.

Redemption: when individuals fail at something in their lives, they dedicate the rest of their life to the pursuit of success in an area.

Setting Up the Drums: individuals can use their failures to fuel their passions in other aspects of their lives; use them as assets, even though they regret what happened

Briefly identify what idea you intend to explore.  
The speaker in "Setting up the Drums" journals about his previous gig, his upcoming gig, and the student his French-horn playing colleague tells him of.

State your choice of prose form. You may respond using a personal, creative, or analytical perspective. Do not use a poetic form.

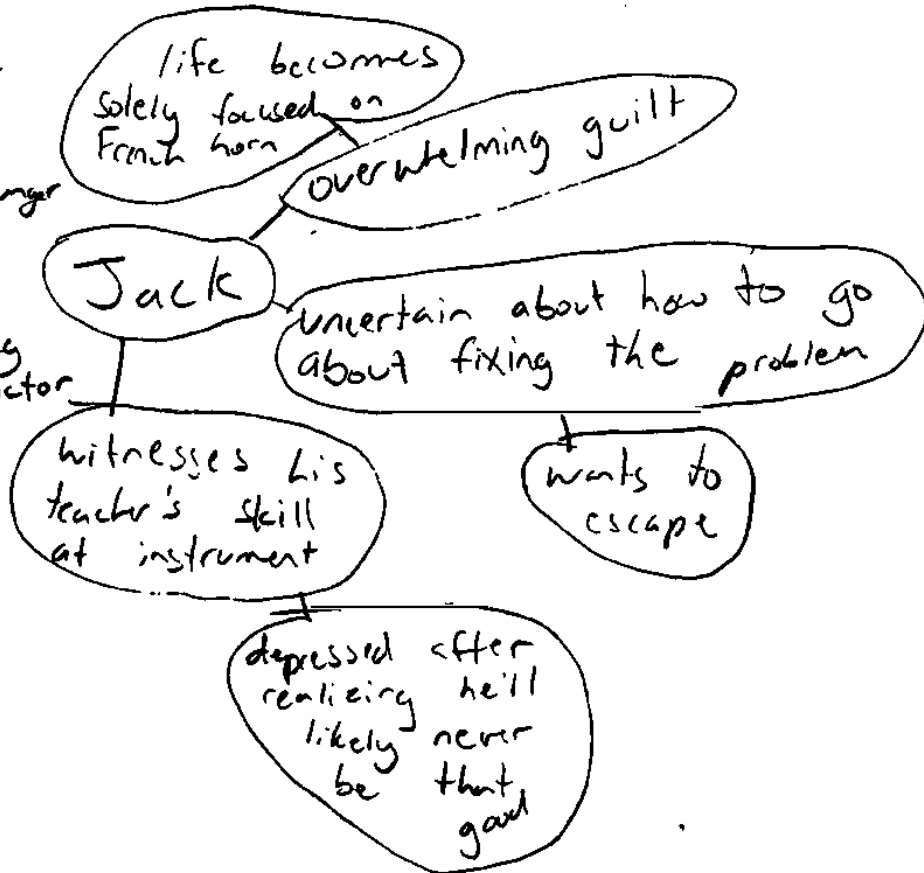
Personal: Journal Response

Example 2 Scored Excellent (E)

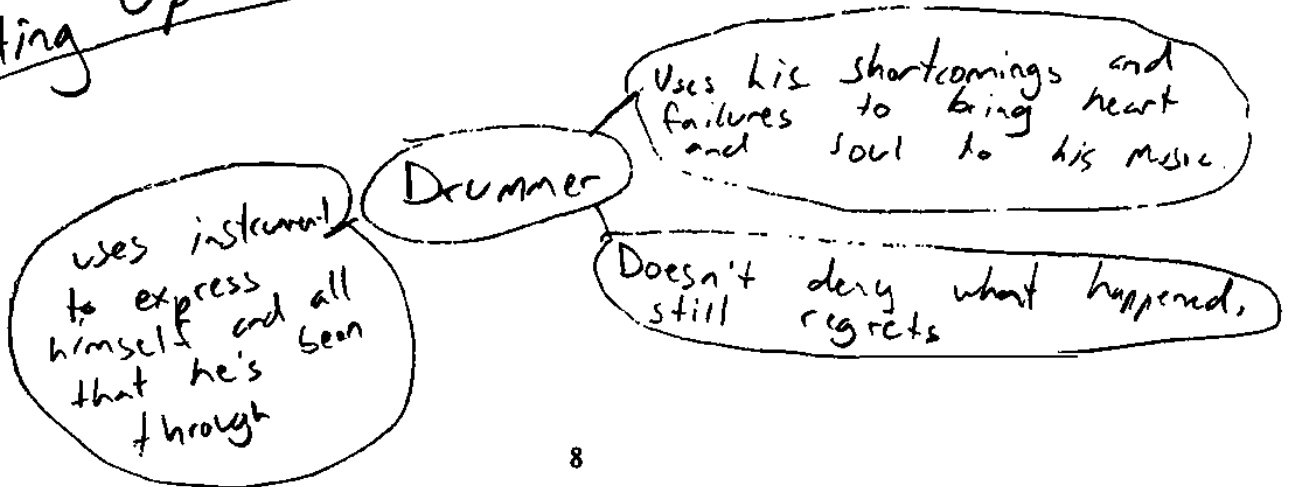
Planning

Redemption

- Jack, 12, kills younger brother David, 7, when pulling him on Cultipacker being pulled by tractor



Setting Up The Drums



English Language Arts 30–1  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment, January 2009

Example 2 Scored Excellent (E)

May 12, 2005

It was the same last night as it has always been. The show at *The Yardbird* was no different than the last time I played there, or the time previous. Everytime I set up my drums there I can still feel it, still feel the first time I walked in through the back door reserved for the musicians, lugging case after case of my drum set, rolling out my carpet, claiming the territory necessary to carry out my work. I can still feel how tight my tie felt that night as I glanced over the crowd that had gathered for the evening show.

The crowd I had seen many times before, not only as audience members, but as incredible musicians and performers themselves. Individuals who would know it the moment I fell off time, immediately recognize the beat missed while unknowingly speeding up some of their favorite songs. The pressure was on. The seats began to fill as I neared completing the set-up of my instrument. Every tripod stand I unfolded reminded me of how close I was to performing. Each drum I placed revealed how soon it would be that I would have to perform. And as I began to play, every glance from the audience reminding me of my previous failures. That first night was also the night where I really learned to understand my instrument. Sure, the countless hours of woodshedding to *Take 5* contributed to my knowledge and skill, but I finally realized what it took to succeed at my music. As I was playing that night, I felt a passion that I had never felt before. I reminisced about every time I had failed in my life. Every poor test result, every missed pass, every roster I had failed to see my name on. I felt them all. I felt the eyes of the audience penetrating my soul, peering into the crevices of my heart even I dared not

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venture. I remembered the long nights in my parents' garage with a pair of sticks and a drumset that had little life left in it, bashing away my pain, trying to stumble across the secret that Buddy Rich had discovered and redeem myself by mastering the skins. It was then that I had my revelation. All of my past failures had led me to this moment. Without a single one of them, I would not be who I am, where I was, or doing what I was doing. I needed my shortcomings in order to express myself in my music. I then understood that music is built upon failures and how they are communicated from soul to soul. I realized that the members of the audience weren't only looking for the precision of my hands and feet, they were looking to hear my life coming through the strokes of my drum sticks.

Playing there many times since, I learned how to harness my failures and put them as much to work as my hands and feet were when playing. It took a while to do, but I found it, and I've used it in every show since, which is why I still feel like the 17 year old kid in a suit too small lugging my drums in through the back door of *the Yardbird*.

After rehearsal for the show Friday night, Arcady Yegudkin, the French horn player in my band, and I went for coffee. He told me of a familiar story. He has a student who is very regretful of things he had done in his life, which he chose not to reveal to me. He apparently practices very hard for many hours a day, engrossing himself in his instrument, and showing exceptional chops for his age, but not yet expressing that which I came to understand my first show. Arcady says he has a difficult time teaching him that "which can't be taught" and is having doubts about the student's ability to advance further if he can't harness his emotions. I think I might have to pay this student a visit. If there's one thing I've learned from this business, it's that you can practice all you want, you can buy the best gear at your disposal, but that won't get you where you want to be.



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**Example 2 Scored Excellent (E)**

**It won't restore the failures in your life, and it sure as heck won't make you feel a whole lot better. What I've learned is that heart and soul, the passion in the music, speaks much louder than the notes themselves, and change change lives if you let it.**

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT—2**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Ideas and Impressions (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s exploration of the topic is insightful.</li> <li>• Perceptions and/or ideas are confident and discerning.</li> <li>• Support is precise and aptly reinforces the student’s ideas and impressions.</li> </ul>	<p>The student offers the <b>insightful</b> idea that while music “won’t restore the failures in your life, and it sure as heck won’t make you feel a whole lot better,” an assault to an individual’s honour may be integral to develop confidence and certainty in oneself, and, ultimately, provide the necessity to communicate this awareness to others. The student pursues this idea in the confident assertion, “What I’ve learned is that heart and soul, the passion in the music, speaks much louder than the notes themselves, and change change[s] lives if you let it.” The student offers the <b>perception</b> that unresolved emotions, resulting from a tragic circumstance, need to be acknowledged, accepted, and expressed: “I needed my shortcomings in order to express myself in my music” and “I then understood that music is built upon failures and how they are communicated from soul to soul.” The student presents the <b>confident and discerning</b> idea that not only is one’s identity contingent upon these failures, but also they must be harnessed and communicated to be effective: “Without a single one of them, I would not be who I am” and “Playing there many times since, I learned how to harness my failures and put them as much to work as my hands and feet were when playing.” Through the experiences of the narrator and Jack, the student offers <b>precise support and aptly reinforces ideas and impressions</b>. The narrator reflects on a series of failures in his life: “I reminisced about every time I had failed in my life. Every poor test result, every missed pass, every roster I had failed to see my name on. I felt them all.” The narrator dealt with the unresolved emotions in isolation: “I remembered the long nights in my parents’ garage with a pair of sticks and a drumset that had little life left in it, bashing away my pain, trying to stumble across the secret that Buddy Rich had discovered and redeem myself by mastering the skins.” During his first performance, the narrator has an epiphany: “I then understood that music is built upon failures and how they are communicated from soul to soul.” The narrator then contemplates visiting Jack who “can’t harness his emotions” and sharing his insight with this young man.</p>

E

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT—2**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Presentation (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice created by the student is convincing.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices are precise and the student’s creation of tone is adept</li> <li>• The unifying effect is skillfully developed.</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>E</b></p>	<p>Despite the student’s choice to use a single journal entry, <b>the student’s voice is convincing</b> as a drummer’s memoir: “Sure, the countless hours of woodshedding to <i>Take 5</i> contributed to my knowledge and skill,” “He apparently practices very hard for many hours a day, engrossing himself in his instrument, and showing exceptional chops for his age, but not yet expressing that which I came to understand my first show,” and “It won’t restore the failures in your life, and it sure as heck won’t make you feel a whole lot better.” Considering the <b>proportion of error in relation to the complexity and length of the response, stylistic choices are precise and the student’s creation of tone is adept</b>, as reflected in the passages “The crowd I had seen many times before, not only as audience members, but as incredible musicians and performers themselves. Individuals who would know it the moment I fell off time, immediately recognize the beat missed while unknowingly speeding up some of their favourite songs. The pressure was on,” “Every tripod stand I unfolded reminded me of how close I was to performing. Each drum I placed revealed how soon it would be that I would have to perform,” and “It took a while to do, but I found it, and I’ve used it in every show since, which is why I still feel like the 17 year old kid in a suit too small lugging my drums in through the back door of <i>the Yardbird</i>.” The student <b>skillfully develops the unifying effect</b> through a narrative of the persona’s journey to a moment of epiphany. His experience and insights are then crystallized in his analysis of Jack’s emotional paralysis. The persona concludes, “What I’ve learned is that heart and soul, the passion in the music, speaks much louder than the notes themselves, and change change[s] lives if you let it.”</p>

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

Hamlet - William Shakespeare

**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.

In Hamlet there is a lot of betrayal  
and a lot of death that takes place. Hamlet  
is not only robbed of a father but  
Claudius is also of a great king.  
The people of Denmark believe  
Claudius is an illegitimate son and  
the reason as well as Hamlet know  
strongly (brother of the King) Hamlet must  
prove his innocence and  
return home or is being driven from Claudius  
and back to his father.

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Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment, January 2009

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

*Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text*

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① Honour -

② Hamlet learns of his father's  
murder, and then...  
is...

③

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

## Hamlet

Honour is often described as recognition of achievement or a good name or reputation; however, honour is much more than this. For true honour to be achieved integrity and dignity are needed. True honour cannot be stolen through betrayal and lies. True honour cannot be sold to the highest payer and true honour can be lost through questionable acts. Thus only true honour can be earned and restored. In the play “Hamlet,” by William Shakespeare, the playwright demonstrates that honour achieved through deceitful acts is not honour at all, and thus can be taken away.

In the play “Hamlet,” the title character is originally characterized as an honourable man. Although Laertes warns the fair Ophelia to be cautious of him because of his womanizing tendencies Hamlet does seem to be sincere in his interest in Ophelia. Hamlet sends her gifts and poems that he has written. Once Hamlet learns that his father’s recent death may not have been an accident but instead a devious murder plot by his uncle Claudius who has now become King he decides to investigate. If the warnings of the deceased King’s ghost are true then Hamlet will be responsible for avenging his father’s death by killing his own uncle. Hamlet shows he is honourable by looking for evidence before acting on his emotions. When Hamlet first hears his deceased father telling him of his uncle’s actions he longs to take control of the situation. Hamlet knows though, that sometimes ghostly apparitions tell falsehoods and thus shows his honour by taking his time in the decision to murder his uncle.

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

Claudius has not only taken over his brother's state as King but has also remarried his brother's wife just after a month of his brother being dead. Hamlet sees his mother's marriage to his uncle as incestuous and thus he does not support it. Hamlet's mother, Gertrude, tells Hamlet to stop mourning his father and instead celebrate in the new marriage of the state but Hamlet refuses. As an honourable man he mourns his father as would be expected and shows respect for the deceased. Claudius seems to have long forgotten his brother and is truly content on being King of Denmark and husband to Gertrude. From the very beginning of Claudius taking over kingship Hamlet has lacked trust in him and now that his suspicions have been supported by his father's ghostly apparition's warning he does not intend on supporting the man who may have killed his own father. The State of Denmark seems to be impressed by King Claudius and have joined in the celebration of a new King and the marriage of the King and Queen.

The ghost of the late King of Denmark has told Hamlet that not only was Claudius involved in his murder but his very own wife was a conspirer as well. Hamlet has lost all trust in his family and is forced to deal with things only with the help of his friend Horatio. Hamlet plans to put on a facade that he is insane to try and learn of his uncle's actions. Hamlet alters the end of a play that is put on for the people to show a man pouring poison into the King's ear to kill him. Claudius' reaction proves to Hamlet that he is guilty of his father's accusations and responsible for his father's death. Claudius poisoned Hamlet's father in order to become King. Just after the play Gertrude summons Hamlet to her bedchambers to discuss with him the play. Hamlet accuses Gertrude of any involvement in the death of his father and her husband and she is

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

shocked and disgusted by them. “These words are daggers to my own ears.” Hamlet thus learns that his father had been mistaken about his mother’s involvement in the murderous plot and declares his mother innocent and honourable.

Because of Hamlet’s actions towards Ophelia which are less than loving and his pretending to be insane the fair Ophelia truly does go insane. Eventually Ophelia commits suicide by drowning herself and her brother Laertes blames her death on Hamlet. Once again Claudius conspires against his own family with Laertes to challenge Hamlet to a duel. Claudius and Laertes intend on cheating by putting a poisoned tip on Laertes’ sword so even with the tiniest nick of Hamlet’s skin he is sure to be killed. Both Claudius and Laertes feel they will gain success with the death of Hamlet, Claudius by keeping his murderous acts hidden and Laertes will have avenged his sister’s death.

During the day of the duel between Hamlet and Laertes, Hamlet poisons Claudius’ wine so that even if Hamlet does die, so too will his uncle. Hamlet kills Laertes and Claudius proves his lack of honour and his ruthlessness by having his own wife Gertrude drink the poisoned wine. Hamlet has lost his mother and father. In a final attempt to kill King Claudius Hamlet not only stabs him with a sword but he forces Claudius to drink the remaining poisoned wine. He has succeeded in avenging his father’s death. Even though Hamlet died while trying to bring honour back to his name he did succeed. Claudius was no longer looked at as a great man and Hamlet had stripped him of his forged honour.



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**Example Scored Satisfactory (S)**

**It was important and necessary for Hamlet to bring honour back to his father, his family and himself and to take honour away from his uncle who was undeserving of it. Hamlet succeeded in his attempts to avenge his father's death for the price of his own life and the life of his mother's. To show honour one must be honest and caring and show integrity. It doesn't take any integrity to lie and to cheat. Honour cannot be sincere when taken from another person dishonestly.**

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Critical / Analytical Responses to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Thought and Understanding (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideas are relevant and straightforward, demonstrating a generalized comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic.</li> <li>• Literary interpretations are general but plausible.</li> </ul>	<p>The student sets out the consistent, <b>straightforward</b> claim that “For true honour to be achieved integrity and dignity are needed” and develops the thesis that “the playwright demonstrates that honour achieved through deceitful acts is not honour at all, and thus can be taken away.” The student then demonstrates how Hamlet “is honourable by looking for evidence before acting on his emotions” and “by taking his time in the decision to murder his uncle.” The student’s second argument regarding Hamlet is that “As an honourable man he mourns his father as would be expected and shows respect for the deceased.” This <b>relevant idea</b> serves as a comparison to Claudius who “seems to have long forgotten his brother and is truly content on being King of Denmark and husband to Gertrude.” The student approaches the aspect of certainty in the topic through Hamlet’s attempt to confirm the Ghost’s words about the involvement of both Claudius and Gertrude in King Hamlet’s murder: “Claudius’ reaction proves to Hamlet that he is guilty,” but Hamlet becomes convinced of his mother’s innocence when Gertrude “is shocked” by Hamlet’s accusation. The student <b>demonstrates a generalized comprehension of the text and the topic. Literary interpretations</b> such as “Laertes warns the fair Ophelia to be cautious of him [Hamlet] because of his womanizing tendencies,” “his father had been mistaken about his mother’s involvement in the murderous plot,” and “Because of Hamlet’s actions towards Ophelia which are less than loving and his pretending to be insane the fair Ophelia truly does go insane” <b>are general but plausible. Comprehension of the text and topic is straightforward.</b></p>

S

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Supporting Evidence (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support is general, adequate, and appropriately chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in an acceptable way but occasionally may lack persuasiveness.</li> <li>• A reasonable connection to the student’s ideas is suitably maintained.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p><b>Support is general</b>, as in “Hamlet sends her gifts and poems that he has written,” “sometimes ghostly apparitions tell falsehoods,” and “From the very beginning of Claudius taking over kingship Hamlet has lacked trust in him and now that his suspicions have been supported by the father’s ghostly apparition’s warning he does not intend on supporting the man who may have killed his own father.” To support in an <b>adequate</b> fashion the idea that Hamlet takes action to verify the truth of the Ghost’s words, the student notes that “Hamlet alters the end of a play that is put on for the people to show a man pouring poison into the King’s ear to kill him.” The detail “she is shocked and disgusted” by Hamlet’s accusations and the quotation “These words are daggers to my own ears” are <b>appropriately chosen</b> to reinforce the student’s idea that Gertrude is not dishonourable. The student’s emphasis on the death of Ophelia as the main cause for Laertes’ thirst for revenge, “Laertes will have avenged his sister’s death,” <b>lacks</b> some <b>persuasiveness</b> because it omits Hamlet’s involvement in Polonius’ death. <b>A reasonable connection to the student’s ideas is suitably maintained</b> in such statements as “Claudius proves his lack of honour and his ruthlessness by having his own wife Gertrude drink the poisoned wine” and “Even though Hamlet died while trying to bring honour back to his name he did succeed. Claudius was no longer looked at as a great man and Hamlet has stripped him of his forged honour.”</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Form and Structure (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A straightforward arrangement of ideas and details provides direction for the discussion that is developed appropriately.</li> <li>• The unifying effect or controlling idea is presented and maintained generally; however, coherence may falter.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p><b>A straightforward arrangement of ideas and details provides direction for the discussion</b> through the student’s selection of negative actions employed by Claudius, Gertrude, and Laertes as illustrations of the idea “that honour achieved through deceitful acts is not honour at all, and thus can be taken away.” The student juxtaposes these dubious actions with Hamlet’s honourable acts and strategies for a <b>discussion that is developed appropriately</b>. In each paragraph the student attempts to explore the nature of honour as embodied in various characters to pursue the controlling idea that “True honour cannot be sold to the highest payer and true honour can be lost through questionable acts” ; however, <b>coherence</b> sometimes <b>falters</b> within paragraphs as in the inaccuracy of: “Hamlet poisons Claudius’ wine so that even if Hamlet does die, so too will his uncle.” This detail undercuts the student’s position that Hamlet’s honour is based on being “honest and caring.”</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Choice (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diction is adequate.</li> <li>• Syntactic structures are straightforward, but attempts at complex structures may be awkward.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a conventional composition with an appropriate voice.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p><b>Diction is adequate</b> throughout the response, particularly in phrases such as “recognition of achievement or a good name or reputation,” “through questionable acts,” “is forced to deal with things only with the help of his friend Horatio,” “Hamlet alters the end of a play,” and “Gertrude summons Hamlet to her bedchambers.” <b>Syntactical structures are straightforward:</b> “The State of Denmark seems to be impressed by King Claudius and have joined in the celebration of a new King and the marriage of the King and Queen” and “Eventually Ophelia commits suicide by drowning herself and her brother Laertes blames her death on Hamlet.” <b>Attempts at complex structures may be awkward:</b> “Both Claudius and Laertes feel they will gain success with the death of Hamlet, Claudius by keeping his murderous acts hidden and Laertes will have avenged his sister’s death.” <b>Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a conventional composition with an appropriate voice:</b> “Claudius and Laertes intend on cheating by putting a poisoned tip on Laertes’ sword so even with the tiniest nick of Hamlet’s skin he is sure to be killed.”</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

<b>SCORING CRITERIA</b>	<b>RATIONALE</b>
<p><b>Matters of Correctness (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</li> <li>• There may be occasional lapses in control and minor errors; however, the communication remains clear.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>S</b></p>	<p><b>This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics</b>, as demonstrated in “Hamlet sees his mother’s marriage to his uncle as incestuous and thus he does not support it” and “Claudius’ reaction proves to Hamlet that he is guilty of his father’s accusations and responsible for his father’s death.” There are <b>occasional lapses in control and minor errors</b>, such as run-on sentences, tense consistency, and comma use consistency; <b>however, the communication remains clear.</b></p>

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

*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

Death of a Salesman - Arthur  
Miller

***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.

Willy Loman, an unsuccessful salesman, ~~states~~ to  
has the illusion of reality. He does not know,  
Sometimes, the difference between reality  
and his dreams. He dreams of success and  
wealth, and that his boys, Happy and Biff  
will become big in the business world. He  
believes success comes from popularity and good  
looks. He ironically, has neither. He also  
does not have all the success he  
supposedly used to have, ~~what~~ and Biff  
is a failure. This creates uncertainty for  
Willy and Biff. \*

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

*Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text*

Willy cannot find the success which he wishes to possess. The respect he used to have from others has disappeared, and he is not <sup>well-</sup>liked. His favorite son Biff has taken influence from his father and believes that success results from personality and charm, and good looks. However, Willy never stresses hard work, therefore, Biff never possesses that either. Willy cannot even make pay, so he borrows from his neighbour Charley. This results to Willy questioning many things about his life and success itself. Biff struggles, as well as Willy, to find successes, and their place in life.

- It is almost impossible to avoid this struggle
- if you don't work hard, than you will struggle
- You cannot be stuck in the past (like Willy) you have to walk away  
"It's better for a man to just walk away" - Bernard
- Willy possesses false pride which is his downfall.



Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

Struggle to Restore Honour and Certainty in Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller

It is almost impossible to avoid the individual struggle to find one's difficulties or downfalls in order to make a change to their ways of living. Like playing a guitar with a missing string, or learning a language without guidance, it is a struggle which can be only identified with admittance to not only the struggle itself, but to the downfall which the struggle resulted from. Like a cycle, the product of these struggles is the uncertainty of the individuals self or even the lack of respect or integrity they once had. In the modern drama, Death of a Salesman, Arthur Miller suggests that in order for an individual to restore honour and certainty, admitting to their struggle and failure is essential.

Willy Loman is a man who possesses the American dream. He dreams of success, wealth, and his two sons Biff and Happy to make it big in the business world. He had a past of happiness; a past which he believed had success. His eldest son, Biff, was the captain of the football team, he got all the girls, and he had scholarships to the University of Virginia. Willy's ideals of success practically poured from Biff; good looks, strength, and personality, Willy's perfect recipe for success. Willy's boss at the firm he worked at had respect for him, and Willy thought of himself as "a New England man", and that the firm would be nothing without him. The thoughts of the successes he had in the past had always been a source of happiness for him. To Willy's misfortune, he was living in the present, where change was unavoidable. Willy, being a man of tradition, did not accept the idea of change, "I don't want change... why am I always being contradicted?" He could not stand the idea of his current failure in the business world. He was not making as many sales as he did in the past, and he was taken off salary and put on commission. He

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

tried to avoid the unavoidable, his struggle with his current situation; he was getting older and Biff was not succeeding like he thought he would. This presented Willy with the stresses of his failure, and also the uncertainty of his current situation. He was “kind of tired”, but he could not admit to his current situation because he had “false pride”, and did not want to come off as a failure. He was having an inner struggle to find the certainty of success he had always dreamed of, but the success which he would never possess.

Willy had been fired from his job with the firm, and could not believe this had happened. He had been with the firm too long, and he was making so much money a week. “You can’t eat the orange and throw the peel away – a man is no a piece of fruit.” Willy thought he was being used, and that because he was getting older and not as useful, they were simply going to dispose of him. Willy afterwards goes to see his friend Charley and finds his son, Bernard, a boy who he teased in the past for being nerdy, and not popular, sitting with tennis rackets. Willy discovers that Bernard is very successful, and asks how he had gotten to that point of success. This suggests Willy in a pathetic state, and shows a sign of defeat, nonetheless, Willy will not admit to this defeat because he lies to Bernard about Biff finding big success. Willy is unable to admit to his struggle because he is ashamed, and wants to impress those around him. Even though he is very uncertain of his standpoint, and lacks respect from others, he cannot accept it. It is clear that he would not able to restore his uncertainty, because of his over confidence and his inability to admit to his struggle of failure. This was Willy’s true downfall, but even to that, he was unable to admit.

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

Willy, even in the present, still believed that success was based on personality, good looks and popularity. Ironically, he did not possess these characteristics, he was not well-liked, he came off too strong, and he found himself not good looking and fat. However, Willy believed that if he was good looking that'd change everything for him and he'd find the success he had always wanted. Willy's narrow ideals of success had influenced not only himself, but his two sons, especially Biff. Biff had always seen his father as a hero, a role model even, but that had blown up in his face. When he caught Willy having an affair with another woman, he found himself to believe other wise. He could not believe what he saw and believed Willy to be a "fake" and a "phony". From this, Biff does not "know what the future is" or what he is going to do with his life. Biff found himself to be very uncertain with the circumstances he was in, but tried to see his father as a good influence, and a "hardworking prince." Biff calling his father a "hardworking prince" is far from true because Willy does not understand the concept of hard work; he only sees the idea of popularity. He believes that you should "start big and you will end big", and he is not capable to see that success starts from scratch. This influence again rubs off on Biff and his brother, Happy; they want to begin a business with the money Biff intends to borrow from his former employer, Bill Oliver, because he had the idea that he had respect for him. They believe that the business will boom immediately, and that no hard work would be required. However, when Biff met with his old employer, he did not even remember him, and Biff realized what a "ridiculous lie" his life has been. Biff in reality was not respected by Bill Oliver, and that he was only a shipping clerk. Biffs' admittance to his downfall had been mind opening for him because he started to look at his life differently. Biff, in contrast to Willy, was able to accept his

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Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

struggle, and wanted a change for him. It was this struggle, and admittance to this struggle which was the door to the restoration of his uncertainties of himself and his life.

To have a struggle in life, sometimes can be a blessing, and sometimes it can be the passageway to denial. In order for a person to get past their struggle they have to be able to accept it and admit to it, like the character Biff Loman. He was able to accept his downfalls and his struggle and therefore he would be able to create a better life for himself. On the other hand if a person is unable to admit to such struggles, they may have a cycle in their life which would never stop. Take the example of Willy; he was in denial so therefore his life would never change. He would have a cycle in his life of failure. If one wants to change their life for the better, the first, apparent step is the admittance to their downfalls, and to their wrongs. This is the best way for a person to restore their certainty, and not only that the respect, or honour, they once had.

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Critical / Analytical Responses to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Thought and Understanding (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideas are thoughtful and considered, demonstrating a competent comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic.</li> <li>• Literary interpretations are revealing and sensible.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>The student’s <b>idea</b> that “in order for an individual to restore honour and certainty, admitting to their struggle and failure is essential” <b>thoughtfully</b> establishes the student’s connection to key elements of the topic. Willy’s inability or unwillingness to admit to his failure based on a faulty view of success is contrasted with Biff’s acceptance of his own struggle and failure. Through this juxtaposition, the student demonstrates in <b>thoughtful and considered</b> ways the need for this recognition of struggle and failure in order to restore honour. The student examines Willy’s and Biff’s past and present perceptions of success and offers <b>revealing and sensible literary interpretations</b>, such as “Willy, being a man of tradition, did not accept the idea of change, ‘I don’t want change...why am I always being contradicted?’” “He was kind of tired, but he could not admit to his current situation because he had ‘false pride,’” “Willy, even in the present, still believed that success was based on personality, good looks and popularity. Ironically, he did not possess these characteristics,” and “Biff realized what a ‘ridiculous lie’ his life has been.”</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Supporting Evidence (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support is specific, and well chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in a persuasive way.</li> <li>• A sound connection to the student’s ideas is capably maintained.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>Support is <b>specific</b> and <b>persuasive</b> to demonstrate the extent of Willy’s illusions: Willy “believes that you should ‘start big and you will end big’, and he is not capable to see that success starts from scratch” and “Willy’s boss at the firm he worked at had respect for him, and Willy thought of himself as ‘a New England man’, and that the firm would be nothing without him.” In developing the contrast between the perceptions of the father and son, the student offers the <b>specific</b> detail that Biff “caught Willy having an affair with another woman,” which leads to Biff’s recognition that Willy is “a ‘fake’ and a ‘phony.’” The student’s use of <b>well-chosen support</b> such as “‘You can’t eat the orange and throw the peel away’” and “Biff in reality was not respected by Bill Oliver” <b>reinforces the student’s ideas</b> regarding the struggles of Willy and Biff. <b>A sound connection to the student’s idea</b> of the contrast between Willy and Biff is <b>capably maintained</b> in such details as “when Biff met with his old employer, he did not even remember him, and Biff realized what a ‘ridiculous lie’ his life has been” and “Willy will not admit to this defeat because he lies to Bernard about Biff finding big success.”</p>

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Critical / Analytical Responses to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Form and Structure (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A purposeful arrangement of ideas and details contributes to a controlled discussion that is developed capably.</li> <li>• The unifying effect or controlling idea is coherently sustained and presented.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>The <b>controlling idea</b> that “In order for a person to get past their struggle they have to be able to accept it and admit to it” <b>contributes to a controlled discussion</b>. The student begins with a discussion about Willy’s perceptions of his past successes and “his inability to admit to his struggle of failure.” The juxtaposition of Biff’s struggles to accept that “his downfall had been mind opening for him because he started to look at his life differently” with Willy’s denial of his failures is <b>purposeful and capable</b>. The <b>unifying effect is coherently sustained</b> with the contrasting parallel of Biff and Willy, leading to the conclusion that “If one wants to change their life for the better, the first, apparent step is the admittance to their downfalls, and to their wrongs.”</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Critical / Analytical Responses to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT / SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Choice (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diction is adequate.</li> <li>• Syntactic structures are straightforward, but attempts at complex structures may be awkward.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a conventional composition with an appropriate voice.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p><b>Diction is adequate</b>, as demonstrated in “Willy had been fired from his job with the firm, and could not believe this had happened” and “He had been with the firm too long, and he was making so much money a week.” <b>Syntactic structures are straightforward</b>, as in “The thoughts of the success he had in the past had always been a source of happiness for him.” <b>Attempts at complex structures</b> are occasionally <b>awkward</b>, as in “This suggests Willy in a pathetic state, and shows a sign of defeat, nonetheless, Willy will not admit to this defeat because he lies to Bernard about Biff finding big success.” <b>Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a conventional composition</b>: “Biff had always seen his father as a hero, a role model even, but that had blown up in his face.” An <b>appropriate voice</b> is demonstrated in “Biff, in contrast to Willy, was able to accept his struggle, and wanted a change for him.”</p>



**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Critical / Analytical Responses to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT / SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Correctness (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</li> <li>• There may be occasional lapses in control and minor errors; however, the communication remains clear.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;"><b>S</b></p>	<p><b>The writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics</b>, as demonstrated in “To Willy’s misfortune, he was living in the present, where change was unavoidable” and “He was not making as many sales as he did in the past, and he was taken off salary and put on commission.” There are <b>occasional lapses in control</b>, as in the sentences, “Like a cycle, the product of these struggles is the uncertainty of the individuals self or even the lack of respect or integrity they once had” and “It is clear that he would not able to restore his uncertainty, because of his over confidence and his inability to admit to his struggle of failure”; however, <b>communication remains clear</b>.</p>

Example 1 Scored Excellent (E)

*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

The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark  
by William Shakespeare

***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.

- Hamlet struggles to restore honour in his uncle's corrupt kingdom
- Hamlet struggles with doubt about his own courage and even existence
- Hamlet is not certain about the Ghost's identity or motive, so he stages the Mouse trap, to "catch the conscience of the King."
- Hamlet is an honest man surrounded by deception (Polonius's flattery, Rosencrantz + Guildenstern's "sponge" to the king nature, his mother, like Niobe, all acting grief → "seems, nay, it is")
- Hamlet succumbs to despair rather than hold on to ~~the~~ hope

Example 1 Scored Excellent (E)

How does Hamlet work to restore honour and certainty? <sup>Planning</sup>

THOUGHT

① DOUBT vs. CERTAINTY

→ There are more things...

→ Hamlet is not certain of the Ghost's true identity or motive, so he stages The Mousetrap to "catch the conscience of the King."  
→

Thought fails him

→ Hamlet reduces all his ambiguities to the false dichotomy of living and dying (To be or not to be) → and contradictions

MANIPULATION

② DECEPTION vs. HONESTY/HONOUR

→ Hamlet is inherently honest and open (seems madam? Nay it is, I know not seems.)

→ Hamlet becomes dishonest (antic disposition) in order to create honesty → paradox

Manipulation fails him

→ He is so honest that he goes truly mad, and hurts Polonius, Gertrude, and specifically Ophelia

FORCE

③ DESPAIR vs. HOPE

↳ If it be now, 'tis not to come. If it be not to come, it will be now. → forsakes hope due to inevitability of death

→ Hamlet is self-loathing (I am pigeon-livered and lack gall)

→ Hamlet sees Fortinbras' army, and says that true nobility is to stir little, but to fight absolutely when honour is at stake.

→ Hamlet ultimately becomes as much a source of corruption as Claudius (tis an unweeded garden, and things rank and gross in there is additional space for planning on the following unlined pages.)

• He hurts Ophelia and drives her to suicide

• Kills ~~him~~ Polonius

nature do possess it merely

Example 1 Scored Excellent (E)

ESSAY

The Struggle to Restore Honour and Certainty in William Shakespeare's Hamlet

In the play Hamlet by William Shakespeare, the eponymous hero struggles to restore honour and certainty to the corrupt kingdom of Denmark. For the purposes of this essay, honour will be defined as honesty and integrity, and certainty will be defined as justified, true belief. Hamlet struggles to restore honour and certainty in three ways: through thought, which only leads him to further doubt; through manipulation, which Hamlet finds difficult due to his inherent honesty; and through force, which Hamlet turns to out of despair. These three strategies slowly transform Hamlet from a fair and gentle prince to a source of corruption that equals his uncle, the “treacherous, lecherous, damned villain”. The story of Hamlet is a story of the abandonment of hope, and how despair and self-loathing defeat even the most just and righteous of struggles.

The main story arc of Hamlet lies in the quest he is given: avenging the Ghost of his murdered father. Hamlet listens to the Ghost's tale of betrayal and vows to take revenge on his treasonous uncle. But Hamlet is a natural skeptic. Rather than to take up arms against his uncle immediately, he decides to stop and question whether his action would encourage dishonour and deceit. He is reluctant to believe this apparition and questions its true identity and motive, thinking that it may be a demon trying to trick him into treason. This rationalization excuses Hamlet from action, and from any struggle to

Example 1 Scored Excellent (E)

restore certainty or honour. Hamlet thereby invites doubt into his mind, and begins his own self-defeating quest for certainty. And when he begins to doubt his father, he also begins to doubt and hate himself. He says that he is “pigeon-liver’d and lack gall” and is ashamed that he must talk himself to action, “like a whore unpack [my] heart with words.” His assertion that “there are more things in heaven and in earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy” reflects his paralysis in the face of overwhelming problems. Hamlet tries to reconcile the vast, inexplicable universe with his need for certainty and truth. But as he dwells on the ambiguities and contradictions of human nature, Hamlet sees time slipping by and no action taking place. While he is thinking, he isolates himself from his friends and family, thereby increasing his depression and hopelessness. He therefore tries to simplify and conclude his thought by reducing it to a false dichotomy—“to be or not to be”. But even as he says it, he realizes that fear of existence after death forces him to live. Hamlet’s thought process leads him to a stalemate. Thus, thought fails him as a means to restore honour and certainty.

Hamlet’s second strategy to restore honour and certainty is through deception and manipulation. Hamlet, disgusted by his own inaction, chooses to deceive the court with an “antic disposition” to disguise his purpose in ascertaining the king’s guilt. But Hamlet’s feigned madness is as much an act for himself as anyone else—he is concealing his doubt. Hamlet is innately honest and open, he “know[s] not seems”, and finds it difficult to maintain his act. Furthermore, the fact that he must turn to dishonourable

(Page 4 of 6)

Example 1 Scored Excellent (E)

falsehood in order to restore honour increases his self-contempt and despair as to whether honour actually exists. Hamlet is so honest that his feigned madness becomes real, and he lashes out at the innocent Ophelia, telling her that he does not love her and she is nothing but a whore. His frustration and uncertainty erupt and he hurts the least guilty party in Elsinore. Thus, Hamlet's quest to restore honour is undermined again by his own hand. Increasingly desperate, Hamlet decides to stage a play to "catch the conscience of the king" and achieve absolute proof and justification for his revenge. When Claudius reacts to the scene paralleling his murder of his brother, Hamlet has no further excuse to delay justice. Yet he does. Finding Claudius praying, Hamlet chooses not to kill him. He denies his opportunity for revenge, and he begins to realize that he has only been deceiving himself. Thus, manipulation fails him as a means of restoring honour and certainty.

Hamlet must act. The only course of action left open to him is force. But his cool rationality has fled—the force he exercises now is rash and distempered by self-hatred. Hamlet proceeds to Gertrude's chamber, and there kills Polonius, mistaking him for his father. Hamlet shows no remorse for Polonius's death. He has gone beyond the moral, fair prince. He is now a murderer, like his uncle, and has begun a series of events that will result in everyone's demise. Hamlet is exiled to England, and on the way, he sees the army of young Fortinbras, prince of Norway, marching to their deaths over a land that has no value but in its name. The contrast between Hamlet and Fortinbras is clear, and Hamlet cannot mistake it. He sees a man who is his equal in all regards but honour. Where Hamlet is loathe to act, Fortinbras is eager to execute swift justice. Hamlet

(Page 5 of 6)

Example 1 Scored Excellent (E)

realizes that true nobility is to stir at little provocation, but to risk all and fight to the end where honour is at stake. Here, Hamlet's faith in himself breaks. He sees such a polar opposite to himself that his self-loathing consumes him. The only way to rectify his dithering is to act without mercy or delay, his "thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth". Hamlet returns to Elsinore and takes his revenge on the king. He is in such despair that his own death at the hands of Laertes does not bother him. "If it be now, tis not to come. If it be not to come, it will be now. If it be not now, yet it will come." Hamlet's resignation to fate is what defeats him. He fulfills his quest for revenge, but does not restore honour or certainty to Denmark—he only achieves a Pyrrhic victory. Hamlet fails to realize that without hope, no venture can succeed, and honour and certainty are not possible.

Hamlet's verdict on Denmark at the beginning of the play is grim: "Tis an unweeded garden and things rank and gross in nature do possess it merely." Throughout the play, Hamlet tries in many ways to restore honour and certainty to the rotten state. Yet each of these relies on changing and perverting himself. He doubts himself, and thereby ruins his chance for certainty. He deceives everyone, and thereby ruins his opportunity for honour. He succumbs to despair, rather than hold on to hope, and thereby acquiesces to the spreading of weeds and villainy. He becomes the corruption he vowed to destroy.

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Critical / Analytical Responses to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Thought and Understanding (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideas are insightful and carefully considered, demonstrating a comprehension of subtle distinctions in the literary text(s) and the topic.</li> <li>• Literary interpretations are perceptive and illuminating.</li> </ul>	<p>The student exhibits a <b>comprehension of subtle distinctions</b> in both the text of <i>Hamlet</i> and the topic of the struggle to restore honour and certainty. Pursuing the idea that the restoration of honour and certainty is not achieved, the student contends that the deterioration of honour and certainty may lead to despair and desperation: “The story of Hamlet is a story of the abandonment of hope, and how despair and self-loathing defeat even the most just and righteous of struggles.” This unorthodox interpretation of the text is built around the premise that Hamlet transforms “from a fair and gentle prince to a source of corruption.” The student’s discussion of this transformation explores <b>subtle distinctions in the topic</b> by examining Hamlet’s sceptical thoughts (which reflects a lack of certainty), his manipulative and self-deceptive means (which prove counter-productive in terms of restoring honour), and his desperate actions (the result of the corruption of both his honour and certainty). While the interpretation of the play’s resolution may be problematic, the student, nevertheless, provides an <b>insightful</b> analysis of subtle changes in Hamlet’s attitudes and actions. These <b>literary interpretations are perceptive and illuminating</b>: “Hamlet tries to reconcile the vast, inexplicable universe with his need for certainty and truth,” “Furthermore, the fact that he must turn to dishonourable falsehood in order to restore honour increases his self-contempt and despair as to whether honour actually exists,” and “Hamlet fails to realize that without hope, no venture can succeed, and honour and certainty are not possible.” Thus, within the framework of the student’s interpretation, the idea that Hamlet “becomes the corruption he vowed to destroy” is <b>carefully considered</b>.</p>

E



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**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Supporting Evidence (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support is precise, and astutely chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in a convincing way.</li> <li>• A valid connection to the student’s ideas is efficiently maintained.</li> </ul>	<p>The student uses the idea that Hamlet is a “natural skeptic” to explain his reluctance to “believe this apparition.” Taken together, Hamlet’s view that he is “pigeon-liver’d and lack[s] gall” <b>precisely</b> supports the idea that “he begins to doubt and hate himself.” Together, these details are <b>astutely chosen</b> to support the notion that Hamlet’s “rationalization excuses Hamlet from action” creating isolation, depression, hopelessness, and an overall “paralysis in the face of overwhelming problems.” Noting the irony of a character who “is innately honest and open, he ‘know[s] not seems’” putting on an “antic disposition,” the student makes a <b>valid connection</b> to the following idea: “the fact that he must turn to dishonourable falsehood in order to restore honour increases his self-contempt and despair as to whether honour actually exists.” The student charts <b>convincingly</b> the failure of this method by noting that Hamlet hurts Ophelia, “the least guilty party in Elsinore,” and is unable to kill Claudius while praying. The student uses Hamlet’s lack of “remorse for Polonius’s death” as support for his transformation from a “moral, fair prince” to a “murderer.” The student’s claim that Hamlet’s final revenge is but a “Pyrrhic victory” because “resignation to fate is what defeats him” is based on the idea that Hamlet is in a state of despair. To support the notion of despair and fatalism, the student uses <b>precise support</b> from the play: “If it be now, tis not to come. If it be not to come, it will be now. If it be not now, yet it will come.” The excision of the notion of “a special providence” at the beginning of this quotation from <i>Hamlet</i> allows the student to support the idea of despair. Given the nature of first-draft, timed writing, however, this excision <b>efficiently maintains</b> the student’s concept that Hamlet himself has become a source of corruption.</p>

E

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Critical / Analytical Responses to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Form and Structure (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A judicious arrangement of ideas and details contributes to a fluent discussion that is developed skillfully.</li> <li>• The unifying effect or controlling idea is effectively sustained and integrated.</li> </ul>	<p>The student begins a <b>judicious arrangement of ideas and details</b> by establishing Hamlet as a “natural skeptic.” The student argues that this disposition leads to a “paralysis” in which “Hamlet tries to reconcile the vast, inexplicable universe with his need for certainty and truth.” Because he cannot achieve this reconciliation, Hamlet resorts to “feigned madness” to achieve his goal to restore honour. In a <b>fluent discussion</b> of these details, the student <b>skillfully</b> concludes that this “dishonourable falsehood” “increases his self-contempt and despair as to whether honour actually exists.” The choice of deception as a method, however, runs contrary to Hamlet’s own conception of honour such that Hamlet “begins to realize that he has only been deceiving himself. Thus, manipulation fails him as a means of restoring honour and certainty.” Hamlet, consumed with “self-loathing,” gives into despair and his “resignation to fate is what defeats him.” Defining honour as “honesty and integrity” and certainty as “justified, true belief,” the student explores the topic through the focused idea, “The story of Hamlet is a story of the abandonment of hope, and how despair and self-loathing defeat even the most just and righteous of struggles.” <b>The unifying effect or controlling idea is effectively sustained and integrated</b> through the student’s exploration of Hamlet’s struggle to restore honour and certainty “through thought, which only leads him to further doubt; through manipulation, which Hamlet finds difficult due to his inherent honesty; and through force, which Hamlet turns to out of despair.” This disintegration of Hamlet’s honour and certainty culminates in the idea that, by “changing and perverting himself,” Hamlet “becomes the corruption he vowed to destroy.”</p>

E

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Critical / Analytical Responses to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Choice (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diction is precise.</li> <li>• Syntactic structures are effective and sometimes polished.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a skillful composition with a convincing voice.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p>	<p><b>Diction is precise</b>, as shown in the lines “Hamlet tries to reconcile the vast, inexplicable universe with his need for certainty and truth” and “He succumbs to despair, rather than hold on to hope, and thereby acquiesces to the spreading of weeds and villainy.” <b>The student’s writing exhibits effective and polished syntactic structures</b>: “While he is thinking, he isolates himself from his friends and family, thereby increasing his depression and hopelessness” and “He fulfils his quest for revenge, but does not restore honour or certainty to Denmark—he only achieves a Pyrrhic victory.” <b>Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a skillful composition with a convincing voice</b>: “When Claudius reacts to the scene paralleling his murder of his brother, Hamlet has no further excuse to delay justice. Yet he does,” “But his cool rationality has fled—the force he exercises now is rash and distempered by self-hatred,” and “The only way to rectify his dithering is to act without mercy or delay.”</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2009  
Critical / Analytical Responses to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Correctness (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This writing demonstrates confidence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</li> <li>• The relative absence of error is impressive considering the complexity of the response and the circumstances.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">E</p>	<p>Using a variety of sentence structures, the student’s writing <b>demonstrates confidence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics</b>: “Rather than to take up arms against his uncle immediately, he decides to stop and question whether his action would encourage dishonour and deceit,” “Hamlet, disgusted by his own inaction, chooses to deceive the court with an ‘antic disposition’ to disguise his purpose in ascertaining the king’s guilt. But Hamlet’s feigned madness is as much an act for himself as anyone else—he is concealing his doubt,” and “The contrast between Hamlet and Fortinbras is clear, and Hamlet cannot mistake it. He sees a man who is his equal in all regards but honour.” <b>The relative absence of error is impressive considering the complexity of the response and the circumstances.</b></p>

## Scoring Categories and Criteria

### Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2008–2009 Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Because students' responses to the *Personal Response to Texts Assignment* vary widely—from philosophical discussions to personal narratives to creative approaches—assessment of the *Personal Response to Texts Assignment* on the diploma examination will be in the context of Louise Rosenblatt's suggestion:

*...the evaluation of the answers would be in terms of the amount of evidence that the youngster has actually read something and thought about it, not a question of whether, necessarily, he has thought about it the way an adult would, or given an adult's "correct" answer.*

Rosenblatt, Louise. "The Reader's Contribution in the Literary Experience: Interview with Louise Rosenblatt." By Lionel Wilson. *English Quarterly* 14, no.1 (Spring, 1981): 3–12.

Markers will also consider Grant P. Wiggins' suggestion that we should assess students' writing "with the tact of Socrates: tact to respect the student's ideas enough to enter them fully—even more fully than the thinker sometimes—and thus, the tact to accept apt but unanticipatable or unique responses."

Wiggins, Grant P. *Assessing Student Performance: Exploring the Purpose and Limits of Testing*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993, p. 40.

**Ideas and Impressions** (10% of total examination mark)  
Cross-Reference to the *Program of Studies for Senior High School English Language Arts* 2.1 2.2 2.3 4.1

When marking **Ideas and Impressions**, the marker should consider the quality of

- the student's **exploration** of the topic
- the student's **ideas and reflection**
- **support** in relation to the student's ideas and impressions

#### **Excellent**

### **E**

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.

#### **Proficient**

### **Pf**

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.

#### **Satisfactory**

### **S**

The student's exploration of the topic is generalized. Perceptions and/or ideas are straightforward and relevant. Support is adequate and clarifies the student's ideas and impressions.

#### **Limited**

### **L**

The student's exploration of the topic is vague. Perceptions and/or ideas are superficial and/or ambiguous. Support is imprecise and/or ineffectively related to the student's ideas and impressions.

#### **Poor**

### **P**

The student's exploration of the topic is minimal. Perceptions and/or ideas are underdeveloped and/or irrelevant. Support is lacking and/or unrelated to the student's ideas and impressions.

#### **Insufficient**

### **INS**

**Insufficient is a special category. It is not an indicator of quality.** Assign Insufficient when

- the student has responded using a form other than prose **OR**
- the student has written so little that it is not possible to assess Ideas and Impressions **OR**
- there is no evidence that the topic presented in the assignment has been addressed **OR**
- there is no connection between the text(s) provided in the assignment and the student's response

**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2008–2009 Personal Response to Texts Assignment (continued)**

**Presentation** (10% of total examination mark)  
 Cross-Reference to the *Program of Studies for Senior High School English Language Arts* 3.1 3.2 4.1 4.2

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.**

<b>Excellent</b> <b>E</b>	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.
<b>Proficient</b> <b>Pf</b>	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.
<b>Satisfactory</b> <b>S</b>	The voice created by the student is apparent. Stylistic choices are adequate and the student’s creation of tone is conventional. The unifying effect is appropriately developed.
<b>Limited</b> <b>L</b>	The voice created by the student is indistinct. Stylistic choices are imprecise and the student’s creation of tone is inconsistent. The unifying effect is inadequately developed.
<b>Poor</b> <b>P</b>	The voice created by the student is obscure. Stylistic choices impede communication and the student’s creation of tone is ineffective. A unifying effect is absent.

**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2008–2009 Critical / Analytical Response to Texts Assignment**

Because students’ responses to the *Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment* vary widely—from philosophical discussions to personal narratives to creative approaches—assessment of the *Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment* on the diploma examination will be in the context of Louise Rosenblatt’s suggestion:

*...the evaluation of the answers would be in terms of the amount of evidence that the youngster has actually read something and thought about it, not a question of whether, necessarily, he has thought about it the way an adult would, or given an adult’s “correct” answer.*

Rosenblatt, Louise. “The Reader’s Contribution in the Literary Experience: Interview with Louise Rosenblatt.” By Lionel Wilson. *English Quarterly* 14, no.1 (Spring, 1981): 3–12.

Markers will also consider Grant P. Wiggins’ suggestion that we should assess students’ writing “with the tact of Socrates: tact to respect the student’s ideas enough to enter them fully—even more fully than the thinker sometimes—and thus, the tact to accept apt but unanticipatable or unique responses.”

Wiggins, Grant P. *Assessing Student Performance: Exploring the Purpose and Limits of Testing*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993, p. 40.

**Thought and Understanding** (7.5% of total examination mark)  
 Cross-Reference to the *Program of Studies for Senior High School English Language Arts* 2.1 2.2 4.1 4.2

When marking **Thought and Understanding**, the marker should consider

- how effectively the student’s **ideas** relate to the assignment
- the quality of the **literary interpretations** and **understanding**

**Excellent**

**E**

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.

**Proficient**

**Pf**

Ideas are thoughtful and considered, demonstrating a competent comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are revealing and sensible.

**Satisfactory**

**S**

Ideas are relevant and straightforward, demonstrating a generalized comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are general but plausible.

**Limited**

**L**

Ideas are superficial or oversimplified, demonstrating a weak comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are incomplete and/or literal.

**Poor**

**P**

Ideas are largely absent or irrelevant, and/or do not develop the topic. Little comprehension of the literary text(s) is demonstrated.

**Insufficient**

**INS**

**Insufficient is a special category. It is not an indicator of quality.** Assign Insufficient when

- the student has written so little that it is not possible to assess Thought and Understanding and/or Supporting Evidence **OR**
- no reference has been made to literature studied **OR**
- the only literary reference present is to the text(s) provided in the first assignment **OR**
- there is no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the task presented in the assignment

**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2008–2009 Critical / Analytical Response to Texts Assignment (continued)**

**Supporting Evidence** (7.5% of total examination mark)  
 Cross-Reference to the *Program of Studies for Senior High School English Language Arts* 2.3 3.2 4.1 4.2

- When marking **Supporting Evidence**, the marker should consider
- the **selection** and **quality** of evidence
  - how well the supporting evidence is **employed, developed, and synthesized** to support the student’s ideas

**Consider ideas presented in the *Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text(s)*.**

<b>Excellent</b> <b>E</b>	Support is precise, and astutely chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in a convincing way. A valid connection to the student’s ideas is efficiently maintained.
<b>Proficient</b> <b>Pf</b>	Support is specific, and well chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in a persuasive way. A sound connection to the student’s ideas is capably maintained.
<b>Satisfactory</b> <b>S</b>	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.
<b>Limited</b> <b>L</b>	Support is inadequate, inaccurate, largely a restatement of what was read, and/or inappropriately chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas and thus lacks persuasiveness. A weak connection to the student’s ideas is maintained.
<b>Poor</b> <b>P</b>	Support is irrelevant, overgeneralized, lacks validity, and/or is absent. Little or no connection to the student’s ideas is evident.



**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2008–2009 Critical / Analytical Response to Texts Assignment (continued)**

**Form and Structure** (5% of total examination mark)  
Cross-Reference to the *Program of Studies for Senior High School English Language Arts* 2.2 3.1 4.1 4.2

When marking **Form and Structure**, the marker should consider how effectively the student’s organizational choices result in

- a **coherent, focused, and shaped** arrangement and discussion in response to the assignment
- a **unifying effect** or a **controlling idea** that is developed and maintained

<b>Excellent</b> <b>E</b>	A judicious arrangement of ideas and details contributes to a fluent discussion that is developed skillfully. The unifying effect or controlling idea is effectively sustained and integrated.
<b>Proficient</b> <b>Pf</b>	A purposeful arrangement of ideas and details contributes to a controlled discussion that is developed capably. The unifying effect or controlling idea is coherently sustained and presented.
<b>Satisfactory</b> <b>S</b>	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.
<b>Limited</b> <b>L</b>	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.
<b>Poor</b> <b>P</b>	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.

**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2008–2009 Critical / Analytical Response to Texts Assignment (continued)**

**Matters of Choice** (5% of total examination mark)  
Cross-Reference to the *Program of Studies for Senior High School English Language Arts* 4.2

When marking **Matters of Choice**, the marker should consider how effectively the student’s choices enhance communication. The marker should consider

- **diction**
- choices of **syntactic structures** (such as parallelism, balance, inversion)
- the extent to which **stylistic choices** contribute to the creation of **voice**

**Excellent**  
**E** Diction is precise. Syntactic structures are effective and sometimes polished. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a skillful composition with a convincing voice.

**Proficient**  
**Pf** Diction is specific. Syntactic structures are generally effective. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a considered composition with a capable voice

**Satisfactory**  
**S** 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.

**Limited**  
**L** Diction is imprecise and/or inappropriate. Syntactic structures are frequently awkward or ambiguous. Inadequate language choices contribute to the creation of a vague composition with an undiscerning voice.

**Poor**  
**P** Diction is overgeneralized and/or inaccurate. Syntactic structures are uncontrolled or unintelligible. A lack of language choices contributes to the creation of a confused composition with an ineffective voice.

**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2008–2009 Critical / Analytical Response to Texts Assignment (continued)**

**Matters of Correctness** (5% of total examination mark)  
Cross-Reference to the *Program of Studies for Senior High School English Language Arts* 4.2

When marking **Matters of Correctness**, the marker should consider the correctness of

- **sentence construction** (completeness, consistency, subordination, coordination, predication)
- **usage** (accurate use of words according to convention and meaning)
- **grammar** (subject-verb/pronoun-antecedent agreement, pronoun reference, consistency of tense)
- **mechanics** (punctuation, spelling, capitalization)

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

**Excellent**

**E**

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.

**Proficient**

**Pf**

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.

**Satisfactory**

**S**

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.

**Limited**

**L**

This writing demonstrates faltering control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The range of errors blurs the clarity of communication.

**Poor**

**P**

This writing demonstrates lack of control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. Jarring errors impair communication.



