

# Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing

# English Language Arts 30–1

From the June 2009 Diploma Examination

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

Government  
of Alberta ■

Alberta ■

Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

This document was written primarily for:

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

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## *Acknowledgements*

Publication of this document would not have been possible without the permission of the students whose writing is presented. The co-operation of these students has allowed us to continue illustrating the standards of writing performance expected in the context of diploma examinations and demonstrate the variety of approaches taken by students in their writing.

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, Jim Forrest, Scott Gibson Dodd, Christine Nesdoly, Cam Tully, Cat Turner.

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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 June 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 June 2009 marking session. 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 June 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 June 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 June 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 June 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.**

*English Language Arts 30–1, June 2009*  
*Writing Assignments*

*June 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.

### **Prayer for Horizon**

I wish you, first, an unimpeded view  
with a boundary in it, between seen and unseen,  
a line to hold onto when you're feeling sick,  
something to aim for but which retreats  
as fast as you travel. May you stay undeceived  
and see, not a line, but a curve of the earth:  
an elegant offering that leads beyond fear  
out to Vasco's<sup>1</sup> discoveries. It's three:  
visible, sensible, rational – lines  
for what we may calculate and what we can't.

In fog, I wish you mercury sight,  
artificial horizon, so that you know  
where not to be, quickly. I wish you the gift  
of knowing where your own knowing ends.

And finally, I ask: when you reach  
the event horizon from which your light  
will no longer reach us and space, highly curved  
will hide you for ever, that you watch me come –  
you shouldn't see me, but you will –  
marching with flashing lighthouses, buoys,  
to the edge of your singularity  
with fleets of full-rigged ceremonial ships  
and acres of scintillating sea.

*Gwyneth Lewis*

<sup>1</sup>Vasco's—Vasco de Gama (1460–1542), a Portuguese explorer, commander of the first ship to sail directly from Europe to Asia



from THE NOVICE

Just before the *Sally Anne* foundered, the mate had been in his bunk, but he knew approximately where they should be. They were no more than an hour out of the Narrows so they were in a stretch of water four miles wide.

What was working against them was that there was a strong northward current in the Narrows and if they didn't get to shore they would be pulled into an area where the lake was twenty miles across. Not that being ashore would necessarily save them. At most, it would give them a fighting chance. On both sides, the inhospitable shores were made up of sand bars and rock ledges interspersed with stretches of marsh....

His faith in the boat had been so overwhelming that he had to force himself to realize it had been destroyed.

He had always felt its intricacy would protect it. The complexity of its creation—it had to be conceived, constructed, nailed, bolted, welded, glued, all according to a carefully worked-out plan—seemed to guarantee its existence. The engine, the drive shaft, the propeller, the wheel, he had made these his study. He could draw them with precision, could recite their exact measurements. So strong was his faith that, as long as the lake was free of ice, he lived on the boat, never leaving it until the end of the shipping season. Throughout the winter, he lived alone in one room in an old house near the harbour, patiently waiting for the season to begin again. A day never passed when he didn't walk to the docks....

He admitted that there had been signs of wear, signs that the boat also suffered from mortality—the motor faltered at times—but they had always fixed it. There had been leaks but they had been found and sealed. When they couldn't find all the leaks, they added extra pumps. Every spring as the boat sat in dry-dock, they had faithfully repainted it, coat on coat until it sat as white and majestic as a shrine.

"Arni," he called with a suddenness that startled even him.

"Here."

"Bob."

"Here."

"Triggvi."

There was no answer.

The deep troughs muffled the sound. "Did you hear anything?" he demanded of the other two.

They had heard nothing.

Fear tightened the muscle under the mate's jaw. Somewhere close, the moustached civil servant was dying, his short, round body turning endlessly with the shifting current. He wanted to cry out in protest but he knew it was no use. Nor would his plunging into the darkness do any good. His life, he realized, was as fragile as the gauze wings of the mayflies that rose from the lake each summer to spiral briefly toward heaven.

The first mate held his wrist close to his face so he could see the luminous dial of his watch. "It's just after midnight."

He knew what they were calculating. Dawn was to come at 4:37. With first light, they would be able to see just what they were hanging onto. He guessed it was most of one wall. Dawn would also reveal how far they were from safety.

He had never done anything except work on the boats. Grade ten finished with, he

had signed on as a deck-hand. From that time on, he had given himself to a succession of boats until he had found the *Sally Anne*. Other men had other passions to disturb their lives. He never slept so well as when he was in his bunk, his ear tuned to the steady rhythm of the motor. Unlike the others, he had been careful not to encumber himself with a wife and children.

A quick swell of anger and disappointment swept through him. "I'm going to work around to Bob," he said. "Arni, you come around to the left until you catch up to me." ...

Arni was slapping at the wood, moving around the perimeter of the wreckage like an angry dog. When he arrived, grumbling and complaining to himself, the mate ordered him to take off his belt and bind himself to the wreckage. When he was sure his order had been carried out, he turned his attention to Bob.

"How's your arm?"

"It's starting to hurt," Bob complained through gritted teeth. "I can feel the bone grinding close to my shoulder."

He undid Bob's suspenders and used them to tie him in place. Then he felt for the broken arm, caught it at the wrist and elbow and pushed it into the front of Bob's shirt so that it would be held in place. For the time being, it was the best he could do. Later, he would make a sling. He tied his own belt to a projecting two-by-four and slipped his arm through the loop.

"Where were you when it happened?" he asked.

"I was getting a cup of coffee."

"What about Cooke?" He and the cook had shipped together for five years.

There was a pause as they tipped over the peak of a large wave and slid down its side in a rush of foam.

"He was standing behind the stove. Everything fell on him."

He tried not to think about that. He checked his watch. It still showed just after midnight. He was disappointed but not knowing the exact time didn't really matter. Dawn would come.

Close together, he reassured himself, they had a better chance of surviving than if each was alone. If one of them passed out, the others could keep his head out of the water. Until the next day began, all they could do was try to endure. The *wreckage*, he started to think and then it came to him that the wreckage was, in reality, a raft. Not much of a raft, he admitted, but it would serve its purpose. Once they were ashore, they could prop it up on two sticks so as to provide a temporary shelter. *After that*. He tried to stop the thought but it was no use. After that, they would abandon it.

He set himself to wait.

Determined not to die, he began to make plans for the trip ahead, reconstructing the shore in his mind. It would be a hard trip. There were rivers and swamps to cross but he knew where he was going and he was determined to get there. As he prepared for the struggle before them, he reached out, from time to time, to the right and left to reassure himself that Bob and Arni were still there and that their heads were out of the water. In turn, they did the same for him. Again and again, in the darkness they touched each other's faces as tenderly, as awkwardly as new lovers. Patiently, they waited for the dawn, certain that it would come and certain that the clouds would open like a vast curtain and the heavens give them a sign.

*W.D. Valgardson*



Elliott Erwitt/Magnum Photos

*Elliott Erwitt*

## **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 “Prayer for Horizon” suggests that to pursue an ideal, an individual must recognize truths and, in turn, be the embodiment of that ideal. In the excerpt from “The Novice,” the first mate recognizes the limitations of his single-minded passion. The photograph by Elliot Erwitt captures the idealized romantic couple in a rear-view mirror.

### **The Assignment**

**What do these texts suggest to you about idealism and truth in an individual’s life? 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 significance of idealism and truth in an individual’s life.**

*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 [education.alberta.ca](http://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 June 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 students paralleled one or more of the texts provided. Similarity between the premise of the narrative or the students' 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 the 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 significance of idealism and truth in an individual’s life.” 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 idealism and truth in an individual’s life. 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, June 2009

Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

**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

• Perfect Standards.

Idealism: A perfect example.

• High principles

• Standard of behaviour.

Truth: truthfulness, rightness.

Truth is often stranger than fiction.

• Looking into the mirror and seeing a perfect example of a relationship.

• Her high standards.

### ***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 photograph: Looking at a perfect example of somebody will not let you become who you want to be.

(Page 1 of 3)

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

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

Life Through the Mirror

Elliot pulled in the driveway after a hard day of work and sat there thinking. She usually used this time to reflect on her day and prepare herself before she went into her home to greet her husband Tom. As she walked in she saw a sink full of dishes, a pile of laundry and Tom snoring on the couch. She sighed and thought to herself, "what a lazy pig...can't even help out around the house while I'm away at work, not like he has anything else to do anyways." Tom mumbled an unexciting "hello dear." Elliot immediately ignored her angry feelings and quietly said "hi hun how was your day? What would you like for dinner tonight?" Tom got off up the couch and started walking towards Elliot; she straightened her dress and pulled her hair out of her face. She was thrilled to think that Tom was coming to greet her with a hug and a kiss. But instead, he walked directly passed her only to grab a cold beer from the fridge, not even meeting eyes with Elliot. Recently she couldn't help but constantly feel irritated with her life and her husband. Although their relationship was never like this to begin with, so she is very saddened by what has happened to their connection. Every night she goes down to a beach for a peaceful, relaxing walk and always sees the same couple every night. The two usually lay in the sand with their eyes locked to each other and laugh endlessly while they squeeze each other tightly in each others arms. Tonight however, the two lovers sat in their car listening to the wave's crash kissing each other and smiling. Elliot enviously stares at them for a long while in the rear mirror of the car. At this point, she realized why she has been so dissatisfied with her life. She has been looking at her life through a mirror wishing desperately that she could have a relationship exactly like theirs which was careless, romantic, happy and free. She realized that by continually to look at this (Page 2 of 3)

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

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

passionate perfect couple she has become miserable with her life. She came to conclusion that by her looking at this perfect example of a couple every night, that she has been pressured to meet up to these high principles. It was her own fault that she feels disconnected and lonely in her life. She has been so busy looking at this other couple wishing it was her and comparing herself to others that she has separated herself from her on life. From there on out, she *never* went back to the beach to visit the couple. Instead, she stayed at home every night and held her husband tightly and lay as they laugh at their favorite sit comes on the television. She's never felt any happier and loved. She now knows that she can not live her life looking through a mirror and hoping to become an ideal person. Instead, she is true to herself and does not worry about reaching the high standards expected in society. Also, she can now have a perfect, loving relationship because she no longer compares herself to anyone else. This idea leaves Elliot with satisfaction and endless happiness within her life.

**English Language Arts 30–1, June 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>The student’s <b>exploration of the</b> topic through a creative narrative about a wife’s reflection on her relationship with her husband is <b>generalized</b>, as in “She came to conclusion that by her looking at this perfect example of a couple every night, that she has been pressured to meet up to these high principles.” The student’s <b>straightforward perceptions</b> that “Recently she couldn’t help but constantly feel irritated with her life and her husband,” “Although their relationship was never like this to begin with, so she is very saddened by what has happened to their connection,” and “She now knows that she can not live her life looking through a mirror and hoping to become an ideal person” are <b>straightforward and relevant</b>.</p> <p><b>S</b></p> <p><b>Support is adequate in clarifying the student’s ideas</b> about the wife’s dissatisfaction and subsequent revelation: “Tom mumbled an unexciting ‘hello dear,’” “The two usually lay in the sand with their eyes locked to each other,” and “Instead, she stayed at home every night and held her husband tightly and lay as they laugh at their favorite sit comes on the television.” The narrator’s moment of recognition moment at the end of the story <b>clarifies the student’s idea</b>: “she can now have a perfect, loving relationship because she no longer compares herself to anyone else.”</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1, June 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 align="center"><b>S</b></p>	<p><b>The voice created by the student is apparent</b> in such sentences as “She sighed and thought to herself, ‘what a lazy pig...can’t even help out around the house while I’m away at work, not like he has anything else to do anyways’ ” and “She was thrilled to think that Tom was coming to greet her with a hug and a kiss.” The <b>conventional tone</b> of the text is established at the onset by comments such as “hi hun how was your day? What would you like for dinner tonight?” and “But instead, he walked directly passed her only to grab a cold beer from the fridge.”</p> <p>The descriptions of the various visits to the beach where the wife observes the young lovers (initially contributing to her bitterness and then inspiring the recognition of her own error of judgement) <b>appropriately develop the unifying effect</b>. As well, the mirror as a reflective device in her relationship reinforces and <b>unifies</b> the text as in “Elliot enviously stares at them for a long while in the rear mirror of the car” and “She now knows that she can not live her life looking through a mirror.”</p>

Example Scored Proficient–1 (Pf)

### Personal Response to Texts

#### Success: the Compromise of Idealism and Reality.

Often times our passions and ideals can hinder our perception of reality, and even make us unable to function in society. This idea is explored in "The Novice", in which the first mate of the *Sally Anne* begins to realize the limitations of his own passion for his ship. This is also common theme among children and young adults. As they begin to idolize famous musicians and athletes they idealize a dream in which they will become the new rock stars or hockey players of tomorrow, when in reality as individuals there is hardly any chance that they will ever be signed to a record label or compete in the NHL. The question we must ask ourselves is therefore: how does idealism and truth impact an individual's life? With this in mind I will analyze the juxtaposition of reality and idealism in my own life, with the example of my personal ambition of one day entering Medical school and becoming a Physician.

From a very young age I have always deeply enjoyed the sensation of being able to help someone. There is a sense of self-satisfaction that I gain when I know I have impacted someone's life positively. I have always also had a passion for science and understanding how things work in the world. With these two passions in my life from childhood, it almost seemed natural for me to dream about one day becoming a doctor, where I could apply my knowledge of biology chemistry and physics, and simultaneously help other human beings in the process. I felt that I would be a perfect fit for such a career, and therefore I began to research what it would be like to become a doctor, and began to gain more experience about the medical sector. I began to volunteer at a senior's residence

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient–1 (Pf)

twice a week last year, and had the opportunity of volunteering at a hospital two summers ago. Ironically, the more I learned about becoming a doctor the more I realized that my dream of becoming a doctor was less desirable and attainable than I previously believed.

I learned that most doctors had to work with mostly unglamorous boring everyday problems such as advising middle-aged men and women about their elevated blood pressure and diet, I also learned that doctors had to work brutally long and unorthodox hours. Although these newly discovered truths were slightly disappointing, the reality check that finally destroyed my romantic dream of becoming a doctor was the realization of how hard it truly is to get into Medical school. When I began to research the criteria and statistics behind getting into medical school I began to feel extremely uncertain whether my goal was realistic for me. Most Medical school applicants in Canada have ridiculously high marks with an average GPA of 3.8 and are usually extremely well-rounded individuals who are involved with many extra-curricular activities and volunteer work. However, despite all of their high-achieving qualifications only about ten percent of medical school applicants finally realize their dream and make into medical school. With this reality I began to understand that my dream of becoming a doctor was dauntingly difficult. My marks were high, and I had a sufficient amount of volunteer work and extra-curricular activities on my resume, my qualifications were excellent, but were they good enough to withstand the force of the extremely high competition?

In the end, when I applied to university midway through this past school year, I chose to apply to a Science and Business combined degree program, where I could combine my passion for science with the applicable practical skills of Business, I have made the

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Example Scored Proficient–1 (Pf)

conclusion that medical school is something to elusive and difficult to attain for me to waste my time and money (tuition is rather expensive these days) trying to achieve an unrealistic goal. I feel that I have not lost all of my passion, I still have the potential to apply my aptitude for science to help others, I have simply altered the process by which I will realize my ideals.

In conclusion, I still firmly believe that idealism and romantic goals are still a valuable part of anyone's life, because it provides motivation for us all to persevere and realize success regardless of what success means for any of us. However I believe that we cannot become caught up and limited by our idealism and passion like the first mate in "The Novice". It is the compromise between idealism, passion and truth in our lives that will enable us to achieve individual success in reality.

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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 style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>The student begins a <b>purposeful exploration of the topic</b> with the title: “Success: the Compromise of Idealism and Reality.” Although the student suggests that “Often times our passions and ideals can hinder our perception of reality, and even make us unable to function in society,” the actual thesis is “The question we must ask ourselves is therefore: how does idealism and truth impact an individual’s life?” The <b>student’s exploration</b> of “the juxtaposition of reality and idealism in my own life” is purposeful. The <b>student’s perceptions</b> are <b>thoughtful and considered</b>: “Ironically, the more I learned about becoming a doctor the more I realized that my dream of becoming a doctor was less desirable and attainable than I previously believed. I learned that most doctors had to work with mostly unglamorous boring everyday problems such as advising middle-aged men and women about their elevated blood pressure and diet, I also learned that doctors had to work brutally long and unorthodox hours.”</p> <p>The student recognizes that this idealistic goal of becoming a doctor is “dauntingly difficult,” and questions whether the student’s résumé is “good enough to withstand the force of the extremely high competition.” Re-evaluating this ideal in the context of the truth and reality of medical school, the student comes to the <b>thoughtful</b> recognition that “I feel that I have not lost all of my passion, I still have the potential to apply my aptitude for science to help others, I have simply altered the process by which I will realize my ideals.” The student explores the difficulty of becoming a doctor through <b>specific support</b> such as most candidates having “an average GPA of 3.8,” being “extremely well-rounded,” and engaging in “many extra-curricular activities and volunteer work.” The statistic that “only about ten percent of medical school applicants finally realize their dream and make it into medical school” <b>strengthens</b> the student’s confidence in having “altered the process” to achieve the student’s ideals.</p>

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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>The <b>voice created by the student</b> is distinct in sentences such as “I have always deeply enjoyed the sensation of being able to help someone,” “it almost seemed natural for me to dream about one day becoming a doctor,” and “With this reality I began to understand that my dream of becoming a doctor was dauntingly difficult.”</p> <p><b>Stylistic choices are specific</b>, as in “I will analyze the juxtaposition of reality and idealism,” “simultaneously help other human beings in the process,” and “where I could combine my passion for science with the applicable practical skills of Business.” Although there are mechanical errors such as comma splices and capitalization, the student’s response demonstrates <b>competent stylistic choices</b>. Such sentences as “As they begin to idolize famous musicians and athletes they idealize a dream in which they will become the new rock stars or hockey players of tomorrow, when in reality as individuals there is hardly any chance that they will ever be signed to a record label or compete in the NHL” and “However I believe that we cannot become caught up and limited by our idealism and passion like the first mate in ‘The Novice’” have a <b>competent tone</b>.</p> <p>The <b>unifying effect is capably developed</b> as the student begins with the question of “how does idealism and truth impact an individual’s life?”, moves to a discussion of the dream of becoming a doctor and the recognition of its difficulties, and concludes with the statement “It is the compromise between idealism, passion and truth in our lives that will enable us to achieve individual success in reality.” The considered logic of this response contributes to the creation of a <b>distinct</b> and capable <b>voice</b>.</p>

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient–2 (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.

In "The Novice", the mate believes that all he needs and wants in life is his boat and that that will be the ideal way to live. Once he loses the "Bally Anne" however, he realizes that ~~the~~ his life is unfulfilled, and that he had given everything up only to lose his ~~one~~ passion, and now he has nothing.

Briefly identify what idea you intend to explore.

An individual may give everything up for a certain ideal, and think they're happy. But once something happens to shatter that idealistic state of being, the truth is revealed. And the truth is that no matter how happy an individual thinks he is, there will always be something that is missing, if he realizes it or not. what you think you want and what you really need are two different things, it just depends on whether you realize what it is that you need or if you are living blindly in the idealistic state that you're in.

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

Short Story

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

Example Scored Proficient–2 (Pf)

**The Unseen Witness**

I see him standing there alone on the dock, working on his boat. Now I know why Father built this attic with this big glass window, I can use it for the same purpose. I don't know how long I have been standing here watching him, but the needle on the big clock on the wall seems like it has been adjusted, I'm wasting my time I suddenly realize, I have more important things to attend to. Dinner should be on the table in an hour and I still need to go buy some eggs for tomorrow's breakfast. Maybe I should invite him over for dinner, but I know that it's an awful idea, he will just say no like all the other times I have asked him. Why do I keep on trying? I wonder. The mate will never change, he has his boat, the *Sally Anne*, which he thinks is all he needs in life. A boat for heaven's sake! Maybe he's crazy, I ponder. But I know that that is not true. He just doesn't realize that he's wasting away his life on things that are unimportant in the long run. For now he might think he's happy, and that his life is fulfilled, but I know the truth, I have seen it before. My father was the same, he thought that life on the sea was all he needed and wanted, until he lost his crew and realized how empty his life had become. He was able to change things for himself though, he met my mother and they were happy. I know that he missed the ocean and the boats and the freedom that he had, I know this because I saw him standing at this very spot, looking out this very window for hours on end just watching and dreaming. Yes, like the mate he thought his life was ideal, but he realized that what you think you want and what you really need are two different things, it just depends on whether you

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Example Scored Proficient–2 (Pf)

realize what it is that you need or if you go on living blindly in the idealistic state that you're in.

As I'm making dinner I feel saddened by the thoughts that are making their way through my mind. I feel sorry for the mate; I have loved him from the very beginning, but I know now that he will never change, he will never see me or what we could've become. I could have given him so much; I could've made him so happy. I can see us now in 10 years, with a beautiful house on the shore, our children playing with fish on the dock, and the mate working on our boat, as happy as he's ever been.

It's early morning and the sun hasn't fully risen yet. I am standing by the glass window looking out over the harbor. *Sally Anne's* docking space is empty, this makes me anxious because the mate is always back before the sun starts rising. I look at the big clock on the wall and once again I have wasted hours of my life standing here and waiting. Waiting for something that will never happen, waiting for someone who will never realize the truth and who will never realize what he's missing. I walk away from the glass window with a tear on my cheek and the sun shining on my back.

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

**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>The student offers a <b>purposeful exploration of the topic</b> on the planning page: “An individual may give everything up for a certain ideal, and think they’re happy. But once something happens to shatter that idealistic state of being, the truth is revealed. And the truth is that what you think you want and what you really need are two different things.” The student examines the temptation to live “blindly in the idealistic state” by considering three fictional characters: a version of the first mate of “The Novice,” the narrator (a young woman who is in love with the first mate), and the narrator’s father (whose life echoes the details of the first mate’s experience in “The Novice”). The student presents the <b>thoughtful</b> scenario that all three characters, with varying degrees of blindness, live or have lived for an illusory ideal state. The first mate, from the narrator’s point of view, lives blindly in his devotion to his boat. The narrator’s father once did the same but, through the loss of his crew, “realized how empty his life had become.” The narrator, throughout the piece, wavers between her own ideal version of a life with the first mate — “I could have given him so much; I could’ve made him so happy” — and her pragmatic conclusion: “I feel sorry for the mate; I have loved him from the very beginning, but I know now that he will never change.” The narrator’s <b>perceptions</b> about the first mate’s delusion and her own susceptibility to the dream of a life with him are <b>thoughtful and considered</b>.</p> <p><b>Support is specific</b> as in the narrator standing in the “attic with this big glass window” allowing her to observe the first mate “working on his boat” and to contemplate the futility of his life “He just doesn’t realize that he’s wasting away his life on things that are unimportant in the long run.” The narrator compares the first mate’s life with that of her father who also once “thought that life on the sea was all he needed and wanted.” The loss of his crew proves to be the shock that allows her father to re-evaluate his life and “change things for himself,” eventually meeting the narrator’s mother and pursuing a more land-based existence. The narrator hopes vainly that the first mate could learn “that what you think you want and what you really need are two different things.” These <b>specific details support and strengthen the student’s idea</b> that a misplaced ideal life needs to be shattered if the truth is to be seen.</p>

Pf



**English Language Arts 30–1, June 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>The student creates a <b>distinctive voice</b> in the narrator: “he has his boat, the <i>Sally Anne</i>, which he thinks is all he needs in life. A boat for heaven’s sake! Maybe he’s crazy, I ponder.” The narrator’s mind, although mostly focused on the futility of the first mate’s life, also turns impatiently to her own fruitless pursuit: “I’m wasting my time I suddenly realize, I have more important things to attend to.” <b>Stylistic choices</b> such as “I know that he missed the ocean and the boats and the freedom that he had,” “I saw him standing at this very spot, looking out this very window for hours on end just watching and dreaming,” and “I can see us now in 10 years, with a beautiful house on the shore, our children playing with fish on the dock, and the mate working on our boat” <b>are specific. The student’s creation of tone is competent</b> as in: “It’s early morning and the sun hasn’t fully risen yet. I am standing by the glass window looking out over the harbor.” The frequent comma errors, although distracting, do not detract from the voice, the tone, or the clarity of the piece.</p> <p><b>The unifying effect is capably developed</b> as the student positions the narrator in the attic by the glass window, initially in the evening and then the following morning. In the evening, the narrator remains somewhat unresolved in her reflections about the first mate, dismissing her hopes about him at one point “The mate will never change” and then, at another point, imagining her future life with him, “I can see us now in 10 years.” In the morning, however, the narrator seems to take her own advice, realizing that for too long she has been “Waiting for something that will never happen, waiting for someone who will never realize the truth.” Accordingly, with a symbolic physical action, she walks “away from the glass window with a tear on my cheek and the sun shining on my back.” At this point, the student also <b>capably</b> employs irony in that the narrator turns away from her hopes regarding the first mate on the very day, it would appear, that the first mate may lose his ship and some of his crew, possibly providing the opportunity for the first mate’s recognition of the need for change.</p>

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

Example Scored Excellent–1 (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.

Excerpt from "The Novice" by W.D. Valgardson  
- Faith, denial central to survival in life-or-death situations

Briefly identify what idea you intend to explore.

In this text, it is suggested that the denial of truth may be imperative to an individual's survival increase

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

Personal Essay

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent-1 (E)

Planning

Intro.

1) Ryan

- Muscular Dystrophy
- Explore optimism, outlook on life

→ In a life-or-death situation, the denial of truth may <sup>increase</sup> ~~be vital~~ to an individual's chances for survival.

Body

(Denial allows an individual to...)

1) Avoid wasting limited time wallowing in grief

2) Take proactive action to deal w. the situation

3) Focus on others who need help

Conclusion

Truth would be fatal; ∴ denial of truth → imperative for survival

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent–1 (E)

On a family cruise to Alaska this past May, I had the great privilege of meeting a most remarkable, inspiring individual. His name was Ryan [REDACTED] and he was a model of the ideal teenager in nearly every way.

Friendly and endearing, Ryan constantly had a broad smile and bright “hello” for all around; and his unwavering politeness earned him the admiration of parents and youths alike. He had even brought his school texts along for the week-long vacation, and could be frequently seen making furious revisions, seated poolside. He was *the* model of a driven, dedicated student with a successful future ahead; so it was to my great surprise that his brother informed me of his degenerative affliction, a rare form of muscular dystrophy—which tends to limit its victims’ lifespan to forty years of age, or less.

Upon hearing this, I found it difficult to comprehend Ryan’s unwavering optimism, his ambition, and his plans for distant tomorrows. After all, given such a prognosis, who would choose *homework* as a priority? Furthermore, what would be the value of pursuing a post-secondary education and career, when the fruitions of such pursuits would likely be short-lived?

In *The Novice* by W.D. Valgardson, the First Mate exhibits a similar denial of truth in dealing with a life-or-death situation. Although the circumstances of their shipwreck would “at most, give them a fighting chance,” the First Mate refuses to ponder the inherent implications of these circumstances. Instead, he makes the conscious choice

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Example Scored Excellent–1 (E)

to take proactive action, increasing his shipmates' chances for survival. In this way, the First Mate supports his injured shipmates by making their suffering more bearable through optimistic visions of the future, "making plans for the trip ahead."

In refusing to acknowledge the severity of the circumstances, the First Mate also avoids mourning the loss of his close friends for the time being. After all, he understands that crying out would be "of no use," as his injured shipmates need him. If he can emerge from the situation alive, there will be plenty of time for thinking about Cookee, with whom he had "shipped together for five years," and Triggvi, "the moustached civil servant"; but his immediate priorities are supporting those shipmates of his not yet beyond his help—and in even greater danger than himself.

Much like the First Mate of Valgardson's story, Ryan's optimism is the result of a steadfast refusal to give up—a denial of the imminent truth as he wait patiently for his "rescue," a cure. In continuing with his studies with ferocious diligence, Ryan refuses to allow his situation to take over his life; and in achieving to the best of his ability, Ryan enables himself to make use of every single moment he has left in the years ahead. Furthermore, like the First Mate, Ryan uses his own experience to focus upon others in the same situation, others who are in even greater need of help—and is constantly involved in raising awareness about this debilitating disease.

Others who've met Ryan have said that it's not optimism he harbors, but foolishness. I would have to respectfully disagree. My brief experience with Ryan has taught me that, in the face of adversity, idealism is far more valuable than the acknowledgement of the pragmatic truth; and his selflessness, in seeking to prevent

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Example Scored Excellent–1 (E)

others from going through the same challenges as he has, would not be possible without such denial.

Even with his bleak prognosis, I'm confident that Ryan's life will be far more fulfilling than many of those with more years to bank upon. His ideal of bettering the world, in spite of his own suffering, is one that we should all aspire towards; and his work ethic is surely something that most "healthy" teenagers lack.

In considering the situations of both Ryan and the First Mate of *The Novice*, the avoidance of truth and adherence to elusive ideals may not only be useful, but *vital* to one's survival in facing imminent death. Denying the truth may have, indeed, deprived both these individuals of reality—but it has also given him something to live for.

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**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>The student offers an <b>insightful exploration of the topic</b> by comparing Ryan, a motivated and admirable fellow teenager met on an Atlantic cruise, to the first mate from “The Novice” who “supports his injured shipmates by making their suffering more bearable through optimistic visions of the future” rather than “mourning the loss of his close friends.” The student clearly establishes the connection between Ryan and the mate: “Furthermore, like the First Mate, Ryan uses his own experience to focus upon others in the same situation, others who are in even greater need of help—and is constantly involved in raising awareness about this debilitating disease.” This comparison results in the student’s <b>confident and discerning perception</b>: “My brief experience with Ryan has taught me that, in the face of adversity, idealism is far more valuable than the acknowledgement of the pragmatic truth; and his selflessness, in seeking to prevent others from going through the same challenges as he has, would not be possible without such denial.”</p> <p>The student provides <b>precise support</b> in “I found it difficult to comprehend Ryan’s unwavering optimism, his ambition, and his plans for distant tomorrows” and “He had even brought his school texts along for the week-long vacation, and could be frequently seen making furious revisions, seated poolside”. By selecting details from “The Novice” related to the First Mate’s refusal to mourn in the midst of the crisis for “Cooke, with whom he had ‘shipped together for five years,’ and Triggvi, ‘the moustached civil servant,’” the student <b>aptly reinforces the insightful idea</b> that the “avoidance of truth and adherence to elusive ideals may not only be useful, but <i>vital</i> to one’s survival.”</p>

E

**English Language Arts 30–1, June 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>The student creates <b>a voice that is convincing</b>: “After all, given such a prognosis, who would choose <i>homework</i> as a priority? Furthermore, what would be the value of pursuing a post-secondary education and career, when the fruitions of such pursuits would likely be short-lived?” and “Ryan’s optimism is the result of a steadfast refusal to give up—a denial of the imminent truth as he wait patiently for his ‘rescue,’ a cure.” Given the length and complexity of the piece, <b>stylistic choices are precise</b>. Despite the misuse of the semi-colon, the student’s diction, rhetorical questions, embedded quotations, and dashes are effective: “Friendly and endearing, Ryan constantly had a broad smile and bright ‘hello’ for all around” and “there will be plenty of time for thinking about Cookee, with whom he had ‘shipped together for five years,’ and Triggvi, ‘the moustached civil servant’; but his immediate priorities are supporting those shipmates of his not yet beyond his help—and in even greater danger than himself.”</p> <p>The student’s <b>creation of tone</b> is adept given the sympathetic reaction to Ryan’s “degenerative affliction” and initial disbelief in the young man’s “unwavering optimism, his ambition, and his plans for distant tomorrows.” The tone becomes one of admiration: “His ideal of bettering the world, in spite of his own suffering, is one that we should all aspire towards; and his work ethic is surely something that most ‘healthy’ teenagers lack.” The student <b>skillfully develops the unifying effect</b> by emphasizing that one’s “avoidance of truth and adherence to elusive ideals” may be essential in order to survive “imminent death.” The student compares Ryan, “<i>the</i> model of a driven, dedicated student” who suffers from a “rare form of muscular dystrophy” to the First Mate who “exhibits a similar denial of truth in dealing with a life-or-death situation.” The student arrives at the conclusion: “Denying the truth may have, indeed, deprived both these individuals of reality—but it has also given him something to live for.”</p>



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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent–2 (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.

Prayer for Nerizen → truth/ideal = goal/conviction/something  
to aim for.

Briefly identify what idea you intend to explore.

How does an ideal, or a conviction survive  
without being doubted/criticized/undermined? Are  
strong convictions desirable, or does fascination  
with the truth/an ideal lead to confusion/doubt.

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

creative.

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent-2 (E)

Planning

Trying to hold on to idealism and truth  
→ in a modern, mundane setting

↙  
ideal/conviction  
- leap of faith/risk  
truth vs doubt

"recognize truths  
and, in turn, be  
the embodiment of  
that ideal"

- intro/setting
- spreadsheet
- trigger = endless cubicles  
(light at end of tunnel?)
- monotony
- what if?
- 

horizon = goal

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent–2 (E)

A Colourless Sea  
(Personal Response to Texts)

A harsh, fluorescent glow illuminated the grey cubicle. She sat, typing mechanically in time to the constant ringing of off-white telephones. Finishing the email, she turned to her next task, the monthly budget. Opening the partially completed spreadsheet she allowed herself to sigh, eyeing cell, after cell, after cell of blank space, waiting to be filled with even less stimulating numbers.

She peeked surreptitiously over the edge of her cubicle, hoping for a distraction. All of her co-worker's heads were down, and each undecorated, monotone wall refused to allow her to see what life was like beyond the bounds of her workspace. The cubicles ran together, creating a nearly endless grey sea with a horizon that stretched back to the end of the enormous room, where one, lonely window could be seen, throwing its pale sunlight defiantly into the office.

She sat back down half-heartedly, and looked again at the waiting spreadsheet. A thought occurred to her; what if, instead of faithfully copying the assigned budget, she left a space or two blank? Or, (she grinned guiltily) she could switch numbers around, give all of the money to catering and leave none for head office.

Smoothing her skirt, she sighed yet again. Playing tricks with budgeting would take much more courage than she had left in her. Not wishing to face the blank spreadsheet yet, though, she leaned back and took a sip from her lukewarm coffee.

Once, she had planned to go to Turkey. She had marvellous plans, she and a friend would go backpacking, volunteer, hitchhike, she would dress herself in white robes and pretend to be TE Lawrence, she would study anthropology and save the world and

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent–2 (E)

visit the cradle of civilization, she would write an astounding novel, not for fame but to further humanity... and then, one day, it had occurred to her that perhaps it wasn't worthwhile.

She remembered believing, a very long time ago. Once she had *known* her values, she had possessed certainties, she had been sure that if she wanted to create a better life, she could embrace anti-materialism and environmentalism and humanitarianism and every other beloved flower-child dream, show the world what was right and true by becoming what was right and true herself.

Her phone rang. She didn't feel like answering it.

It wasn't that she didn't believe that she could make a difference, she had just begun to doubt whether those differences were worth making. She had grown lazy, and doubtful, and (worst of all) analytical... and now she found herself hacking away at every truth she had ever loved. Without her convictions, she felt smarter, more worldly, and certainly more cynical, but these last few months she had realized that she wasn't strong enough to be a happy cynic. Self-doubt had spiraled into self-hatred, and she couldn't make herself believe in uncertainty.

Her phone rang again. She let it go to the message machine.

She had trouble pinpointing what it was about comfortable skepticism that wasn't comfortable, though she was sure that it was a personal flaw. Living without a goal shouldn't be as hard as she was finding it. She ought to be able to find contentment among the cubicles, couldn't a flexible mind create happiness anywhere? Turning back to her computer screen, she glared at the monitor, which was still stubbornly displaying the hated spreadsheet.

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**Example Scored Excellent–2 (E)**

Again she rose to peer over the wall of her cell. There was still no visual evidence of life around her, just that ocean of grey leading to the tiny, glowing window over top of the door on the far wall...

Shutting down her computer, she pushed in her chair and emerged, leaving her suitcase behind, to walk down the long off-white aisle towards the beckoning exit.

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**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 style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">E</p>	<p>By using “Prayer for Horizon” as an implicit contrast, the student <b>explores the topic insightfully</b> through a protagonist who has pragmatically surrendered to a mundane existence as a number-cruncher and given up her younger social conscience and lofty ideals of “anti-materialism and environmentalism and humanitarianism and every other beloved flower-child dream.” Recognizing that this surrender has produced both complacency and a pessimistic scepticism, the student offers the <b>discerning idea</b> that the protagonist “found herself hacking away at every truth she had ever loved. Without her convictions, she felt smarter, more worldly, and certainly more cynical, but these last few months she realized that she wasn’t strong enough to be a happy cynic.” The impact of ascribing to false truths is conveyed in the declarative conclusion that “Self-doubt had spiralled into self hatred, and she couldn’t make herself believe in uncertainty.” The <b>perception</b> that the protagonist’s intelligence, ironically enough, might act against the very ideals she knows to be true is <b>confident and discerning</b>: “She had trouble pinpointing what it was about comfortable scepticism that wasn’t comfortable, though she was sure it was a personal flaw. Living without a goal shouldn’t be as hard as she was finding it.”</p> <p><b>Support is precise and aptly reinforces the student’s ideas and impressions.</b> The experiences of the protagonist parallel and expand upon, in an implicit way, elements of the poem “Prayer for Horizon.” The external fog of the poem compares to the internal confusion that the protagonist experiences as a result of self-deception. Whereas the “artificial horizon” (“Prayer for Horizon”) provides momentary comfort for a threatened individual in the poem, the “monotone wall” of the cubicles serves as a limiting artificiality which constrains the protagonist’s desire to move “beyond fear” (“Prayer for Horizon”) with the courage of an adventurer like T. E. Lawrence or Vasco de Gama. The cubicles create “an endless grey sea with a horizon that stretched back to the end of the enormous room.”</p>

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**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 style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 20px;">E</p>	<p>The student has created a <b>convincing narrative voice</b> that details the struggle of the protagonist through effective descriptions of actions and thoughts. Boredom: “Opening the partially completed spreadsheet she allowed herself to sigh, eyeing cell, after cell, after cell of blank space, waiting to be filled with even less stimulating numbers.” Mischievousness: “A thought occurred to her; what if, instead of faithfully copying the assigned budget, she left a space or two blank? Or, (she grinned guiltily) she could switch numbers around,” Yearning: “she would dress herself in white robes and pretend to be TE Lawrence, she would study anthropology and save the world and visit the cradle of civilization, she would write an astounding novel, not for fame but to further humanity.” In the last example, the confident use of the run-on sentence reflects the <b>adept creation of tone</b> in a stream-of-consciousness narrative.</p> <p><b>Stylistic choices are precise</b>, as well, in the brevity of key paragraphs as the protagonist progresses towards an epiphany: “Her phone rang. She didn’t feel like answering it” and “Her phone rang again. She let it go to the message machine.” The opening characterization of the office as “A Colourless Sea” of cubicles forming a “monotone wall” highlights the grey-bland nature of the suffocating office environment. This use of colour is <b>precise</b> in the juxtaposition between the “nearly endless grey sea” and the vibrancy of the “one, lonely window” “throwing its pale sunlight defiantly into the office.” Through these details, the student <b>skillfully</b> develops a <b>unifying</b> portrait of paralysis and yearning that culminates in the conclusion: “Shutting down her computer, she pushed in her chair and emerged, leaving her suitcase [briefcase] behind, to walk down the long off-white aisle towards the beckoning exit.”</p>

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

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

The Kite Runner → Khaled Hosseini

**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.

Amir <sup>did not have.</sup> ~~had~~ an ideal situation to grow up in. No mother. A father who he couldn't relate to. His passions were not accepted. He was in denial about his best friend. The truth is his prison, for 26 years of his life he is just trying to find an ideal way to live.



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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

~~THESE~~ → When the truth of a situation  
haunts an individual, he must pursue ~~an~~  
a perfect or ideal situation in order to escape  
the <sup>captivity.</sup> prison of truth!!!

1 -

2 → Childhood

3 → The lies of his life.

4 → The truth and idealism of his  
final situation.

5 - Summary.

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

Written Work

P1 Perfection is a strange idea that is constantly just out of an individual's grasp. As an individual journeys through ~~their~~ his life many aspects of truth are revealed; both liberating and constraining. ~~truths.~~ ~~the~~ In the novel *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini many ideas are developed regarding ~~idealism~~ idealism and truth. When truth haunts an individual, he must pursue a perfect or ideal situation in order to escape the captivity of truth.

P2 In an individual's childhood, they are

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

exposed to many truths of life. In the story Amir does not grow up in an ideal situation. He does not have a mother, Amir can not ~~relate~~ identify with his father, his passion is frowned upon by his dad. Amir is constantly in denial about his best friend Hassan. These are all ~~truths~~ <sup>situations</sup> which Amir is faced with at a young age. All these situations reveal truths to Amir. He learns that it is difficult growing up without a mother. Amir knows that his dad <sup>openly</sup> thinks "there is something missing

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

in [him]"; he doesn't realize it yet but there is a "special bond" between himself and Hassan. Hassan is the best friend Amir could ask for. The ideal situation which Amir is hoping to attain is a serene and loving relationship with his father. This always seems impossible for Amir to achieve. The truths of his childhood, and the lies that he develops inhibit his ability to be happy.

PS For twenty-six years of his life Amir is concealing the truth and living the a

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

lie he developed in the winter of 1975,  
back in Kabul. He showed his true ~~loyalty~~<sup>loyalty</sup>  
and desires when he ran away from Hassan  
in the dark alley. He betrayed the only  
person who would do anything to make Amir  
happy. "a thousand times over". With this  
lie Amir becomes closer with Baba and he  
is happier because finally, his dad is  
accepting him. Although things may be  
better for Amir, the guilt of his sin  
rots  
~~rotts~~ him from the inside and he  
realizes he can not run from the

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

Written Work <sup>understands he</sup>

truth forever. Amir <sup>^</sup> must find "a way  
to be good again".

PA Amir grows to be a young man who  
falls in love and has a successful career  
in the makings. Some might say his situation  
is ideal; But he cannot live with the truth  
of what he has done to Hassan. After  
receiving a phone call from an old friend,  
Rahim Khan, Amir decides he must redeem  
himself and return to Afghanistan. in  
order to attempt to <sup>right</sup> write the  
wrongs of his past. He goes back

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

to his ~~in~~ homeland and finds that things have changed. The idealistic country from Amir's childhood has transformed into a war torn land of chaos. In a final attempt to redeem himself to Hassan, and to become a man his father would be proud to call his son, he goes on a life threatening mission to retrieve Hassan's son, Sohrab. After successfully bringing Sohrab back to North America, Amir can finally begin to escape the lies he has been living in for so long. Amir is now able to pursue ~~the~~ true idealism.

PS Throughout his life Amir is faced

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

~~with~~  
with many truths which he must  
accept and deal with. His pursuit of  
perfection and happiness is altered by  
many events which happen in his life.  
He learns from his mistakes and becomes  
a better person in the end. ~~The truth~~  
~~interplay between truth and I.~~ When  
the truth haunts an individual,  
he must persevere and continue to  
strive for idealism in order to escape  
the containment of truth. The interplay  
between truth and idealism is very  
diverse therefore each individual must figure  
~~their~~<sup>31</sup> ~~his~~ life path out  
on his own.



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Critical/Analytical Response 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 style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>The student establishes a <b>straightforward</b> connection between a character’s longing for an ideal situation and a character’s necessity to come to terms with truth in order to pursue that ideal: “When the truth haunts an individual, he must pursue a perfect or ideal situation in order to escape the captivity of truth” (3). The student <b>demonstrates a generalized comprehension</b> of the topic by saying “In the story Amir does not grow up in an ideal situation. He does not have a mother. Amir can not identify with his father, his passion is frowned upon by his dad” and recognizing that “Amir is hoping to attain” “a secure and loving relationship with his father.” The student’s <b>idea</b> that “The truths of his childhood, and the lies that he develop inhibit his ability to be happy” is <b>relevant and straightforward</b>. The statements “With this lie Amir becomes closer with Baba and he is happier because finally, his dad is accepting him. Although things may be better for Amir, the guilt of his sin rots him from the inside and he realizes he can not run from the truth forever” <b>demonstrate a generalized comprehension of the literary text</b>.</p> <p><b>Literary interpretations</b> that Amir “has a successful career in the makings” and that “Some might say his situation is ideal” <b>are general but plausible</b> as is one of the concluding comments, “He learns from his mistakes and becomes a better person in the end. When the truth haunts an individual, he must perservere and continue to strive for idealism in order to escape the containment of truth.”</p>

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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> when the student describes Amir’s childhood: “Amir is constantly in denial about his best friend Hassan. These are all situations which Amir is faced with at a young age. All these situations reveal truths to Amir.” <b>Support is appropriately chosen to reinforce the student’s idea</b> about Amir’s relationship with both his father and Hassan: “He learns that it is difficult growing up without a mother. Amir knows that his dad openly thinks ‘there is something missing in [him]’” and “He doesn’t realize it yet but there is a ‘special bond’ between himself and Hassan.”</p> <p><b>Occasionally the support lacks persuasiveness</b> because of generalities such as, “Amir is now able to pursue true idealism” and “His pursuit of perfection and happiness is altered by many events which happen in his life.”</p> <p><b>A reasonable connection to the student’s ideas is suitably maintained:</b> “In a final attempt to redeem himself to Hassan, and to become a man his father would be proud to call his son, he goes on a life threatening mission to retrieve Hassans son, Sohrab.”</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</b> chronologically tracks the protagonist, Amir, from his less than ideal childhood through the “twenty-six years of his life” when he is “concealing the truth and living a lie” to Amir growing up “to be a young man who falls in love” and finally having to “return to Afghanistan in order to attempt to right the wrongs of his past.” This organization <b>provides direction for the discussion that is developed appropriately.</b></p> <p><b>The unifying effect</b> of the imagery in how the “truth haunts an individual” runs throughout the response and <b>the controlling idea</b> that an individual “must pursue a perfect or ideal situation in order to escape the captivity of truth” <b>is presented and maintained generally, but coherence falters</b> owing to a lack of clear definition of Amir’s notion of idealism: “The idealistic Country from Amir’s childhood has transformed into a war torn land of chaos” and “After successfully bringing Sohrab back to North America,” “Amir is now able to pursue true idealism.”</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 in such examples as “When truth haunts an individual,” “The ideal situation which Amir is hoping to attain is a secure and loving relationship with his father,” “the lies that he develop inhibit his ability to be happy,” and “the guilt of his sin rots him from the inside.”</p> <p><b>Syntactical structures are straightforward</b> in the second paragraph, “Amir is constantly in denial about his best friend Hassan. These are all situations which Amir is faced with at a young age. All these situations reveal truths to Amir,” but <b>attempts at complex structures are awkward</b> in the first and concluding paragraphs: “As an individual journeys through his life many aspects of truth are revealed; both liberating and constraining” and “The interplay between truth and idealism is very diverse therefore each individual must figure his life path out on his own.”</p> <p><b>Stylistic choices provide an appropriate voice</b> as in, “For twenty-six years of his life Amir is concealing the truth and living a lie he developed in the winter of 1975, back in Kabul. He showed his true loyalty and desires when he ran away from Hassan in the dark alley. He betrayed the only person who would do anything to make Amir happy ‘a thousand times over.’”</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</b> with the occasional missing or misused word or comma, as in “In the novel <u>The Kite Runner</u> by Khaled Hosseini many ideas a developed regarding idealism and truth” or “With this lie Amir becomes closer with Baba and he is happier because finally, his dad is accepting him.”</p> <p><b>There are occasional lapses in control and minor errors; however, the communication remains clear.</b></p>

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 Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

Literary text and  
 Text Creator A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen

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

other texts = Hamlet?  
 = Crime and Punishment?  
 = Watchmen?  
 - read but not studied, so no.

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.

A Doll's House was the most studied text. Also very interesting. idealism perceptions

Torvald believes his life is ideal, perfect. Nora knows the truth. truth = harsh realities. idealism = "in a perfect world" how things should be as values?

Opening Paragraph - Mention societal constraints (write last)

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First → Torvald's ideals vs. truth about Nora

---

Extra??  


Second → ~~Torvald's~~ truth vs. Nora's ideal vs. truth about Torvald

---

Third → truths revealed in last scene

---

Closing → re-iterate stuff

I am so nervous that I threw up and I just swallowed it. I am not leaving this computer for any reason.

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

*Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text*

✂

- Torvald's desires/ideals/values = self-centered young wife who pumps out babies and caters to his whims. Values his reputation. Doesn't know the truth about the loan for a long time, reacts badly when he finds out
- Nora's desires/ideals/values = ~~torvald~~ Nora knows the truth, and frequently goes against wishes of Torvald ("macaroons", "bloody hell"), wants Torvald to make a sacrifice (he doesn't)

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

Critical/Analytic Response – A Doll’s House

A person’s ideals, what they believe and value, often seal them off from the truth. In the text “A Doll’s House” by Henrik Ibsen, conflicts between the perceived truth and the real truth are prevalent. The things that characters believe to be true, or want to be true, leave them disappointed in themselves and in each other by text’s end. This is especially true for the characters Torvald and Nora, a husband and wife who each fail to live up to the other’s expectations, dissolving their marriage.

Torvald Helmer is a man who believes that he is ideal from a societal standpoint, and who values his wealth of perceived normalcy. He goes so far as to fire a man, Krogstad, from the bank he has recently become head of, because this man calls Torvald by his first name, and this could potentially damage the reputation. He believes his wife, Nora, to be obedient and loving, and his household to be peaceful and open. The reality of the situation, however, is that his wife is rebellious, eating macaroons that he has strictly forbidden in his house, and manipulating him to win favours for friends. At one point, Nora declares to two friends that she would like to say “Bloody hell” to him, a phrase which was considered terribly profane and improper when the play was written. Nora is even keeping from him an illegal loan with a forged signature that she took out to obtain money to take an ailing Torvald to Italy, a secret that could potentially ruin the family’s reputation. Nora also got a secret job to pay off this loan, and lies to her husband about it. Torvald would like to believe he and his family are perfect and proper, but the truth is that they are human, and thereby flawed.

Nora Helmer, Torvald’s wife, while considered wiser and less concerned with what society thinks than her husband, still holds foolish ideals. She believes that when the secret of her

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

loan is made public, Torvald will take full responsibility for it, damaging his reputation so she will not be charged or humiliated. She believes that he will take the blame out of gratitude for saving his life. The truth of the matter is that Torvald's deep-seated love of his position in society does not make him a man accustomed to sacrifices. While Nora is more conscious of the truth than her husband, she still does not know the truth about him.

In the last scene of "A Doll's House," Nora and Torvald see through their ideals and face the truth about each other, bringing the tension and conflict throughout the text to a head. Torvald discovers a letter from the man Nora took the loan from, who is coincidentally the man Torvald fired earlier in the play. In the letter, Krogstad says he will reveal that Nora took the loan out publicly. Torvald, having no prior knowledge of the loan, has his beliefs about Nora shattered, and sees the truth of her rebellious nature. Torvald, fearing for his reputation, says he will send the children away, and that he and Nora will continue living together, but the marriage will be loveless. Nora, seeing that Torvald will not, as she had believed he would, take the blame and save her, also sees the truth. Torvald discovers a second letter from Krogstad, saying he will not reveal Nora's secret, and decides that all is forgiven, but Nora now knows her husband's nature, and, true to her own, leaves her family behind to seek an honest life.

A person's beliefs and ideals can shade them from the truth, and it is likely Henrik Ibsen's intention to say that one should always look deeper than the surface. Torvald's and Nora's ignorance of the truth shattered their ideals, leaving Torvald alone and Nora with an uncertain future. What a person's beliefs and ideals are can prevent them from seeing anything but these ideals, and leave them broken. It is important to hold opinions, but not to the point where a change in them could cause such a rift between people.

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Critical/Analytical Response 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;"><b>Pf</b></p>	<p>The student’s <b>idea</b> that “A person’s ideals, what they believe and value, often seal them off from the truth” and “leave them disappointed in themselves and in each other” <b>thoughtfully</b> establishes a <b>competent comprehension</b> of the topic. Torvald’s belief that “he is ideal from a societal standpoint” is juxtaposed with Nora’s belief in the ideal husband who “will take full responsibility for it, damaging his reputation so she will not be charged or humiliated.” These <b>literary interpretations are revealing and sensible</b>: “Nora and Torvald see though their ideals and face the truth about each other” “leaving Torvald alone and Nora with an uncertain future.”</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;"><b>Pf</b></p>	<p><b>Support is specific</b> in the discussion about Torvald who fires Krogstad for calling “Torvald by his first name,” forbids Nora from “eating macaroons,” and, “fearing for his reputation,” threatens to “send the children away.” To demonstrate Nora’s secret life, the student includes the <b>well-chosen</b> evidence that “Nora declares to two friends that she would like to say ‘Bloody hell’ to him,” that she is “keeping from him an illegal loan with a forged signature,” and that she has “got a secret job to pay off this loan.” After Torvald discovers the truth, he “decides that all is forgiven, but Nora now knows her husband’s nature, and, true to her own, leaves her family behind to seek an honest life”; this summation demonstrates a <b>sound connection to the student’s ideas</b> which is <b>capably maintained</b>.</p>

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Critical/Analytical Response 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;"><b>Pf</b></p>	<p>The student introduces the conflict “between the perceived truth and the real truth” which is <b>developed capably</b> with the detail that Torvald “believes his wife, Nora, to be obedient and loving” but the reality is “that his wife is rebellious” and manipulates “him to win favours for friends.” The student then addresses the importance Torvald places on his business reputation and the action he takes.</p> <p>Through a <b>purposeful</b> presentation of Torvald’s flawed ideals of a “perfect and proper” family and Nora’s “foolish ideals” about Torvald’s being a perfect husband, the <b>controlling idea</b> that “Torvald’s and Nora’s ignorance of the truth shattered their ideals” and leaves “them broken” is <b>coherently sustained</b>.</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Choice (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diction is specific.</li> <li>• Syntactic structures are generally effective.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a considered composition with a capable voice.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;"><b>Pf</b></p>	<p><b>Diction is specific</b> as in: “perceived normalcy,” “charged or humiliated,” “deep-seated love,” “accustomed to sacrifices,” “shattered their ideals,” and “leave them broken.” The student’s use of periodic sentences with interrupting phrases is <b>generally effective</b>: “Nora Helmer, Torvald’s wife, while considered wiser and less concerned with what society thinks than her husband, still holds foolish ideals” and “Torvald, having no prior knowledge of the loan, has his beliefs about Nora shattered, and sees the truth of her rebellious nature.” These <b>stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a capable voice</b> as demonstrated in “a phrase that was considered terribly profane and improper” and “the truth is that they are human, and thereby flawed.”</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1, June 2009  
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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Correctness (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This writing demonstrates competence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</li> <li>• Minor errors in complex language structures are understandable considering the circumstances.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>Despite pronoun-antecedent agreement problems, such as “A person’s ideals, what they believe and value” and tense shifts from present to past, <b>minor errors in complex language structures are understandable considering the circumstances. This writing demonstrates competence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics</b>, as is evident in: “Torvald, fearing for his reputation, says he will send the children away, and that he and Nora will continue living together, but the marriage will be loveless.” The student also <b>demonstrates competence</b> in the use of proper punctuation in the following example: “Torvald discovers a second letter from Krogstad, saying he will not reveal Nora’s secret, and decides that all is forgiven, but Nora now knows her husband’s nature, and, true to her own, leaves her family behind to seek an honest life.”</p>

English Language Arts 30–1, June 2009  
Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent (E)

Literary Text and  
Text Creator

Death of a Salesman by  
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.

In *Death of a Salesman*, the main characters, of Biff and Willy Loman face their greatest conflicts internally as the struggle between accepting the truth of their own nature and falling prey to deluded societal and personal ideals, which paint life as a popularity contest where the measure of success is material. Willy's pursuit of the "noble" *Death of a Salesman* and Arthur Miller's

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent (E)

*Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text*

development of theme of "The American Dream" in the play show the despair and disappointment found in idealism based on lies.

Biff's own journey to discover his true nature eventually leads to emotional peace for him. Through Biff Arthur Miller shows that only when we understand who we are can we create an ideal life for ourselves.

Arthur Miller, through the play, shows the correlation between truth and idealism, and on the flip side lies and delusion.



Example Scored Excellent (E)

**Truth is the Ideal**

Throughout early life children are constantly told that if a person desires something strongly enough it will become an achievable goal. However, as these children grow up they will undoubtedly discover through experience and observation the limitations of their own intellect and potential. Those who are able to realize what it is that they are meant for will generally live a more fulfilled life than those who are caught up in delusion and attempt to fulfill unrealistic societal ideals instead of seeking out their own.

In Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman, Willy Loman and his sons are faced with this dilemma as they struggle with their own self worth and the pressures of society to achieve "The American Dream." Willy Loman dismisses the members of his family who work with their hands, instead indoctrinating his children and indeed himself to believe that the only noble life is that of a "well liked" businessman who achieves financial success for his family. He lives his life in lies and illusions and is portrayed as Miller to be a morally inferior and significantly less sympathetic character than his son Biff who spends the duration of the play, and indeed much of his life up until the present action of the story, attempting to uncover his own nature and set his own ideals.

Willy, though a generally harmless and ineffectual seeming person to those around him, is guilty of many crimes in the eyes of the reader, as developed by Miller, in the play. He is a deluded idealist who teaches his sons from an early age to believe that they are "Adonises," who will succeed in life as long as they are popular. He never stresses hard work as a necessary ingredient for success, a delusion that greatly harms Biff's future when much of his potential is thrown away by failing math. He betrays his family not only by consistently lying to them about

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Example Scored Excellent (E)

his own success and the realistic functioning of the world but also by carrying out an affair and betraying his family ethically. The other character who consistently lives in delusion in the play, believing, like Willy, that success in business is the only success, is Happy who is seen as a womanizer who treats people just as he treats objects – another type of amoral materialism.

The character of Biff is viewed quite differently from that of Happy and Willy. Though he is admonished by his father for spending much of his life drifting and working with his hands on ranches, he is really the only main character in the play who discovers his true identity. The consequences of Willy's poor parenting skills are quite clear with Biff. Although it is obvious that he is happiest when working with his hands, he is unable to settle this way for the obligation and guilt he feels to his father's ideals to work in business. Despite Willy's own inclination towards this way of life – indeed he is said to have put more of himself in his house's front stoop that he made than into all of his sales – he looks down upon those in his own family who have chosen a life of menial labour. As well, Willy's moral betrayal in his affair, which Biff is witness to, destroys Biff's internal moral compass. He steals for no particular reason except ability for much of his life, because he no longer feels the need to stick to principles and ideals if the man who taught them to him turned out to be an amoral liar and not the hero he had once thought.

This undeserved hero worship is a recurring motif in the play. Willy appears to look up to a deceased salesman as some kind of mythical hero, ignoring the fact that he died out on the road, alone, still working at an incredibly old age. This idea of the "noble" death of a salesman is one of the greatest lies throughout the whole play, or at least it is in the way Willy originally views it. Willy is initially quite taken with this way of dying because he wants proof that he is well liked. He wants his funeral to be attended by many people from a variety of places.

However, in his moments of lucidity he recognizes, in his often contradictory way, that he is, in

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent (E)

fact, not well liked and is even made fun of quite often. This occasional lucidity and resulting disappointment in his own life is what drives Willy to various attempts at suicide. It is in suicide that some value is attached to the salesman's death he has long sought, for his life insurance will provide the type of material security he has always wanted to give his family. His suicide, which occurred only when he could come to terms with the truth that he would never be the great, successful man he had deluded himself and his family into thinking he was, can be paralleled to his brother Ben's journey into the unknown of Alaska, which resulted in the discovery of an African diamond mine. "A diamond is hard and rough," but it is also tangible, unlike the illusions Willy has built around himself his entire life. By coming to terms with his own failure he is able to find his own diamond in the darkness, achieve his ideal and help his family, even if it is through suicide.

Biff finds a similar, albeit more hopeful, redemption through self awareness towards the end of the play. He realizes that he's "a dime a dozen," and so is Willy. In recognizing his own averageness and limitations he has put himself in a position where he can set his own goals and ideals, instead of trying, with futility, to achieve ambitions set by his father and society that he is not meant for and is not able to achieve. Through his epiphany he becomes a more ideal version of himself. While Willy's delusions tied him down and made him a failure until the end, Biff's self awareness, contrastingly, sets him free.

Through the internal conflicts of these two characters, as well their interactions with each other, Miller develops the relation between truth, lies, idealism and delusion within the play. Moral bankruptcy and failure are associated lies and delusion, while redemption and fulfillment are the results of truth and self awareness. Willy's sheep-like ideals about the materialistic American Dream creates a life of betrayal and isolation, while Biff's recognition of his and his

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Example Scored Excellent (E)

**father's true desires to work with their hands or be on a ranch gives him peace and, perhaps most importantly, hope and prospects for the future. To become an ideal person of worth, in Miller's view in this play, and choose the right path in life, a man must first see both the world and himself as he really is, unobstructed by illusion.**

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**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 establishes a <b>carefully considered idea</b> in the introduction, asserting that “Those who are able to realize what it is that they are meant for will generally live a more fulfilled life than those who are caught up in delusion and attempt to fulfill unrealistic societal ideals”. Willy is portrayed as a “deluded idealist” guilty of “indoctrinating his children and indeed himself to believe that the only noble life is that of a ‘well liked’ businessman who achieves financial success for his family.” Biff, on the other hand, is “the only main character in the play who discovers his true identity.” These decisive and <b>perceptive literary interpretations</b> are developed by <b>subtle distinctions</b> such as the observation that “in his moments of lucidity” Willy “recognizes, in his often contradictory way, that he is, in fact, not well liked and is even made fun of quite often.”</p> <p>Likewise, the student provides the <b>illuminating</b> interpretation that discovering Willy’s adultery “destroys Biff’s internal moral compass” for many years. The student offers the insight that Biff “no longer feels the need to stick to principles and ideals, if the man who taught them to him turned out to be an amoral liar.” When Biff later reaches a recognition of “his own averageness and limitations, he has put himself in a position where he can set his own goals and ideals.” The idea that “Moral bankruptcy and failure are associated [with] lies and delusion, while redemption and fulfillment are the result of truth and self awareness” exhibits an <b>insightful</b> understanding of the topic and the literary text.</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 style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 20px;">E</p>	<p>Supporting evidence in this response, while not overwhelming in quantity or specificity, <b>efficiently maintains a valid connection to the student’s ideas</b> and interpretations of both the text and the topic. The idea that Willy, although seeming “harmless and ineffectual,” is in fact morally culpable for much damage to his family as well as to himself is supported with <b>astutely chosen</b> evidence. For instance, Willy “teaches his sons from an early age to believe that they are ‘Adonises’,” while he “dismisses the members of his family who work with their hands,” thereby creating “a delusion that greatly harms Biff’s future.” Similarly, the student refers, without naming him directly, to Dave Singleman by describing him, accurately if unconventionally, as a man who “died out on the road, alone, still working at an incredibly old age.”</p> <p>This support is <b>convincingly and precisely</b> tied to the student’s interpretation that “undeserved hero worship is a recurring motif in the play.” Later in the paper, Willy’s suicide is “paralleled to his brother Ben’s journey into the unknowns of Alaska” in the sense that, through killing himself, Willy finds a way of “coming to terms with his own failure” and being “able to find his own diamond in the darkness.” These examples illustrate the subtle and unobtrusive manner in which evidence in this paper is integrated and synthesized <b>to reinforce the student’s ideas in a convincing way.</b></p>

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**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 style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 20px;">E</p>	<p>Arguing that self-awareness is a prerequisite for fulfillment in the face of “unrealistic societal ideals,” the student <b>judiciously</b> and consistently juxtaposes Willy and Biff Loman as they “struggle with their own self worth and the pressures of society to achieve ‘The American Dream.’” The initial characterizations of Willy as a man who “lives his life in lies and illusions” and of Biff as “attempting to uncover his own nature and set his own ideals” are <b>developed skillfully</b>. Willy is presented as “guilty of many crimes” associated with his “poor parenting skills” and by indoctrinating both Biff and Happy with false ideals. While Happy is “the other character who consistently lives in delusion,” Biff gradually comes to a “redemption through self awareness towards the end of the play.”</p> <p>The <b>effectively sustained and integrated</b> comparison of father and son creates a <b>unifying effect</b> that is evident in the restatement of the controlling idea in the conclusion: “Willy’s sheep-like ideals about the materialistic American Dream creates a life of betrayal and isolation, while Biff’s recognition of his and his father’s true desires to work with their hands or be on a ranch gives him peace and, perhaps most importantly, hope and prospects for the future.” Overall, the arrangement and integration of ideas and details in this response <b>contribute to a fluent discussion</b>.</p>

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**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; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">E</p>	<p><b>Diction is precise</b>, as is evident in “deluded idealist,” “amoral materialism,” “admonished,” and “occasional lucidity.” <b>Syntactical structures are effective and polished</b>: “Despite Willy’s own inclination towards this way of life – indeed he is said to have put more of himself into the house’s front stoop that he made than into all of his sales – he looks down upon those in his own family who have chosen a life of menial labour” and “While Willy’s delusions tied him down and made him a failure until the end, Biff’s self-awareness, contrastingly, sets him free.”</p> <p>Often reflecting the comparison/contrast structure of the paper, <b>stylistic choices contribute to a skillful composition with a convincing voice</b>: “Through the internal conflicts of these two characters, as well as their interactions with each other, Miller develops the relation between truth, lies, idealism and delusion within the play.”</p>



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Critical/Analytical Response 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;"><b>E</b></p>	<p>The varied and fluent writing in this paper <b>demonstrates confidence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics</b>: “However, as these children grow up they will undoubtedly discover through experience and observation the limitations of their own intellect and potential,” “It is in suicide that some value is attached to the salesman’s death he has long sought, for his life insurance will provide the type of material security he has always wanted to give his family” and “To become an ideal person of worth, in Miller’s view in this play, and choose the right path in life, a man must first see both the world and himself as he really is, unobstructed by illusion.” <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)*.**

<p><b>Excellent</b> <b>E</b></p>	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.
<p><b>Proficient</b> <b>Pf</b></p>	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.
<p><b>Satisfactory</b> <b>S</b></p>	Support is general, adequate, and appropriately chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in an acceptable way but occasionally may lack persuasiveness. A reasonable connection to the student’s ideas is suitably maintained.
<p><b>Limited</b> <b>L</b></p>	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.
<p><b>Poor</b> <b>P</b></p>	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.