Examples of the Standards for Students’ Writing

English Language Arts 30–1

From the January 2015 Diploma Examination
This document was written primarily for:

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<td>Students</td>
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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 cooperation 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: Stephanie Chow, Jennifer Crumpton, Mike Freeborn, Cynba Gray, Martha Howson, Amanda Huddleston, Karen Nakaska, Kathy Royce, Stephen Womack, Jason Wutzke, and Doug Zook.

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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 student writing that received scores of Satisfactory (S), Proficient (Pf), or Excellent (E). These sample responses are taken from the January 2015 administration. Along with the commentaries that accompany them, they should help teachers and students to understand the standards for English Language Arts 30–1 Diploma Examination writing in relation to the scoring criteria.

The purpose of the sample responses is to illustrate the standards that governed the January 2015 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 January 2015 marking session selected the examples of student responses included here. They also wrote the commentaries that discuss the students’ writing in terms of the scoring criteria used for marking.

During their preparation for the January 2015 marking session, markers reviewed and validated the standards represented by these sample responses. Markers then used these sample responses as guidelines for marking the written-response sections of the January 2015 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 are free to select and organize their materials in a manner that they feel will enable them to present their ideas most successfully. 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 organizational and rhetorical strategies used in January 2015.
There is no preferred approach to an assignment except the approach that accomplishes the student’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 engaging and thoughtful individual voice.

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 Choice, and Matters of Correctness.

5. More information about student performance on the Part A: Written Response can be found in the [English Language Arts 30–1 Subject Information Bulletin](#).
January 2015

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.

Part A: Written Response consists of two assignments worth 50% of the total English Language Arts 30–1 diploma examination mark.

Assignment I: Personal Response to Texts
Value 20% of total examination mark

Assignment II: Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts
Value 30% of total examination mark

Recommendation: Plan your time carefully. Use the initial planning pages. Time spent in planning will result in better writing.

Instructions

• Complete Assignment I 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 Assignment II: Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts. The two assignments are thematically linked, but are not identical. Complete both assignments.

• It is your responsibility to print out (or handwrite) and staple all of your final written work to the designated pages in this booklet. You must also verify that this has been done correctly. Page 9 illustrates how to attach your final work to the booklet.

Additional Instructions for Students Using Word Processors

• Format your work using an easy-to-read 12-point font, double space, and use headers and footers as illustrated on page 9.

Additional Instructions for Students Who are Handwriting

• Use the paper provided by your school for handwritten work. Note that there is no paper provided in this booklet for final written work.

• Use blue or black ink for handwritten work.

Do not write your name anywhere in this booklet or on your response. Feel free to make handwritten revisions directly on your final response.
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.

Itinerary

Feel a passion for invisibility, be a fly on the wall, the pitcher’s ear, the child in the corner with his eyes clenched. Like a dog going round and round, you circle a space you’ve come back to, trying to find some comfort, something that says you’re at home now. Pray for the enlarging hush of the owl’s ear, the hawk’s high wide-angle lens reading the world like a map. Your friend’s been weeding his potato drills. He stops and sits on a rock for a cigarette. The sun has been shining for days and days. It’s a gift, he tells you.
A solitary thrush, with his heart in his mouth, performs a dozen songs at dusk, none finished, as if it were just himself and the world. Such tense composure swells that speckled breast, warm in late daylight: you see the beak open and close, shivering into music. Wrapped in the spider’s winding-sheet, a bluebottle makes another music, sawing the room in half: you note, till it stops, each repeated live driving note. When you throw open the door, the scent of fresh-cut grass swims in and a huge yellow-edged summer moon hangs alone in a powder-blue sky: a bright dense body dependent on nothing. Stand back from nothing: pussyfoot no more from the crux of the matter: you must travel at the speed of light, not looking back.

Eamon Grennan

Gus, the narrator of the excerpt, has not seen his father in two years. Cathy, Gus’s 10-year-old daughter, rarely visits Gus and has never met her grandparents.

from A FEW NOTES FOR ORPHEUS¹

“That’s him,” I said.
“I see. He’s smaller than you.”
She was right. I had always thought of him as being bigger, but he was tiny and shrivelled in an old-dog kind of way. I hadn’t seen him in over two years and it was like I had forgotten what he looked like.
“This is a surprise,” he said. “Who’ve we got here?”
“This is my daughter, Cathy. This is my father Cathy, your grandfather.”
“Well,” he said, and took her hand smoothly. They walked away, him holding her hand and talking.
“I was just gettin’ the boat ready to do a bit of fishin’. You ever been fishin’?”
She shook her head.…
“Is okay to bring her along Gus?”
His tone was polite but we all knew the question had been settled. He was already helping her into the boat.
“Sure,” I said. “You got an extra rod?”
“She can use mine.”
He’d done it again. I stood there feeling awkward, the way I had so often in the past. Like I was a kid again and didn’t know what to do with my hands or feet, or the words in my mouth.
“You comin’ Gus?” He was behind the motor tugging at the cord, as thin as the cord himself and looking frail in a tough way with an old raggedy wine-coloured sweater dropping from his shoulders. So often in the past when he had offered things in that tone I’d refused. Now I jumped into the boat before he left without me.
He had the kid sitting across from him helping steer the boat as it plowed through the water making miniature rainbows in the spray. He was talking to her but I couldn’t make out the words above the sound of the engine.…
“This is it,” he said, “but don’t forget what I said, fish can hear, so you gotta be real quiet.”
She put her hand to her mouth and ssshed.
“Right,” he said.
So easy for her to get his approval. Was it easier now than it had been for me? He baited the hook for her as she watched intently. He plunked the line in the water and looked up to see me watching him.
“I was just remembering the first time you showed me how to put a worm on a hook,” I said. “You remember?”
He laughed drowsily and coughed quietly. He was a quiet man, I thought. A quiet, polite man. He was sitting four feet away dying the same way he had lived.
“You were worse than a girl,” he said.…

¹ Orpheus—an allusion to a figure from Greek mythology who descended into Hell to recover his wife on the condition that he should not look back until they both had reached the upper world.
“Sssh daddy, the fish’ll hear,” Cathy cautioned, her face serious.

The old man smiled. He had a way. Maybe I was jealous. I was a sickly kid, lousy at sports, anything physical, but he had a way of making it harder for me. He’d just stand there politely smiling at my attempts. He never laughed. Just that damn polite smile. And sometimes, now that I remembered, not even that. He wasn’t always around when I tried my stunts; the day I finally made the hockey team and actually scored a goal. The second-place medal for swimming. He was busy playing golf, a game he was so good at different people had encouraged him to turn pro. That made me proud when I heard that. I had day-dreams of caddying for him in the big tournaments, but he just smiled his polite smile and said no….

“Nothin’ bitin’,” he said.

“No, not today by the look of it. Could be too hot. Maybe we should go in. The kid’s got no hat, she might get sunstroke.”…

And suddenly the kid was standing, jerking forward like a Buddhist monk in prayer falling to his knees.

“There’s something …” she yelled and splashed into the water.

It was a short distance to fall from her position at the back of the boat and I watched the bright yellow dress congeal into a dishrag. It was all so strange: once I had fallen off the end of the dock when I was five. I may even have done it on purpose and I kept my eyes open in the water as I sank and I saw the eerie arm of my father reach down and grab me. He used a fish gaff to hook me. I still have the scars on my shoulder. The proof of something.

The old man was right beside her. All he had to do was reach over the side and pull her in. It would be easy for him.

He yelled at me. Something was wrong. He never yelled. A quiet polite man.

“Get her, Gus! Move, you stupid bugger!”

Me.

I plunged in. The water turned my clothes into a smothering blanket. It was cold.

I couldn’t see her. I had to go up. I couldn’t breathe. I didn’t want to drown. I didn’t want to die. I really didn’t….

And then I saw her. She was upside down, her dress over her head. She seemed to be spinning slowly and I grabbed a leg. I pawed upward with my other hand, not knowing any longer that there was anything beyond. The surface was a spot in my mind that had receded to a soft blur. Like a memory of long-ago pain.

But it was there waiting. I punched into the air, my free hand clawing for something to hold but the boat was several yards away. I saw the old man still seated. He spotted me and leaned forward, yelled something and I was under again. I fought to turn the girl around. She was like a shot deer. Stiff-feeling. Her head was up and I cupped her under the chin and swam back to the boat just the way I’d been taught in the Red Cross life-saving course. The old man hadn’t been around when I got that certificate either.

He was waiting and held her arms while I crawled in the boat. Everything was clear now. Pull her aboard, put her on the bottom of the boat with his sweater under her head. Check her mouth for obstructions. Head to one side. Arms in position. Pushing down gently. Pulling back. Counting. And repeating the whole thing over and over again.

The old man watched. He rolled a cigarette and coughed politely several times.

He didn’t smile and I saw he was sweating.

She began to cough. And then she was sick. That was good. It was okay.

Don Bailey
ASSIGNMENT I: PERSONAL RESPONSE TO TEXTS
Suggested time: approximately 45 to 60 minutes

You have been provided with three texts on pages 1 to 4. One interpretation of “Itinerary,” by Eamon Grennan, suggests that the speaker recognizes the need to secure a broader perspective. In the excerpt from “A Few Notes for Orpheus,” an estranged son returns home and revisits the past in light of a new experience. Alex Webb’s photograph entitled Dislocations captures a lone figure on a carnival ride.

The Assignment

What do these texts suggest to you about the ways in which individuals deal with the uncertainties of the past? 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 prompting texts provided in this examination to the topic and to your own ideas and impressions
Assignment I: Personal Response to Texts

Initial Planning

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

What idea about the prompting text(s) do you intend to explore and how does it address the topic?

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

Use additional paper for planning if required.
ASSIGNMENT II:
CRITICAL/ANALYTICAL RESPONSE TO LITERARY TEXTS
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 human need to reconcile the uncertainties of the past with a new or present situation.

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).
Assignment II: Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts

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

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Note: Write the title of your chosen literary text on the back cover of this examination booklet.

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, Provincial Assessment Sector 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 Provincial Assessment Sector 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 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 January 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 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
Examples of Students’ Writing with Teachers’ Commentaries

English Language Arts 30–1, January 2015
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory–1 (S)

Initial Planning

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

- A few notes from Orpheus
  - Gus feels he was never able to get his father’s approval

What idea about the prompting text(s) do you intend to explore and how does it address the topic?

- Unstated approval can stay with an individual for many years
- Gus dealt with the uncertainty of his father’s approval by keeping quiet and feeling annoyed that his father would only be polite

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

analytical

(Page 1 of 4)
Example Scored Satisfactory–1 (S)

Planning

- Gus feels like his dad never was there for his achievements, and that he is too prideful to understand that. Everything to him dealt with it by being quiet all these years.

- “so easy for her to get his approval. Was it easier now than it had been for me.” Gus thinks it was very difficult to get his dad’s approval. Dealing with that uncertainty trying to bring up his experience to see how Dad would respond. Not seeking approval

- “He’d just stand there politely smiling at my attempts.” Smiled his polite smile and said no.” Gus is lacking his father’s polite smile to a sense of disappointment

- Ignore until confronted. “All he had to do was reach over the side and pull her in. It would be easy for him.” Father chose to make Gus do it. Gus ignored his feeling of annoyance and stepped up to do the deed. His Father watched.
The text piece “A Few Notes for Orpheus” suggest to readers the way individuals deal with the uncertainties of their past. The character of Gus in this story dealt with the unclear past of his father’s approval by keeping it in his mind as it lingered on for years. Seeing how well his daughter got along with her grandfather made Gus remember his own childhood, and how his father didn’t give him any sign of approval. Gus chose to deal with the situation by keeping it to himself for years. This action suggests the similar way individuals too deal with their past uncertainties.

Individuals will often attempt to resolve their past uncertainties by trying to bring the situation back into the light, in hope to get answers. Gus asks himself, “Was it easier now that it had been for me?”, when he saw how easy it was for his daughter to get Gus’ father’s approval. Gus then later brought up the memory of him and his father and their first time hooking bait. Gus has attempted to bring up his past in an effort to seek approval for past events that he originally got no approval for. In the same way, individuals who are uncertain about feelings in the past will often try to bring the event back into view, in order to resolve their doubts.

Individuals may make assumptions about their past situations, which can lead to creating their uncertainties. In the story, Gus assumes that his father’s quiet and polite smile was a show of disapproval. Gus reveals that growing up, his father would always have a way of making things difficult for by “just standing there politely smiling at my attempts”, or the time he dreamt of caddying for his dad and his father “smiled his polite
smile and said no". Gus had a manner of thinking that every time he father simply smiled at him and didn't say anything, there were implications of disapproval. Gus never attempted to see if his beliefs were true. Individuals in the same way make beliefs for themselves from the way the people around them react to their actions and opinions. The way individuals deal with their past uncertainties, especially in this state of mind, are by continuing to believe their assumptions are correct and also by not discussing with another individual whether their assumptions are true or not.

Every individual deals with their past uncertainties differently. Some chose to confront the situation head on, and find their answers. But some others, like Gus, choose to keep their uncertainties to themselves, which can cause the problem to linger on for a long time. The way that they deal with their uncertainties depend on how close they are with another individual that shares or knows about their past uncertainties. But most often, the doubts are kept in the person's mind until the matter manages to resolve itself.
English Language Arts 30–1 January 2015  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment  
EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY–1

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<th>SCORING CRITERIA</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
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| **Ideas and Impressions (S)** | The student opens with the observation that Gus’s “action suggests the similar way individuals too deal with their past uncertainties” (3) and offers a **generalized exploration of the topic** in the response that concludes with “Every individual deals with their past uncertainties differently” (4).  
The student establishes these differences through a series of **straightforward ideas** about the prose excerpt, suggesting that “Individuals will often attempt to resolve their past uncertainties by trying to bring the situation back into the light, in hope to get answers” (3) and “to resolve their doubts” (3). Such individuals “may make assumptions about their past situations, which can lead to creating their uncertainties” (3). The student concludes, “Some chose to confront the situation head on, and find their answers. But some others, like Gus, choose to keep their uncertainties to themselves, which can cause the problem to linger on for a long time” (4).  
These ideas are **clarified** by **supporting** details such as “The character of Gus in this story dealt with the unclear past of his father’s approval by keeping it in his mind as it lingered on for years” (3) and “Gus asks himself, ‘Was it easier now that it had been for me?’, when he saw how easy it was for his daughter to get Gus’ father’s approval. Gus then later brought up the memory of him and his father and their first time hooking bait” (3). Ideas are further **supported** in an **adequate** manner when the student notes that “Gus assumes that his father’s quiet and polite smile was a show of disapproval” (3) and that “Gus had a manner of thinking that every time he father simply smiled at him and didn’t say anything, there were implications of disapproval. Gus never attempted to see if his beliefs were true” (4). |

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY—1**

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<th>RATIONALE</th>
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<td>Presentation (S)</td>
<td>The voice created by the student is apparent.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stylistic choices are adequate and the student’s creation of tone is conventional.</td>
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<td>The unifying effect is appropriately developed.</td>
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**The voice created by the student is apparent** in the general opening statement, “The text piece ‘A Few Notes for Orpheus’ suggest to readers the way individuals deal with the uncertainties of their past” (3), and is sustained in comments such as “The way individuals deal with their past uncertainties, especially in this state of mind, are by continuing to believe their assumptions are correct and also by not discussing with another individual whether their assumptions are true or not” (4).

**Adequate stylistic choices** are evident in “Gus has attempted to bring up his past in an effort to seek approval for past events that he originally got no approval for” (3), “Individuals in the same way make beliefs for themselves from the way the people around them react to their actions and opinions” (4), and “The way that they deal with their uncertainties depend on how close they are with another individual that shares or knows about their past uncertainties” (4).

The **student’s creation of tone is conventional**, as in “Gus has attempted to bring up his past in an effort to seek approval for past events that he originally got no approval for” (3).

The **unifying effect is appropriately developed** as the student explores the idea of individuals dealing “with their past uncertainties differently” (4), focusing mainly on Gus, but including Cathy and his father as well. This focus is indicated on the Initial Planning page with “Gus feels he was never able to get his father’s approval” (1), and the Planning page outlines the straightforward manner in which the discussion will proceed.
English Language Arts 30–1, January 2015
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory–2 (S)

*Initial Planning*

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

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What idea about the prompting text(s) do you intend to explore and how does it address the topic?

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__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

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

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Sierra was a 12 year old orphan that lived in an orphanage full of young children and babies. She had lived there since she was small and had never been taken in by family. She was so old that she would probably never be adopted by anyone. People came to the orphanage looking for babies or 1 to 3 year olds, not girls who are nearly teenagers. She was the only one that was over 8 years of age and quite obviously she was very bored without having any friends as old as her. Sierra hadn’t seen any more of the world than simple the play ground behind the orphanage. She became more and more set up with the place and eventually it was too much for her. She put together a simple plan and escaped. She simply snuck out and ran away, not knowing where to go, not knowing what she was doing.

The second night after she had left the orphanage, she came across an industrial yard filled with amusement rides. There were rows upon rows of rides and carnival games. She had never seen anything like this before. As she walked between them she thought to herself what it might feel like to be on something like that. To feel the wind blowing past her as she spun in circles or twirled upside down. She soon came to a ride with the name, “The Himalayas” posted across the front of it; outlined in colored light bulbs. She climbed aboard one of the cars that connected to all the rest. They all formed a wide circle around the center of the ride. Detailed paintings on the wall showed skiers and mountains. Sierra sat back in the seat of the ride and stared up at the painted walls. The white wonderland of snow amused her so much so that she began to smile. She hadn’t smiled in years.

She hadn’t smiled in years because the recollection of her dark past always loomed just below her surface. But she had some how found peace here; on this ride, The Himalayas. As she thought harder she remembered her birth father and how he used to treat her. She had been
considered an orphan at the age of 3 after her birth parents were considered unworthy of caring for her. Her father had hit her, and these memories haunted Sierra every day since.

This ride must have represented something awfully special if it could make her smile but she couldn’t figure out what it was. However, it soon hit her. The sudden realization that it had been her fault for not being adopted. She had always been so sluggish and unappealing because in the back of her mind there was but the evil memories of her past. She had let those dark days take over her mind and as a result, she had let them ruin her life.

Her coping strategies had to change; she had to deal with things better than this. She suddenly had another epiphany. The reason she had smiled when she got onto the ride and noticed the setting was because it reminded her of her grandmothers favorite story; her story of going to the Alps. Sierra felt the warmth of life in her as she devised a plan to find her grandmother. The less she thought about her past the easier it became to focus on her present and future. She would try and find her grandmother and live with her. They would be happy together; her grandmother was always happy.

Sierra noticed one other thing that night. She realized how happy her thoughts of her grandmother made her feel and she realized that even though she was a homeless child, sleeping on amusement rides, she was still so happy. All of her life that she recalled before this, was a gloomy, dark hole of nothing but negativity. It was how she dealt with these times of insecurity that would change her mood and her overall satisfaction with her life. It was all up to her.
### SCORING CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Ideas and Impressions (S)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The student’s exploration of the topic is generalized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Perceptions and/or ideas are straightforward and relevant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support is adequate and clarifies the student’s ideas and impressions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### RATIONALE

Despite the absence of noted planning on the *Initial Planning* page, the student sets up a clear, creative response about a twelve-year-old orphan, Sierra, who “put together a simple plan and escaped” (2) from the orphanage. The student’s narrative explores the topic in relation to the photograph in a generalized manner. The “industrial yard filled with amusement rides” (2) is the backdrop for Sierra’s “recollection of her dark past” (2). As she considers her past, she remembers her “birth parents” (3), the reasons for her not “being adopted” (3), and her “grandmothers favourite story” (3), which lead her to devising “a plan to find her grandmother” (3).

The student’s ideas are straightforward and relevant as Sierra leaves the orphanage and happens upon “rows upon rows of rides and carnival games” (2). Staring at “the painted walls” (2), she realizes that “She hadn’t smiled in years” (2) and “had let those dark days take over her mind” (3). The student’s perceptions that Sierra’s “coping strategies had to change; she had to deal with things better than this” (3) are straightforward and relevant. In an attempt to resolve uncertainty, Sierra “had another epiphany” (3) and decides to “find her grandmother and live with her” (3). Sierra’s conclusions that “It was how she dealt with these times of insecurity that would change her mood and her overall satisfaction with her life. It was all up to her” (3) represent straightforward and relevant ideas.

The student provides adequate support for the idea that dealing with uncertainty is an individual responsibility. In the ride, Sierra comes to the “sudden realization that it had been her fault for not being adopted” (3). In a further adequate connection to the photograph, Sierra “realized that even though she was a homeless child, sleeping on amusement rides, she was still so happy” (3). Sierra sees that she has been in a “gloomy, dark hole of nothing but negativity” (3) out of which she must pull herself. The support provided clarifies the student’s impressions and ideas in a generalized way.
EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY–2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORING CRITERIA</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation (S)</td>
<td>The student’s voice in this narrative is apparent: “Sierra hadn’t seen any more of the world than simple the play ground behind the orphanage” (2), “The white wonderland of snow amused her so much so that she began to smile” (2), and “Sierra felt the warmth of life in her as she devised a plan to find her grandmother” (3). The student’s stylistic choices are adequate: “As she walked between them she thought to herself what it might feel like to be on something like that” (2), and “They would be happy together; her grandmother was always happy” (3). The student creates a conventional tone in the narrative: “Sierra was a 12 year old orphan that lived in an orphanage full of young children and babies” (2), “She hadn’t smiled in years” (2), and “As she thought harder she remembered her birth father and how he used to treat her” (2). The student’s unifying effect is appropriately developed through the movement of the character physically from the orphanage to the rides and psychologically from a place of negativity to one of hopefulness. The narrator’s physical movement is indicated by “she simply snuck out and ran away” (2) and “The second night after she had left the orphanage, she came across an industrial yard filled with amusement rides” (2); her psychological movement is shown by “She became more and more fret up with the place and eventually it was too much for her” (2), which shifts to “But she had some how found peace here; on this ride, The Himalayas” (2). The student returns to Sierra’s experiences of “those dark days” (3), moves to the hope of living with her grandmother, and ends the narrative with the assertion that for Sierra to overcome her “insecurity” (3), “It was all up to her” (3), demonstrating an appropriately developed unifying effect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

S
English Language Arts 30–1, January 2015
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient–1 (Pf)

Initial Planning

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

I am responding to A Few Notes for Orpheus. The text deals with an uncertain and challenging father/child relationship, which is also what I will be personally addressing.

What idea about the prompting text(s) do you intend to explore and how does it address the topic?

I will explore how Gus and his father had a difficult relationship in the past with uncertainties for Gus about if his father cared about him and how in the story Gus’s father makes Gus save his daughter so that Gus’s relationship with her is strengthened, making their relationship better vicariously.

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

Personal Essay
Planning

Short Story—boy grows up, a father—himself, hard to connect with
dad, doesn’t remember him differently, dad wasn’t always there for
him, starts him down, struggled to get dad approval
A Symbol → when he saves his daughter it’s dad won’t be
is being here for her, healing past between him and
dad
—uncertainty in their relationship, dad trying to be

Me—my relationship with dad—struggled to get along b/c we were so different—gruff, loud, soft and liked reading more
than shooting guns—can’t communicate—speak different
languages—uncertainty around each other
Dealing—now, we try to get talk—go to breakfast just us
meet in the middle, I go shoot, find movies we both like
—healing our relationship, more comfortable/stable—certain
—being open to each other, differences
Fix the Past to Change the Future

The idea of the future is an abstract concept; it is always just peaking over the horizon, being created every moment by the proceedings of the present and, more importantly, the unchangeable actions already in the past. The future of a relationship, for example, is shaped by events in the relationships’ past. The events are its foundation, and if the foundation is strong and stable, the relationship shall build up from there, tall and assured, and if the foundation is tentative and uncomfortable, the relationship shall be that way instead. It is possible for an insecure foundation to be restored if it was built poorly on the shifting sands of uncertainty if effort is made by the members of the relationship to reconcile and rebuild. No one can change the past, but actions in the present can heal the uncertainties of the past to change the future.

Gus had a difficult relationship with his father growing up. He felt awkward around his father often in the past, and struggled to feel his approval because Gus was not good at anything physical, and his father could have become a professional golfer. He was uncertain of if his father truly cared about him and sincerely believed in him when he tried different activities and his father merely smiled politely at his attempts, or did not show up at all to encourage him because he was busy doing something for himself, playing golf. This uncertainty made Gus feel that the relationship was very difficult and not something he wanted to continue very much. In the story “A Few Notes for Orpheus” Gus comes to see his father after a couple years separation to introduce his daughter to him, a daughter whom he rarely gets to see and so has a patchy relationship with as well. During this visit Gus once again feels left out and uncomfortable, until suddenly there is an emergency. Cathy, his daughter, falls into the water and although Gus’s
father is easily within reach of saving her, he shouts for Gus to do the rescue. Gus does save his
daughter though he fears himself drowning. At first, it seems very odd that Cathy’s grandfather
would not grab the imperilled child, but by making his son save his own child, Gus’s father gave
Gus a chance to be there for his daughter. This greatly strengthens Gus and Cathy’s relationship,
and creates a strong foundation for it to continue off of. As for Gus and his father, they cannot go
into the past to change what happened between them. However, their relationship is beginning to
heal and improve as Gus realizes that his father is trying to help Gus not make the same mistake
of standing idly by during the goings on of his child’s life. Gus’s father does this for Gus to help
heal the uncertainty that was in their relationship in the past.

Certainly father and child relationships are uncertain and difficult outside of literature as
well. In the past, for most of my young teenage years, I struggled to get along with and have a
healthy relationship with my father. We were such totally different people. He was a gruff and
loud military man who liked shooting guns and watching football with his dogs, and I was a soft
and quiet girl who would rather read or play music than go shoot targets and ride the quad. We
couldn’t communicate because we seemed to speak different languages and I believe we both felt
like we were tip toeing around each other, wrapped up in stress and uncertainty towards each
other. In a lot of ways we still are these different things, but we have been trying hard to fix our
broken relationship of the past. Now, we try hard to find middle ground things to talk about and
do. We go out for breakfast, just us, to talk, and I sometimes do target practice with him and he
sometimes listens to me play my violin. We are being open to each other’s differences and
finding that our relationship has become much more stable and comfortable. There is a long road
still ahead of us, but we are healing the uncertainty and discomfort of our past relationship to
step forward into a brighter future together.
It is difficult to deal with the uncertainties of the past within a relationship more than in any other circumstance. Since the past itself cannot be touched, people must be willing to find ways in the present to heal the problems that they had before. Gus and his father took the first steps to fixing their relationship when Gus’s father showed that he regretted his apathetic responses to his sons’ life when he was a child. In a similar way, my father and I are dealing with our broken past through showing each other that we care and value the other, even though we are different. Both of these situations demonstrate just a sliver of the ways in which individuals can deal with the uncertainties of the past and move forward into a healed, more stable future.
### SCORING CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas and Impressions (Pf)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The student’s exploration of the topic is purposeful.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Perceptions and/or ideas are thoughtful and considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support is specific and strengthens the student’s ideas and impressions.</td>
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<th>RATIONALE</th>
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<tr>
<td>As indicated on the <em>Initial Planning</em> page, the student offers an analytical and personal response to “an uncertain and challenging father/child relationship” (1) through a <strong>purposeful exploration of the topic</strong> by noting that “No one can change the past, but actions in the present can heal the uncertainties of the past to change the future” (3). The student establishes the <strong>thoughtful</strong> idea that Gus “felt awkward around his father often in the past, and struggled to feel his approval because Gus was not good at anything physical” (3) and offers the <strong>specific support</strong> that when Gus tried sports “his father merely smiled politely at his attempts, or did not show up at all” (3). Similarly, the student presents a <strong>considered personal perception</strong> of her relationship with her father: “for most of my young teenage years, I struggled to get along with and have a healthy relationship with my father” (4). This idea is strengthened with the <strong>specific support</strong> that her father is “a gruff and loud military man who liked shooting guns and watching football with his dogs” (4), while the student identifies herself as “a soft and quiet girl who would rather read or play music” (4). The student offers another <strong>thoughtful perception</strong> that Gus and his father “cannot go into the past to change what happened between them” (4); however, “by making his son save his own child, Gus’s father gave Gus a chance to be there for his daughter” (4). As a result, “their relationship is beginning to heal and improve as Gus realizes that his father is trying to help Gus” (4). In the student’s relationship, a similar healing occurs because of “being open to each other’s differences” (4), an observation <strong>strengthened</strong> by <strong>specific support</strong> such as “I sometimes do target practice with him and he sometimes listens to me play my violin” (4). The student shows that the uncertainties of the past are not immediately healed simply because of an attempt to deal with them through <strong>considered statements</strong> such as “There is a long road still ahead of us, but we are healing the uncertainty” (4) and “Gus and his father took the first steps to fixing their relationship” (5).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The student creates a distinct voice in “The idea of the future is an abstract concept; it is always just peaking over the horizon, being created every moment by the proceedings of the present and, more importantly, the unchangeable actions already in the past” (3). As well, the student offers a distinct, personal voice in lines such as “In a lot of ways we still are these different things, but we have been trying hard to fix our broken relationship of the past” (4).

Specific stylistic choices are evident in effective diction, such as “a patchy relationship” (3), “the imperilled child” (4), and “he regretted his apathetic responses” (5) and in varied sentence construction, such as “Since the past itself cannot be touched, people must be willing to find ways in the present to heal the problems that they had before” (5).

The student’s creation of tone is competent in both the analytical section, “During this visit Gus once again feels left out and uncomfortable, until suddenly there is an emergency” (3), and in the personal section, “I believe we both felt like we were tip toeing around each other, wrapped up in stress and uncertainty towards each other” (4).

The student clearly parallels Gus’s recovery and her own healing in the parent/child relationship to develop capably the unifying effect that “individuals can deal with the uncertainties of the past and move forward into a healed, more stable future” (5). The near drowning “greatly strengthens Gus and Cathy’s relationship, and creates a strong foundation” (4), and the student and her father “step forward into a brighter future together” (4).

In both situations, an “effort is made by the members of the relationship to reconcile and rebuild” (3).
Initial Planning

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

Dislocations. The child in the photo is on an amusement park ride, but is paying no attention to the ride itself. In my story, the boy goes on an amusement park ride but completely distracted by thoughts about his father.

What idea about the prompting text(s) do you intend to explore and how does it address the topic?

The way in which an individual deals with uncertainties of the past affects greatly their ability to move on. Condemning one's self will only lead to self hatred, while accepting one's past helps them to move on.

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

Story
Example Scored Proficient–2 (Pf)

Carl was thirteen when his father left. As much as he was relieved to hear an end to the yelling, he still couldn’t stand to see his father leave. It was his father who had spent time with him, taking him out for dinner, taking him fishing, teaching him how to tie rope. Once he left, Carl didn't have much to do.

At first it was his father he was most angry at, but after a while his anger shifted to his mother. It wasn’t because of the fighting, it was because there was a distinct lack of sadness, or regret in her attitude. It was as if she was happier now that her husband had left. This made Carl furious.

Two months after Carl's father left, he started to realize his father wasn't coming back. It was the hope to see his father again that brought home after school. After that hope had disappeared, Carl struggled to find reason for coming home. One night, Carl couldn't, for the life of him, think of a reason to go home, so he went home with his friend after school. It was getting close to midnight when her mother stormed into the house and dragged Carl home, yelling the whole way. After this point, it was just to avoid angering his mother that brought him home every night.

During summer, when Carl no longer had school to keep himself busy, he started to think a lot more about his father. He thought about why his parents were fighting in the first place, what it was that made them so angry around each other, and the hardest question of all, why his father left. Carl struggled with these questions for a long time. He kept thinking if there was anything he could have done differently. He thought about how much other father's love...
their sons, and how it would take a lot to make them want to leave their sons. What was different about his father?

This was when Carl's summer took a dark turn, this is when he started to blame himself for his father leaving. After long hours of staring at a ceiling, he had come to the conclusion that his father never loved him, he thought this was because he hadn't been a good enough son.

It was nearing the end of summer, during the time of the summer festival. Carl and his father used to always go to the festival together, and spend the day going on all the rides. Carl's mother, knowing this was one of Carl's most treasured activities with his father, took him to the festival for the day, intending to cheer him up.

The entire day Carl was moping, he followed his mother onto all of his favourite rides, and just sat there, absent mindedly. After trying so desperately all day, Carl's mother finally sat him down on a bench and asked what was going on. It took a bit of prodding to get an answer out of him, but Carl finally told her what was going through his head. Carl told her that it was his fault his father left, that he wasn't a good son for his father, and that he doesn't deserve to be there. Shocked at finding out what was burdening her son, Carl's mother sat and thought for a while before answering. "You cannot blame yourself for your father leaving, it was not your fault in any way. He loved you more than anything. It's me you should blame, it's me he was fighting with, and it was me who he was leaving to get away from." Carl's mother spoke strongly, trying to inspire confidence in Carl. "And don't think I don't blame myself for him leaving, I do. But I don't punish myself for the actions I committed in the past. I accept for actions and I move on, that's all I can do." She pauses, taking time to fabricate her next sentence. "You can't punish
yourself for past mistakes, you have move on, and to do that you have to accept yourself. Your father loved you more than he did me.” Carl’s mother breaks off, sobbing. Carl, slowly absorbing everything his mother had just said, came to a realization. He realized that he was not doing what was right by condemning himself, he was only doing what was easy. It was his mother who was being courageous, and accepting her mistakes. It was only through this that she was able to move on from her husband leaving. Carl knew then that he had to move on from his father, and not dwell on his past.
### SCORING CRITERIA

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<td>- The student’s exploration of the topic is purposeful.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Support is specific and strengthens the student’s ideas and impressions.</td>
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### RATIONALE

The student’s exploration of the topic through a creative narrative purposefully examines the way in which an individual may deal with uncertainties of the past. On the Initial Planning page, the student offers the thoughtful perception that “Condemning one’s self will only lead to self hatred, while accepting one’s past helps them to move on” (1). This planning indicates the student’s intention to respond to the visual text; however, the student’s discussion also references the prose text. The student purposefully uses “Dislocations” when Carl “followed his mother onto all of his favourite rides” (3), and echoes the prose passage throughout the response with such specific support as “taking him fishing” (2) and “he hadn’t been a good enough son” (3). Although this narrative is not Gus’s story, Carl’s story is still inspired by the need “to move on from his father, and not dwell on his past” (4). As such, these supporting details strengthen the student’s ideas and impressions in partnership with the student’s original design, including Carl’s frustration with the circumstances of his parents’ divorce, his mother’s apparent “lack of sadness” (2), and his difficulty finding “a reason to go home” (2).

There is a thoughtful parallel to the prose text in Carl’s speculation and the fear that “it was his fault his father left, that he wasn’t a good son for his father” (3), a misapprehension that is supported specifically by the mother’s desire to revisit “one of Carl’s most treasured activities with his father” (3). Seeing Carl’s mood, wherein he “just sat there, absent mindedly” (3), his mother directly intervenes to get to the heart of the matter. This moment leads to the considered perception that the uncertainty caused by past blame and recrimination is not without recourse: “‘And don’t think I don’t blame myself for him leaving, I do. But I don’t punish myself for the actions I committed in the past’” (3). This specific support strengthens the student’s ideas. The transition to Carl’s realization that “he was not doing what was right by condemning himself, he was only doing what was easy” (4) reveals a purposeful exploration of the topic.
### SCORING CRITERIA

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The voice created by the student is distinct.</td>
<td><strong>The voice created by the student is distinct</strong> with clear diction and parallel structures: “As much as he was relieved to hear an end to the yelling, he still couldn’t stand to see his father leave” (2) and “He thought about why his parents were fighting in the first place, what it was that made them so angry around each other, and the hardest question of all, why his father left” (2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stylistic choices are specific and the student’s creation of tone is competent.</td>
<td><strong>Stylistic choices are specific</strong>, as in “It was his father who had spent time with him, taking him out for dinner, taking him fishing, teaching him how to tie rope” (2). The student also makes the <strong>specific stylistic choice</strong> to use participial phrasing at the end of clauses: “yelling the whole way” (2) and “intending to cheer him up” (3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The unifying effect is capably developed.</td>
<td><strong>The student’s creation of tone is competent</strong> in describing Carl’s frustration: “One night, Carl couldn’t, for the life of him, think of a reason to go home, so he went home with his friend after school” (2) and his mother’s admission, “It’s me you should blame, it’s me he was fighting with, and it was me who he was leaving to get away from” (3). The student’s tracing of the stages of Carl’s mother as she moves from “trying so desperately all day” (3), to being “Shocked at finding out what was burdening her son” (3), to pausing and “taking time to fabricate her next sentence” (3) confirms the creation of a competent tone.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>By documenting Carl’s struggle to make sense of his father’s leaving (2), the student <strong>capably develops a unifying effect</strong> with the rhetorical question “What was different about his father?” (3), which sets the stage for the “dark turn” (3) the summer takes. As well, given a topic concerned with time, the student offers a <strong>capably developed unifying effect</strong> through indicating the passage of time: “Carl was thirteen” (2), “Two months after” (2), and “During summer” (2). The student focuses finally on one day “nearing the end of summer” (3) when Carl, with his mother’s help, comes “to a realization” (4) that frees him.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Initial Planning

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

The short story "A Few Notes for Orpheus"

man was never sure if his dad cared. He did not
didn't know if it. Gus never dealt w/ it.

What idea about the prompting text(s) do you intend to explore and how does it address the topic?

Gus unsure of whether his father cared

never truly dealt w/ it; why hasn't seen him

father does show he cares, just very slightly

father uses kid to example how he cares?

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

critical / analytical

In the short story, a few Notes for Orpheus, Don Bailey uses his narrator to depict that in light of new experiences, one's outlook on the uncertainties of the past can be affected. As a result of having his own daughter, Gus becomes more frustrated by his father's inability to care; ironically he looks over key evidence showing his father's true purposes?

new word.
Like Father, Like Son

Unanswered questions from the childhood of an individual can haunt him long past what may seem reasonable. Sensibility tends to waver when an emotion cuts so deep as the neglect from a key character in the life of a developing child. Undoubtedly it can be hard to look upon the situation later in life with a different outlook when old pain is continually resurfacing. In the short story “A Few Notes from Orpheus”, Don Bailey uses his narrator to depict that in light of new experiences, the frustrations of the past can be brought back to the foreground with an even more powerful effect than they previously had. As a result of having his own daughter, Gus becomes thoroughly more agitated by his father and his inability to show that he cares; ironically he overlooks key evidence that leads to an assumption of the father’s true feelings.

Despite the fact that Gus holds on so tightly to the pain of his childhood neglect, he does not appear to comprehend that he seems to be showing the same type of parenting towards his own daughter. When Cathy, Gus’ daughter, comes to visit both him and his father, Gus shows little emotion towards her other than jealousy stemming from the desire to be accepted by his father. Rather than encouraging her on her first fishing trip, his mind instead wanders to thoughts of his father’s love — or lack there of — and wonders why it is “so easy for [Cathy] to get his approval”. He refers to Cathy more than once emotionlessly as “the kid” which appears uncaring and detached, he is angry at his father for treating him the same way as he is treating his daughter without even acknowledging it. The story makes it apparent that Gus’ father makes him uncomfortable by making him feel emasculated; despite some of the sports he played well such as hockey and swimming, he refers to himself as “lousy at... anything physical” later blaming his father for his seemingly nonexistent short comings. With Cathy as a Gus’ daughter it would make sense to the observer that he releases some of his anger towards his father in the form of
Example Scored Excellent–1 (E)

loving his child in the way he was not; despite this, Gus neglects Cathy much like he was by his father.

When Cathy is dragged into the water by the fishing rod, Gus does not appear to show the decisive action one would expect from a father in that situation, he waits to be told before he attempts to rescue her. This moment is another example of the emasculation he feels from his father. Though his father is described as old and slight, and Gus has the necessary training, he still believes that his father is a better candidate for rescuing Cathy. The irony here is that even though he holds on so tightly to his anger, he subconsciously recognizes the times at which his father showed his love. Due to the fact that his father saved him from drowning as a child, he believes that he will not be able to accomplish the same himself. After Gus pulls her aboard, he recognizes that his father is sweating, showing obvious nervousness, but it is describes still with the qualities of his father that he does not appreciate. By overlooking these evident moments of caring – which the reader can then assume there have been more of – it shows that Gus wants to remain angry rather than forgive. It is a probably assumption that the anger he displaces towards his father is truly a reflection of the anger he holds inwards for not becoming what his father had wanted of him. Rather than Gus reconciling with the uncertainty of his father’s love he instead projects it outwardly onto his father and daughter. Gus has shown to not understand the concept of unconditional love without worry for oneself; even when he is saving his daughter he is considering returning to the surface as not to die. The title connects back to Gus’ feelings of insecurity because he is writing to Orpheus, a man who loved wholeheartedly, something Gus has yet to understand, even with a daughter.

Due to the neglect Gus felt as a child he finds it impossible to love unselfishly with his entire heart. Ironically he is causing his daughter the same pain that he holds for his father,
assuming something she will never overcome leaving him to a life of his daughter never truly forgiving him – an endless cycle until he finds peace in death. The uncertainties of Gus’ past never truly developed into some form of motivation to move on and become a better person, but rather he held tight to them and uncertainty became the only thing he knew. By disallowing his past to be reconciled, he damned the future of his daughter while condemning himself to a life of insecurity.
## SCORING CRITERIA

### Ideas and Impressions (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.

### RATIONALE

Through an analytical response, the student explores the topic insightfully by examining the character of Gus: “Don Bailey uses his narrator to depict that in light of new experiences, the frustrations of the past can be brought back to the foreground with an even more powerful effect than they previously had” (2). The student recognizes that it is a challenge for an individual “to look upon the situation later in life with a different outlook when old pain is continually resurfacing” (2), and notes that instead of Gus “reconciling with the uncertainty of his father’s love he instead projects it outwardly onto his father and daughter” (3).

The student’s ideas are confident in emphasizing how “Gus shows little emotion towards her other than jealousy” (2) and how “Gus’ father makes him uncomfortable by making him feel emasculated; despite some of the sports he played well” (2). The student also confidently reveals the complexity of Gus’s character in “The irony here is that even though he holds on so tightly to his anger, he subconsciously recognizes the times at which his father showed his love” (3) and in “The uncertainties of Gus’ past never truly developed into some form of motivation to move on and become a better person” (4).

Support from “A Few Notes from Orpheus” is used precisely in how the student shows how Gus’s “mind instead wanders to thoughts of his father’s love – or lack there of – and wonders why it is ‘so easy for [Cathy] to get his approval’ ” (2). The student also aptly notes how Gus “refers to Cathy more than once unemotionally as ‘the kid’ which appears uncaring and detached” (2) and how Gus overlooks “his father sweating, showing obvious nervousness” (3). The student draws an insightful parallel between Orpheus and Gus who are both “returning to the surface” (3), but one is “a man who loved wholeheartedly” (3) and one is a man who “finds it impossible to love unselfishly” (3). This parallel aptly reinforces the student’s ideas and impressions.
### SCORING CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation (E)</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The voice created by the student is convincing.</td>
<td>Using an analytic prose form, the student creates a convincing voice in “Unanswered questions from the childhood of an individual can haunt him long past what may seem reasonable” (2) and “it would make sense to the observer that he releases some of his anger towards his father in the form of loving his child in the way he was not; despite this, Gus neglects Cathy much like he was by his father” (2–3). The student’s voice is logical and convincing in “Due to the neglect Gus felt as a child he finds it impossible to love unselfishly with his entire heart” (3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stylistic choices are precise and the student’s creation of tone is adept.</td>
<td>The student’s stylistic choices are precise, as in “jealousy stemming from the desire to be accepted” (2), “his seemingly nonexistent short comings” (2), and “the emasculation he feels” (3). The student’s creation of tone is adept, as in “When Cathy, Gus’ daughter, comes to visit both him and his father, Gus shows little emotion towards her other than jealousy” (2) and “Though his father is described as old and slight, and Gus has the necessary training, he still believes that his father is a better candidate for rescuing Cathy” (3). Despite the student’s grammatical slips, readers are reminded to consider the proportion of error in terms of the complexity and length of the response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The unifying effect is skillfully developed.</td>
<td>The unifying effect is skillfully developed as the student begins by noting how “Gus holds on so tightly to the pain of his childhood neglect” (2) and pursues this argument by analyzing how “Gus neglects Cathy much like he was by his father” (3). The student elaborates on how Gus causes “his daughter the same pain that he holds for his father” (3) and creates an “endless cycle” (4). In recognizing the possibility of this cycle, the student comes to this logical unifying conclusion: “By disallowing his past to be reconciled, he damned the future of his daughter while condemning himself to a life of insecurity” (4).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Initial Planning

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

"Itinerary" by Eamon Grennan,
- “friend” in poem parallel is friend in my story (embracing life)
- main choice -- to -- broaden perspective as poem suggests

What idea about the prompting text(s) do you intend to explore and how does it address the topic?

In "Itinerary," the idea is developed that individuals must respond positively to the uncertainty and ambiguity of the past. Individual's choice to broaden their perspective and broaden their mind over time, if individuals face life, reality provides he or she can achieve fulfillment and happiness.

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

(Sentence - short story)
English Language Arts 30–1, January 2015
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent–2 (E)

Planning

- Invisibility
- Travel → birds = freedom
- Cities
  - L = Symbolic freedom
  - Stays home → comfort in our things just up
  - Growth in the past
  - V = Personal desire for the future, also at
    1/ Robin → uncertainty in her desires.
    and shows
    how she
    finally reached
    happiness.

Broken glass - IZzie's image of her life were
shattered by her rejection
- causes her to realize true happiness
  (change of perspective)

- in rising → new perspective, new life.

- Mother's friends "frighten society"
Example Scored Excellent–2 (E)

When I was younger, my mother's friends would always ask me what I wanted to be when I was older. I would always have two answers for them, safe at the back of my throat to be released like baby sparrows whenever I was asked. My first response was always to be invisible. I liked the idea of shrinking away from the crowds, of being the unseen in a mob of unkind eyes, and even at such a young age I reveled in the idea of disappearing. But my mother's friends never understood. They laughed at such a childish wish and soon I began to doubt my desire to be unseen.

My second answer came later, when I was in elementary school. This answer was bathed in sunshine and I believed it was a perfectly reasonable desire. I believed this was a wish that wouldn't be laughed at by my mother's friends. And yet, when I told them I wanted to live in Morocco, they would sneer at me and tell me that I should give up now, because I would need a job, and money, and a lot of other things I didn't understand.

And so my next wish became one that was forced on me, one that I let myself think I wanted because I was unsure I would ever make it to Morocco.

I began to study harder. I rarely left the comforts of my home anymore, and I never went out with friends. I felt as if all I had left was my school work, and the only thing left for me was my future: I had promised my mother's friends weakly- like a robin hopelessly searching the snow for worms- that I wanted to go to medical school. The promise of a future outside of the mundane seemed to be so farfetched to me that I almost laughed at my former self: I agreed with my mother's friends.
And so it was such a shock to me when I was rejected. Now, looking back on it, my rejection was probably the best thing to happen to me. And yet, in the moment, it took such a toll on me. I remember standing in my mother's kitchen, sifting through the mail. I was really looking for the envelope that would direct my future. And there it was! I remember reaching for it, feeling my heart soar and pump and burst with excitement and regret and uncertainty in what I had done with my life and yet I had gone too far to turn back now and go to Morocco and live the life I had always dreamed of. In my heart I knew what I wanted, and yet I kept telling myself it was impossible and unreasonable.

I ripped open the envelope and saw the words, "We regret to inform you..." in bold on the top. I dropped the glass of water I had been holding. It shattered on the ground. My mother rushed downstairs. She saw the letter in my hand.

"Oh, Izzie, dear. It's alright. You can rewrite the MCAT. You can try again next year." She was saying, patting my back while reaching for a broom. She seemed almost absentminded. I walked over the broken glass and left her standing alone in the kitchen.

That night I had dreams of flying above the clouds. I hadn't had such vivid dreams since before high school, and when I woke up I heard birds chirping outside my window. That day, I called my old friend, Amy. She had worked on a farm after high school, which I had found strange, and now it seemed like the most wonderful thing in the world to me. She gave me her address and told me to visit her.

I left the house, ignoring my mother's small attempts at comforting me, and drove to Amy's house. It was on the outskirts of the city, it was small, and clearly hand painted. I saw Amy standing outside gardening. She was barefoot and had mud on her face and
grass in her hair. She looked like a female version of Tarzan who just happened to find herself living in the city. I smiled when I remembered her eating grass in Grade One during gym class, or making "mud pies" during recess in Grade Four. She really hadn't changed a bit.

"So, no med school for you, huh?" She said, once we had settled down inside. She grabbed a pitcher of iced tea from the 80's style fridge and offered me some.

"I guess not. I don't really know now." I muttered. Amy's chirpiness and straightforwardness almost intimidated me, as it never had when we were children. I was struck with the simple fact that I had been more her equal at the age of nine than I was now.

"What happened to Morocco and traveling the world?" Amy asked with a laugh. I knew she wasn't making fun of me, but the question still stung. What had happened to my dreams? And why couldn't I still accomplish everything I wanted?

"I guess med school was a safer option. There was nothing... Sure about travel, if that makes sense." I trailed off, staring at a speck of mud in the middle of Amy's forehead.

"But you didn't even get into med school, so where are you now?" Amy rebutted with a soft smile. She rubbed her forehead and the mud flaked off onto the floor. "You know, I took the more risky route, and I just did whatever I wanted. And I feel so free. Like I could go anywhere whenever I wanted and I'm not tied down to anything or anyone."

I took a sip of iced tea and almost gagged on how bitter it was. Amy beamed at me. I faked a smile. "This is good."
She laughed, one of her full and childish laughs that seemed to back up the statement she had just made. "Put some sugar in it." She pushed an antique looking bowl towards me. "And think about going to Morocco. Your whole life could change."

I lay in bed that night and considered everything that Amy had said to me. Leaving behind everything I had worked so hard to accomplish seemed almost as awful as the fact that I had been rejected. And yet... The idea of freedom struck me as comfortable in a way that home wasn't. It seemed like something that could make me happy.

It was three in the morning when I turned on my laptop to buy a plane ticket. By the time I had made all the necessary arrangements for my year abroad, I could hear sparrows chirping outside my window, and the sun was rising on a new day.
SCORING CRITERIA | RATIONALE
---|---
**Ideas and Impressions (E)** | On the *Initial Planning* page, the student establishes the **confident idea** that a character can “respond positively to the uncertainty and ambiguity of the past” (1) by “broadening his or her perspective” (1). The student further clarifies this idea by stating that the character’s “uncertainty of her desires led to her unhappiness” (2). In doing so, the student establishes the framework for an **insightful exploration of the topic**.
- 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.

The first-person narrative begins with the narrator, Izzie, reminiscing about being asked “what I wanted to be when I was older” (3) and reflecting upon her initial, authentic responses: “to be invisible” (3) and “to live in Morocco” (3). The student then describes the mockery from her “mother’s friends” (3), which leads Izzie to adopt a goal “forced on me” (3). By addressing the tension between Izzie’s first “two answers” (3) and what “I let myself think I wanted” (3), the student establishes **confident and discerning ideas** about Izzie’s uncertainty about the past. Even before opening the letter of rejection, Izzie expresses a complexity of response to her possible future: “feeling my heart soar and pump with excitement and regret and uncertainty in what I had done with my life” (4). Izzie then deals with the “shock” (4) of “rejection” (4) from medical school and the subsequent advice from an “old friend, Amy” (4). The **insightful exploration** culminates with Izzie realizing that her past “childish” (3) desires were, ironically, the “safer option” (5), in the strongest sense of “safer,” and that “The idea of freedom struck me as comfortable in a way that home wasn’t” (6).

**Precise support** for the narrative is indicated on the *Planning* page: “birds = freedom” (2), “Broken glass – Izzie’s views of her life were shattered” (2), and “sun rising ➔ new perspective” (2). Support such as the bookending “sparrows” (3, 6) and the futility of the “robin hopelessly searching the snow for worms” (3) **aptly reinforce the student’s ideas and impressions** by providing a motif of freedom from uncertainty that is carried through the “dreams of flying” (4).
### EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT—2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORING CRITERIA</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation (E)</strong></td>
<td>The voice created by the student is convincing throughout the response, as in “And yet, when I told them I wanted to live in Morocco, they would sneer at me and tell me that I should give up now, because I would need a job, and money, and a lot of other things I didn’t understand” (3) and “She laughed, one of her full and childish laughs that seems to back up the statement she had just made” (6). The student creates an adept tone that shifts from a self-reflective, slightly uneasy beginning, as in “I liked the idea of shrinking away from the crowds, of being the unseen in a mob of unkind eyes” (3), to a forward-looking, optimistic perspective at the end: “By the time I had made all the necessary arrangements for my year abroad, I could hear sparrows chirping outside my window, and the sun was rising on a new day” (6). These statements demonstrate precise stylistic choices that mirror the student’s ideas and impressions. The dialogue of Izzie and Amy reinforces the convincing voice and precise stylistic choices through contrasting the flippant but pointed Amy, “‘What happened to Morocco and traveling the world?’” (5), with Izzie’s characteristic hesitancy and insecurity as an adult, “‘There was nothing... Sure about travel, if that makes sense’ I trailed off” (5). The response begins with subtle thematic references to freedom in the “baby sparrows” (3) and an optimistic perspective “bathed in sunshine” (3) that become more overt as the response moves toward Izzie’s epiphany. This progression demonstrates a unifying effect that is skillfully developed. The conversation with Amy acts as a catalyst for Izzie’s change and parallels the friend in the prompting poem. At the end of the story, Izzie’s simple confidence in “It seemed like something that could make me happy” (6) is a deliberate return to the purity and clarity of her childish ambitions to disappear to Morocco.</td>
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</table>
Examples of Students’ Writing with Teachers’ Commentaries

English Language Arts 30–1, January 2015
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

I will be writing on The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini.

Note: Write the title of your chosen literary text on the back cover of this examination booklet.

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 The Kite Runner, Amir struggles with a lot of guilt from his past. Due to this, when the opportunity arises, he takes it so that he can in a way resolve his issues. The circumstances he goes through are completely different to what he knows, which challenges him a lot. The doubt and guilt Amir carries with him from his past is rectified.
Reconcile - resolve, settle, rectify, compose
Uncertainties - unsure, doubt, confusion, ambiguity, hesitancy, reasonable doubt
Past - former, previous, bygone
Present - current, existing, present-day
Situation - case, scenario, circumstances
New - unfamiliar, restored, changed

Thesis: In The Kite Runner, Khaled Hosseini demonstrates that when an individual is faced with the opportunity to rectify their past, ambiguous past, they may be willing to take the chance and to live free of their doubt.

Body Paragraphs
(i) What happened in Amir’s past.
(ii) What is his opportunity and how does he feel about it.
(iii) How things changed by the new circumstances
According to the Collins Canadian Dictionary, uncertainty is defined as not being able to be accurately known or predicted; not able to be depended on. This provides that if an individual faces feelings of uncertainty, they may not be sure of themselves or their situation. In *The Kite Runner*, Amir faces a lot of doubt in himself due to his past experiences. As a result of this, he has difficulty being confident in himself and believing that he is capable of standing up for himself or any one else, as well as being incapable to accept unfamiliar circumstances. In *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini demonstrates that when an individual is faces the opportunity to rectify their ambiguous past, they may be willing to take the chance to live free of their doubt.

Surely, when Amir witnesses a horrifying situation in his past, it will be a struggle for him throughout his life. When Amir is just a little boy, at the age of twelve, he has the most exhilarating experience - winning the kite tournament. However, the joy from the win is not to last long, as he is about to witness a very dark situation. His partner, and close friend, Hassan, is the kite runner. After many hours pass, Amir becomes concerned as to why Hassan is taking so long, seeing as he is the best kite runner in Kabul. So, he decides go out and look for him, but soon finds himself regretting this. A strong friendship about to be destroyed by a single thing. Hassan would do anything for Amir, although, it is not the same in return. Amir finally finds Hassan, but it is not in the way he hoped to. There he is, getting abused, and raped, by their enemy Assef. Being unable to bare witnessing such a thing, Amir hides and pretends he does not know a thing, but it becomes noticeable throughout the story that Hassan very well knows that Amir sees what happens. After that day, things are
not the same. Amir does not understand why Hassan can stand up to Assef, until it comes to standing up for himself. Noticeably, the underlying reason as to why Amir has so much hatred is because of the fact that he does not stand up for Hassan, despite how many times Hassan did for him. This is a guilt that Amir lives with for decades.

Many years pass, and finally, Amir, unknowingly, gets the opportunity to escape his self-doubt. After living in America for about two decades, Amir receives a call from a close friend of his father, with a questionable statement. "There is a way to be good again", the words Rahim said to Amir, the words that run through his mind for hours, days even, after call. Curiosity brings Amir to go to Peshawar and see Rahim, and to find out what the request is. He is informed of so much more than he ever expects, and becomes overwhelmed. However, it is more of an enlightenment than anything else. Still, without knowing what he is to face and overcome, his guilt and hesitancy bring him to want to pursue the challenge Rahim has given him. Rescue the son of Hassan - his nephew. Regardless of seeing himself unable to do what Rahim asks him to, Amir remembers the words of his father, that "a boy who [cannot] stand up for himself becomes a man who [cannot] stand up for anything", and is determined to proves this wrong.

Amir goes through a lot more than he expects, but also proves himself to be capable of more than he thought. As a child, and even through many of his adult years, Amir does not think that he can do much good for anyone, and he lives with uncertainty of himself that builds up from a young age. However, Amir challenges himself, and everyone who does not believe in him, and gets success. He has to go back to
Afghanistan, a war filled place that he used to call home. Although, he does as requested by Rahim, and finds Sohrab, his nephew. In doing this, Amir gets beaten up by Assef, but this is basically his reconciliation for the times he did not stand up for Hassan. After many years of fighting within himself, Amir has been relieved of all the guilt, shame, and doubt in himself. Amir and Sohrab grow a strong relationship, even though the face many trials along their journey, they remain together. Despite not speaking for some time, Amir gives all his effort to make Sohrab aware that he is loved. The chances Amir takes and the unfamiliar situation he goes through are what build him up to be a better person and to have all of his past uncertainty resolved.

Khlaed Hosseini demonstrates in his story The Kite Runner, that despite the challenges and individual may face, the can rectify themselves of their past and relieve all of their guilt and uncertainty of themselves. When an individual desires to escape these feelings, they can achieve it, which is exemplified by Amir when he takes action to prove all of his the doubt he and his father have in him. Ultimately, no individual has to live with being unsure their whole lives, and although it may take facing unfamiliar and challenging situations, they can prove themselves wrong and relieve all these feelings. Uncertainty can be said as being unpredictable, which is exactly what Amir demonstrates. He resolved decades of ambiguity, which proves how strong the desire and individual has to do so can be.
**Thought and Understanding (S)**

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORING CRITERIA</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
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</table>
| In this response, the student **demonstrates a generalized comprehension** of the **literary text** and the **topic**. The student begins with the **straightforward idea** that “In *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini demonstrates that when an individual is faces the opportunity to rectify their ambiguous past, they may be willing to take the chance to live free of their doubt” (3). This assertion is applied through a **relevant literary interpretation**: “Amir faces a lot of doubt in himself due to his past experiences. As a result of this, he has difficulty being confident in himself and believing that he is capable of standing up for himself or any one else, as well as being uncapable to accept unfamiliar circumstances” (3).

In the first body paragraph, the student presents the **straightforward idea** that Amir pays a price for not coming to terms with his past experience with his childhood friend Hassan: “Noticeably, the underlying reason as to why Amir has so much hatred is because of the fact that he does not stand up for Hassan, despite how many times Hassan did for him” (4). The second body paragraph provides the **general but plausible** literary interpretation that “Many years pass, and finally, Amir, unknowingly, gets the opportunity to escape his self-doubt” (4). The student points out how this situation allows for Amir’s redemption: “Still, without knowing what he is to face and overcome, his guilt and hesitancy bring him to want to pursue the challenge Rahim has given him” (4). The **relevant ideas** that “Amir goes through a lot more than he expects, but also proves himself to be capable of more than he thought” (4) and “After many years of fighting within himself, Amir has been relieved of all the guilt, shame, and doubt in himself” (5) demonstrate a **generalized comprehension** of the text.

In the conclusion, the student offers the **plausible literary interpretation** that Amir “resolved decades of ambiguity, which proves how strong the desire and individual has to do so can be” (5). | S |
### SCORING CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting Evidence (S)</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Support is general, adequate, and appropriately chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in an acceptable way but occasionally may lack persuasiveness.</td>
<td>The student’s controlling <strong>idea</strong> about Amir’s “ambiguous past” (3) is <strong>reinforced</strong> with <strong>appropriately chosen support</strong>. The first body paragraph sets out Amir’s past: “When Amir is just a little boy, at the age of twelve, he has the most exhilarating experience – winning the kite tournament. However, the joy from the win is not to last long, as he is about to witness a very dark situation” (3). Although Amir sees Hassan getting attacked “by their enemy Assef” (3), Amir “hides and pretends he does not know a thing” (3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A reasonable connection to the student’s ideas is suitably maintained.</td>
<td>The second body paragraph continues <strong>with adequate general support</strong> for the <strong>student’s idea</strong> about Amir’s “opportunity to escape his self-doubt” (4), outlining Amir’s conversation with Rahim Khan in which Amir learns “‘There is a way to be good again’” (4), through rescuing “the son of Hassan - his nephew” (4). The student also points out the impact of Amir’s father and his advice: “that ‘a boy who [cannot] stand up for himself becomes a man who [cannot] stand up for anything’” (4), a piece of evidence <strong>appropriately chosen to reinforce the idea</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the third body paragraph, the student points out <strong>reasonably</strong> that, “Amir challenges himself, and everyone who does not believe in him, and gets success” (4). Although “Amir gets beaten up by Assef” (5), the student uses this detail to <strong>support appropriately the idea</strong> of Amir’s “reconciliation for the times he did not stand up for Hassan” (5). While the student’s use of details may <strong>occasionally lack persuasiveness</strong> as in “Amir and Sohrab grow a strong relationship, even though the face many trials along their journey” (5), which only hints at Sohrab’s suicide attempt, a <strong>reasonable connection to the student’s ideas is suitably maintained</strong>.</td>
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### Scoring Criteria

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORING CRITERIA</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form and Structure (S)</td>
<td>In this response, the student employs a straightforward arrangement of ideas and details by using aspects of the prompt to guide each of the body paragraphs: the first body paragraph establishes Amir’s “horrifying situation in his past” (3), the second body paragraph establishes the uncertainty connected with Amir’s “self-doubt” (4) and “guilt and hesitancy” (4), and the final body paragraph establishes what “is basically his reconciliation” (5). This chronological arrangement of ideas and details, indicated clearly by the student on the Planning page, provides direction for the discussion that is developed appropriately:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                  | “i) What happened in Amir’s past.  
   ii) What is his opportunity and how does he feel about it.  
   iii) How things changed by the NEW circumstances” (2).  |
|                  | The student’s controlling idea that “Khlaed Hosseini demonstrates in his story The Kite Runner, that despite the challenges and individual may face, the can rectify themselves of their past and relieve all of their guilt and uncertainty of themselves” (5) is maintained generally throughout the response. |
**Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORING CRITERIA</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
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</table>
| **Matters of Choice (S)** | The student’s **diction is adequate** in relating the details of Amir’s childhood, as in “After many hours pass, Amir becomes concerned as to why Hassan is taking so long, seeing as he is the best kite runner in Kabul” (3) and “He is informed of so much more than he ever expects, and becomes overwhelmed” (4).  
**Syntactic structures are straightforward**, such as “His partner, and close friend, Hassan, is the kite runner” (3) and “The chances Amir takes and the unfamiliar situation he goes through are what build him up to be a better person and to have all of his past uncertainty resolved” (5). However, **attempts at complex language structures may be awkward**, as in “Amir does not understand why Hassan can stand up to Assef, until it comes to standing up for himself” (4).  
Although the student uses absolutes, as in “no individual has to live with being unsure their whole lives” (5) and “prove themselves wrong and relieve all these feelings” (5), the response balances these extremes with **stylistic choices that contribute to the creation of a conventional composition with an appropriate voice**: “As a child, and even through many of his adult years, Amir does not think that he can do much good for anyone, and he lives with uncertainty of himself that builds up from a young age” (4). |

| **S** | |

59
**SCORING CRITERIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matters of Correctness (S)</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</td>
<td>The student’s writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics throughout, as in “In <em>The Kite Runner</em>, Amir faces a lot of doubt in himself due to his past experiences” (3), “After living in America for about two decades, Amir receives a call from a close friend of his father, with a questionable statement” (4), and “Curiosity brings Amir to go to Peshawar and see Rahim, and to find out what the request is” (4).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There may be occasional lapses in control and minor errors; however, the communication remains clear.</td>
<td>There are occasional lapses in control and minor errors, such as “when an individual is faces the opportunity” (3), “the words that run through his mind for hours, days even, after call” (4), and “an indivudal” (5). Despite these kinds of errors and other minor errors, the communication remains clear.</td>
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**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

Death of a Salesman

Arthur Miller

Note: Write the title of your chosen literary text on the back cover of this examination booklet.

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.
Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

Planning

A title:

Conclude to restore

DOES
human need → see reality/
commit to oneself
Willy → always flashes back to the past
"the better days"
→ tries to get Biff to follow in
his footsteps
Wants Biff to know how great
willy is.
→ sets unrealistic goals for himself.
→ Willy doesn’t get why Biff looks
him → never told them anything but good things

When one is unhappy with their present
life, one may create ideals that cause them
to reconcile the uncertainties that were
cast by these ideals.
When one is unsure of their true self
how may feel the need to reconcile
uncertainties by failing to
Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

Controlling idea
only when one does something will uncertainties be resolved.

Planning

Biff: he comes home. He’s not sure what he should do.

doesn’t need (but he knows what makes him happy)

→ Willy’s wants for him hold him back.

→ He of the ideals formed in the past he wants to change his life.

Thesis

Biff: Willy: He’s unsure of who he is

The need

→ created ideals= personality that obscured his view of reality

Self image

→ He can’t be expected to be like him.

Realistic goals

→ sets unrealistic goals for himself.

Uncertainties

They must work the past that one must reconcile

Thesis: need for reassurance & acceptance causes one to create ideas that result in uncertainties of the past that one must accept/change.
Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

Planning

BP - 1

Willy
The Importance of Actions to Reconcile Uncertainties

When one is uncertain of themselves or the world around them it can affect aspects of the individual’s life that result in the conflict of how one must work to reconcile these uncertainties. In *Death of a Salesman*, a modern play written by Arthur Miller, Willy Loman, one of the protagonists, is a self-deluded salesman that is unsure of who he is and the life he is living. This affects both himself and the others around him, and the ideals that he created throughout his life to counteract this ambiguity transfer to the individuals around him. These ideals lead to his unrealistic view of who he is and what he wants to achieve, pressuring both him and Biff Loman, another main character. In this modern play the contrast between Biff and Willy and their differing need for reassurance show how to achieve understanding of the uncertainties in life. Arthur Miller suggests that the need for reassurance and acceptance causes individuals to create ideals that result in uncertainties of the past that one must either accept or try to change.

Willy Loman, an unsuccessful salesman who ultimately sells himself, was previously glorified by the people around him. In the beginning of the play it is evident that he is unsure of the realities of life, and he constantly contradicts himself so that his conclusion is correct and opinion accepted. These contradictions show the reader that Willy is worried about judgement from others and the possibility of not being “well liked”. He believes that “personality always wins” and tells his sons to “be liked and [they] will never want”. In one of Willy’s flashbacks he remembered him and his sons outside cleaning the Chevy. Willy is telling Biff and Happy how successful his business trips are and how everybody in Boston loves him. He mentions how he never has to wait
in line because of the admiration the people have for him. He ultimately teaches his sons that as long as one is liked and accepted by others then they should not worry about anything else in life. These ideals, that one does not need to work for success, show that Willy is preoccupied with the thought of being accepted based on personality. This ultimately uncovers as a lie due to the result of his funeral and the minimal amount of people that arrive. Willy is always trying to make himself seem like a stronger, more successful person than he is. In the past, he attempted to lie to his wife, Linda, about the amount of gross he made on his last business trip, stating that his final income was higher than the reality. In the present, he lies to her about his income and the actual source of the money he receives, which comes from his neighbour Charley. These two incidents show that Willy longs to be successful and that he believes that success will easily come to him. Willy’s present day actions of contradictions and selling himself to be accepted by others, relates to how he wants to keep the image that he created for himself in the past. He is ultimately unwilling to accept his situation and see the reality of what his life has come to, relating to how he cannot reconcile his uncertainties. Willy Loman does not take any immediate action to change his life and break free from his ideals that caused his uncertainty. The overall reason for these ideals is so Willy can be accepted and reassured in his life by the other people around him.

Contrary to Willy, Biff knows what makes him happy and knows that he is a “dime a dozen”. Biff, previously engulfed in his father’s ideals, sees that he is a fake when he goes to see his father for advice and learns about the affair in Boston. Biff is shocked and heartbroken to see his father, one who only spoke about himself highly and royally, is a “fake” and a “phony”. Because of this incident Biff sees the reality of what
Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

his life is and how Willy’s ideals affected his life. He tells Willy that he “blew [him] so full of hot air [he] couldn’t take orders from anybody” and tells his family that no one has ever told the truth in their house. When Biff lives with these ideals he constantly wanted to be accepted. He was the big shot football player that had all the confidence in the world to do whatever he wanted to. When he failed math and realized his father was a fake all that confidence diminished and he was unsure of who he really was. When he decides to come back home he is reminded “what a whole lie [his] whole life has been”. This affects him to the point where he resorts back to following his father’s ideals that ultimately lead him to his realization of who he is. Biff knows that he is the happiest when he is outside working with his hands, even though he knows that no money comes out of it. When caught up in the idea of immediate success he plans to go and talk to Bill Oliver and ask for fifteen thousand dollars. Willy assures him that he was “well liked” by Bill and that there’s no way he would say no to him. When Biff arrives he steals his pen and realizes that he was not made for business, “men like [him] are meant to work outside” with thier hands. This incident reminds Biff that he only needs to be accepted by himself and not the others around him. He restored his uncertainties of the past by taking action to do what made him happy, reconciling the indecisions of the past.

With Biff and Willy Loman and their differing need for acceptance from others one can see that only with the commitment of an action will the uncertainties of the past be restored. Arthur Miller’s use of this character foil and the end result due to their actions show how one may come to the settling of their previous uncertainties. Due to the human need for acceptance and the ideals one may create to achieve this one can be aware of the importance of accepting ones reality and choosing to change their former
view. Ultimately, *Death of a Salesman* shows the reader that the only way to reconcile conflicting uncertainties of the past is to accept the situation and choose to act upon it.
**Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORING CRITERIA</th>
<th>RATIONALE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thought and Understanding (Pf)</td>
<td>In addressing the topic and the play <em>Death of a Salesman</em>, the student makes a <strong>thoughtful and considered</strong> choice to contrast Willy and Biff, asserting in the introduction that “When one is uncertain of themselves or the world around them it can affect aspects of the individual’s life that result in the conflict of how one must work to reconcile these uncertainties” (5) and that, in terms of Willy, “the ideals that he created throughout his life to counteract this ambiguity transfer to the individuals around him” (5). <strong>Thoughtful and considered ideas</strong>, such as “He is ultimately unwilling to accept his situation and see the reality of what his life has come to, relating to how he cannot reconcile his uncertainties” (6), “Because of this incident Biff sees the reality of what his life is and how Willy’s ideals affected his life” (6–7), and “Due to the human need for acceptance and the ideals one may create to achieve this one can be aware of the importance of accepting ones reality and choosing to change their former view” (7–8), <strong>demonstrate a competent comprehension of the literary text and topic.</strong> <strong>Literary interpretations</strong> that focus on Willy’s faith in the dubious sentiment that “‘personality always wins’” (5) and the influence it has on Biff are <strong>revealing and sensible</strong>. Two such <strong>sensible interpretations</strong> can be seen in: “Willy’s present day actions of contradictions and selling himself to be accepted by others, relates to how he wants to keep the image that he created for himself in the past” (6) and in “When Biff arrives he steals his pen and realizes that he was not made for business, ‘men like [him] are meant to work outside’ with thier hands. This incident reminds Biff that he only needs to be accepted by himself and not the others around him” (7).</td>
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<td>Supporting Evidence (Pf)</td>
<td>In the discussion of Willy’s “unrealistic view of who he is and what he wants to achieve” (5) and the impact this view has on Biff, the student’s <strong>support is specific and well chosen to reinforce the ideas in a persuasive way</strong>. In the first body paragraph, the student creates a direct connection between the past, when Willy “attempted to lie to his wife, Linda, about the amount of gross he made on his last business trip” (6), and the present, when Willy “lies to her about his income and the actual source of the money he receives, which comes from his neighbour Charley” (6). In stating that “These two incidents show that Willy longs to be successful” (6) and that his “present day actions of contradictions and selling himself to be accepted by others, relates to how he wants to keep the image that he created for himself in the past” (6), the student <strong>capably maintains a sound connection between support and ideas</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Support is specific and well chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in a persuasive way.</td>
<td>In examining Biff, the student points to the significance of time when Biff “goes to see his father for advice and learns about the affair in Boston” (6). This event is <strong>well-chosen to reinforce the idea</strong> that Biff is “shocked and heartbroken to see his father, one who only spoke about himself highly and royally, is a ‘fake’ and a ‘phony’” (6). A <strong>sound connection to the student’s idea is capably maintained</strong> when the student assesses the impact on Biff: “all that confidence diminished and he was unsure of who he really was” (7). As well, the student also recognizes the <strong>persuasive effectiveness of specifically chosen quotations</strong> from the play: “He believes that ‘personality always wins’ and tells his sons to ‘be liked and [they] will never want’” (5) and “He tells Willy that he ‘blew [him] so full of hot air [he] couldn’t take orders from anybody’ and tells his family that no one has ever told the truth in their house” (7).</td>
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### SCORING CRITERIA

| RATIONALE                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| **Form and Structure (Pf)**                                                                                                           | Pf |
| - 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.                                                        |   |
| As is evident in the thorough planning (2–3), the student **establishes a purposeful arrangement of ideas**, beginning with the **controlling idea**: “In this modern play the contrast between Biff and Willy and their differing need for reassurance show how to achieve understanding of the uncertainties in life. Arthur Miller suggests that the need for reassurance and acceptance causes individuals to create ideals that result in uncertainties of the past that one must either accept or try to change” (5). The first paragraph then focuses on why Willy is “preoccupied with the thought of being accepted based on personality” (6), but “does not take any immediate action to change his life” (6). The student then moves to the contrast of Biff coming to a “realization of who he is” (7) and concludes the paragraph with the idea that, unlike Willy, Biff dealt with “his uncertainties of the past by taking action to do what made him happy, reconciling the indecisions of the past” (7). **Details** in both paragraphs **contribute to a controlled discussion which is developed capably.** Despite only having two body paragraphs, each fully develops its portion of the controlling idea, and the consistent use of both topic and concluding sentences aid in the **unifying effect.** This unity is **coherently sustained** and reiterated in the conclusion: “With Biff and Willy Loman and their differing need for acceptance from others one can see that only with the commitment of an action will the uncertainties of the past be restored.” (7) |
### SCORING CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matters of Choice (Pf)</th>
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<td>• Diction is specific.</td>
<td>In the discussion of the two contrasting characters, <strong>diction is specific</strong>: Willy is “an unsuccessful salesman who ultimately sells himself” (5), and Biff, “engulfed in his father’s ideals” (6), is “the big shot football player that had all the confidence in the world to do whatever he wanted to” (7).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Syntactic structures are generally effective.</td>
<td><strong>Syntactical structures are</strong> established with clarity and are therefore <strong>generally effective</strong>: “In <em>Death of a Salesman</em>, a modern play written by Arthur Miller, Willy Loman, one of the protagonists, is a self-deluded salesman that is unsure of who he is and the life he is living” (5) and “These ideals, that one does not need to work for success, show that Willy is preoccupied with the thought of being accepted based on personality” (6).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a considered composition with a capable voice.</td>
<td>The student makes <strong>considered stylistic choices</strong>. Examples include integrating quotations, such as “Biff knows what makes him happy and knows that he is a ‘dime a dozen’” (6), and using effective repetition to introduce sentences, as in “In the past, he attempted to lie to his wife, Linda, about the amount of gross he made” (6) and “In the present, he lies to her about his income and the actual source of the money” (6). Overall, these <strong>contribute to the creation of a considered composition with a capable voice</strong>.</td>
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<td>Matters of Correctness (Pf)</td>
<td>The student maintains a <strong>competent control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics</strong> that is typified throughout the response in examples such as “He ultimately teaches his sons that as long as one is liked and accepted by others then they should not worry about anything else in life” (6), “When caught up in the idea of immediate success he plans to go and talk to Bill Oliver and ask for fifteen thousand dollars” (7), and “Ultimately, <em>Death of a Salesman</em> shows the reader that the only way to reconcile conflicting uncertainties of the past is to accept the situation and choose to act upon it” (8). <strong>Minor errors</strong>, such as shifting verb tenses, are <strong>understandable considering</strong> both the exam <strong>circumstances</strong> and the <strong>complexity</strong> involved with discussing a text that moves fluidly between past and present.</td>
</tr>
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Pf
Initial Planning

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

Literary Text and Text Creator

A Streetcar Named Desire

by Tennessee Williams

Note: Write the title of your chosen literary text on the back cover of this examination booklet.

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.
Planning

Thesis - ... develops the idea that when we must face a past wrought with adversity, in order to face an uncertain post wrought with adversity, an individual may choose to manipulate their present situation to an idyllic one, even though the past is impossible to outrun.

Initially - Blanche's troubled past

- "Parade to the graveyard"
- "Misfired with strangers."
- death of Allen = GUILT

However - does not confront

- "Hum" + perfumes
- lantern over light
- no realism, magic + the thing.

Consequently - Stanley tears her apart

- "No Lilly" Stanley IS reality
- "It just illusion"
- music = cannot escape
Finally – it caught up to her – she must face up.

- Stella sends her away

- still in her-own word.

"Cruise"

- reality wins.
Example Scored Excellent (E)

Time is an ever moving phenomenon that will continue to move without regard for people’s readiness. Life is very much the same idea in which things happen that are entirely out of any individual’s control. The past happens to be a combination of them both in that no one is able to go back to fix situations that they are unhappy with. It is truly that past that keep so many individuals awake at night and struggling to reconcile the troubles. In Tennessee Williams’ modern play *A Streetcar Named Desire*, the character of Blanche DuBois struggles with facing her own adverse past but has a unique way of avoiding such a confrontation. Blanche builds up a facade to protect herself from the harsh attack of reality, but is simply unable to as it is shown through the character of Stanley Kowalski that even the harshest parts of her past are destined to catch up to her. Through this antagonistic relationship, Tennessee Williams develops the idea that in order to cope with an uncertain past wrought with adversity, a sensitive individual may choose to manipulate their present life to an idyllic one, even though the past can be impossible to outrun.

Initially, Blanche is shown to be an extremely sensitive and overly self conscious individual who unfortunately has been forced to deal with extreme adversity in her life. When Blanche first arrives to the Kowalski’s home, she is carrying huge amounts of baggage, physical and emotional. Blanche was left alone as the sole proprietor to a crumbling estate that she tries to put back together to no avail. She has left Belle Reve, or her beautiful dream, full of anger, guilt and sadness. Her own mortality weighs on her shoulders as she watches all her family members in the “parade” to the graveyard. Death surrounds Blanche and as such a delicate “moth”, she is far from equipped to handle it. Her own sister Stella states that Blanche has a very sensitive soul who has been broken apart over the years. Perhaps the most intense stress weighing on her shoulders would be the guilt and remorse she feels following the suicide of her husband, Allan. She was so hurt by the discovery of his homosexuality that she was beyond horribly mean to him and that continues to weigh on her shoulders. Obviously deeply saddened and affected by his death, her “intimacies with strangers” at hotels are all that would “fill her empty heart.” This is a powerful statement from Blanche admitting that she needs to escape somehow from her sad soul and empty heart. Her dwindling self esteem and confidence only add to her burdens as she continues to age and admits she feels “played out” and becomes desperate for someone to give her “respect” after she feels so much has been tarnished. Blanche cannot see positive in her life and begins to feel suffocated by all this adversity facing her head on. She is not wanted anywhere when she is fired and kicked out of Laurel and for a sensitive person, this is far too much to take on.

However, despite an immense amount of pressure to face up to the struggles that follow her every move, Blanche is not strong enough to do so, so the only way she can deal with it is to give her entire self up to an illusion in
order to make her life bearable. This idea of covering up is shown physically in how she dresses herself in such fine and fancy clothing and continually douses herself in perfume. Both of these methods are a way of hiding behind something else or putting on a new face for the world to see. This of course is not the real Blanche who is penniless and alone, but she chooses these items as a way of physically expressing who she wishes she was. When she was with Allan, Blanche admits that the love was "like a blinding light" and now that he is gone she wants to resume living in the shadows. She never puts herself in direct light and this is further demonstrated when she places a delicate paper lantern over a naked light bulb further darkening the scene. To her, the bulb is as bad as a "rude remark or vulgar action". Blanche wants to cover those parts of her life up and in her mind the ugliness of reality should be veiled by something nice and pretty. She does not tell the truth, she tells "what ought to be the truth" as a way of making things better, but really as her way of coping. It is like a turtle going into shell when threatened, Blanche retreats inside her fantasy world when faced with adversity and currently, her past is full of it. Ignoring reality and asking for "magic" is the only way she knows to attempt to reconcile some of the issues she faces. Magic is something you cannot achieve though, because it does not exist. Magic is all an illusion or a figment of someone's imagination. Unfortunately, this is the idyllic life Blanche envisions as she refuses to own up to her struggles. She is not a confrontational individual, but rather someone who wants to skirt around the issue for as long as possible.

Consequently for Blanche, the reality of her past cannot leave her in peace and it just continues to tear her apart as hard as she tries to avoid it. The fact the past continues to haunt Blanche is shown symbolically through her bathing constantly and the polka music that seems to follow her everywhere. While bathing, Blanche is attempting to scrub away the impurities and once again be a clean, virginal, perfect woman and admits that afterwards she feels like a "brand new person". However, this is only temporary, as all her solutions are, and the past comes back again so she must bathe again the get rid of it. The music also reinforces the same idea that the past will always come back to haunt her and that even though the facade of Blanche might be doing fine, in reality she has a very uncertain and troubling past behind her. Stanley Kowalski, who is the physical embodiment of reality, relentlessly tears her apart from the moment she arrives. He is critical of everything and has a goal to poke holes in her stories. He is able to see through the smoke and mirrors act and repeatably points out "its just an illusion", which is something everyone else fails to see. The furs, jewels and make-up do not fool Stanley and he can see behind all that to who she really is, which is "no lily". For Blanche, this is devastating because she thought that their home would be a place where her "magic" could flourish and she could escape the harshness of home. Stanley is like a predator from the moment he throws a hunk of raw meat at Stella until he brutally rapes Blanche taking away her last thread of dignity and pride. Things have clearly crumbled for Blanche in
the past and try as she might to deal with the situation, reality and Stanley Kowalski just drag her further down. There is no where for her to run and she is agonized at the thought of being "caught in a trap", unable to escape from the shackles of her own condition.

Finally and inevitably, reality wins. Her past catches up to her and it is time for her to face up to it, no matter how unpleasant. Blanche has lost all sense of her own identity and now is a shell of someone, someone her own sister does not even recognize. In a way, Blanche has given up all right to control her own present and future by running from the past. So, the Kowalskis make the decision to send Blanch away to a mental institution because they see someone who is deeply sick and needs help. This is not the outcome Blanche wanted, nor is it the one she thinks she is receiving. As she continues to live in an illusion, she is convinced a gentleman is taking her away from it all. In her mind, the trap she is caught in is the house, Stella and Stanley, but the trap is really her own life and her own past which is something she cannot simply leave. Perhaps the most tragic part of Blanche is she has been so consumed by the illusion that she is not able to handle anything as her own self any longer. When she is frightened by the doctor and nurse, she is totally unable to cope and loses her mind, just as she has countless times before. But, at the first glimpse of someone showing compassion, she insists that she has "always relied on the kindness of strangers". She needs some glimmer of positivity or light in her life like she had way in her past before she was lost in a sea of adversity. Blanche has been living in the shadows for so long she does not know anything else. Her story of being buried at sea in a white bag is a very pristine and beautiful image that reinforces she is not ready to let go of the illusions. She maintains until the end the ugliness of the world is going to get her in the form of an "unwashed grape". Her fantasy world is so entrenched in who she is now, that there is no way for her to ever completely come to terms with her past or ever move on into the future.

In Tennessee Williams’ modern play A Streetcar Named Desire, the sensitive Blanche DuBois attempts to handle the struggles that plague her past by escaping from them and making her world how she wishes it to be, but this proves futile as it is shown that reality always catches up to her at some point. The peace and quiet she thought she would receive at the Kowalski’s home turns out to be just another place for problems to follow her and an never ending parade of reminders of what is waiting back home. As much as Blanche and all individuals wish there was some way to turn clocks black and fix the problems of a time long ago, some things just cannot be fixed. It is shown through Blanche however that running or creating an idyllic present for us to live in does nothing to reconcile those problems either, but can in fact magnify them or create new ones to solve. Facing problems head on is never an easy task, but rather a mandatory one that will hopefully ensure a better or more promising present and future life.
### SCORING CRITERIA

**Thought and Understanding (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.

### RATIONALE

The student’s introduction contains a carefully considered idea about *A Streetcar Named Desire* that “in order to cope with an uncertain past wrought with adversity, a sensitive individual may choose to manipulate their present life to an idyllic one, even though the past can be impossible to outrun” (4).

The student offers the perceptive understanding that “Blanche DuBois struggles with facing her own adverse past but has a unique way of avoiding such confrontation” (4) through building “up a facade to protect herself from the harsh attack of reality” (4). The student presents the considered idea that “Blanche is not strong enough” (4) to cope when she realizes that staying with Stella and Stanley does not provide “a place where her ‘magic’ could flourish and she could escape the harshness” (5) of her past.

**Perceptive literary interpretations** are evident in “Blanche wants to cover those parts of her life up and in her mind the ugliness of reality should be veiled by something nice and pretty” (5), in “She does not tell the truth, she tells ‘what ought to be the truth’ as a way of making things better, but really as her way of coping” (5), and in “She is not a confrontational individual, but someone who wants to skirt around the issue” (5).

The student’s understanding that Blanche is “unable to escape from the shackles of her own condition” (6) because “the trap is really her own life and her own past” (6) is an illuminating interpretation that reveals subtle distinctions in the literary text. The student recognizes that, despite it being “time for her to face up” (6) to her past, “Her fantasy world is so entrenched in who she is now, that there is no way for her to ever completely come to terms with her past or ever move on into the future” (6).
### SCORING CRITERIA

**Supporting Evidence (E)**

- 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.

### RATIONALE

The student’s exploration of the text displays **precise and astutely chosen support to reinforce ideas** with examples such as “Obviously deeply saddened and affected by his death her ‘intimacies with strangers’ at hotels are all that would ‘fill her empty heart’” (4) and “This idea of covering up is shown physically in how she dresses herself in such fine and fancy clothing” (5) as a means of “putting on a new face” (5). This idea is further **precisely supported** with Blanche’s assertion that after she bathes “she feels like a ‘brand new person’” (5), despite Stanley’s declaration that she “is ‘no lily’” (5). The student notes that Blanche, upon being sent to a “mental institution” (6), “insists that she has ‘always relied on the kindness of strangers’” (6) although she fears that finally “the ugliness of the world is going to get her in the form of an ‘unwashed grape’” (6). These **precise details** are **astutely chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in a convincing way**.

A **valid connection to the student’s ideas is efficiently maintained** in such instances as when Blanche “is fired and kicked out of Laurel and for a sensitive person, this is far too much to take on” (4) and in “The fact the past continues to haunt Blanche is shown symbolically through her bathing constantly and the polka music that seems to follow her everywhere” (5). Blanche fears “being ‘caught in a trap’, unable to escape” (6), **supporting the idea** that “Perhaps the most tragic part of Blanche is she has been so consumed by the illusion that she is not able to handle anything as her own self any longer” (6) and the “Kowalski’s home turns out to be just another place for problems to follow her” (6). The student’s choice to incorporate the detail of the “story of being buried at sea in a white bag” (6) to reinforce that Blanche “is not ready to let go of the illusions” (6) is **astutely chosen and maintains a valid connection to the student’s ideas**.
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<td><strong>Form and Structure (E)</strong></td>
<td>The form and structure of the response is judiciously arranged and skillfully developed through a fluent discussion and effective transitions. In the introduction, the student establishes the controlling idea that is effectively sustained: “Tennessee Williams develops the idea that in order to cope with an uncertain past wrought with adversity, a sensitive individual may choose to manipulate their present life to an idyllic one, even though the past can be impossible to outrun” (4). The student indicates a judicious arrangement of ideas in the Planning pages wherein the student sets out the logic of the discussion clearly and effectively. First, the student focuses on the uncertainties of Blanche’s “troubled past” (2) and how the deaths of family members and her husband affect her. In the next area of focus, the student looks at the new situation in the house of Stella and Stanley, where Blanche hopes to “give her entire self up to an illusion in order to make her life bearable” (4–5). In the third body paragraph, the student explores how “the past continues to haunt Blanche” (5) and how Stanley acts “like a predator” (5) to strip away her façade and illusions. In the final body paragraph, the student concludes the fluent discussion by noting that “the trap is really her own life and her own past” (6), and thus her fate is inescapable: “there is no way for her to ever completely come to terms with her past or ever move on into the future” (6). The unifying effect about Blanche’s doomed struggle “to handle the struggles that plague her past by escaping from them and making her world how she wishes it to be” (6) is effectively sustained and integrated through the skillful development of the controlling idea as supported by astutely chosen details in relation to the topic.</td>
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### SCORING CRITERIA

**Matters of Choice (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.

### RATIONALE

The student’s writing choices enhance communication through the use of **precise diction**, as in “ever moving phenomenon” (4), “dwindling self esteem” (4), “physical embodiment of reality” (5), “glimmer of positivity or light” (6), and “lost in a sea of adversity” (6).

The student uses **effective and sometimes polished syntactic structures**, as illustrated by “She has left Belle Reve, or her beautiful dream, full of anger, guilt and sadness” (4) and “When she was with Allan, Blanche admits that the love was ‘like a blinding light’ and now that he is gone she wants to resume living in the shadows” (5).

**Stylistic choices**, including the use of imagery, serve to create a **skillful composition with a convincing voice**. The fragility of Blanche is reinforced in “Blanche builds up a façade to protect herself from the harsh attack of reality” (4). She is identified as “a delicate ‘moth’” (4), a “sensitive soul” (4) who wishes to “resume living in the shadows” (5). The **skillful** comparison of Blanche to “a turtle going into a shell when threatened” (5) to “escape the harshness of home” (5), finally becoming “a shell of someone” (6), demonstrates a **convincing voice**.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORING CRITERIA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Matters of Choice (E)</strong></td>
<td>The student’s writing choices enhance communication through the use of <strong>precise diction</strong>, as in “ever moving phenomenon” (4), “dwindling self esteem” (4), “physical embodiment of reality” (5), “glimmer of positivity or light” (6), and “lost in a sea of adversity” (6). The student uses <strong>effective and sometimes polished syntactic structures</strong>, as illustrated by “She has left Belle Reve, or her beautiful dream, full of anger, guilt and sadness” (4) and “When she was with Allan, Blanche admits that the love was ‘like a blinding light’ and now that he is gone she wants to resume living in the shadows” (5). <strong>Stylistic choices</strong>, including the use of imagery, serve to create a <strong>skillful composition with a convincing voice</strong>. The fragility of Blanche is reinforced in “Blanche builds up a façade to protect herself from the harsh attack of reality” (4). She is identified as “a delicate ‘moth’” (4), a “sensitive soul” (4) who wishes to “resume living in the shadows” (5). The <strong>skillful</strong> comparison of Blanche to “a turtle going into a shell when threatened” (5) to “escape the harshness of home” (5), finally becoming “a shell of someone” (6), demonstrates a <strong>convincing voice</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**E**
**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXEMPLARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORING CRITERIA</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matters of Correctness (E)</td>
<td>The student’s writing demonstrates a 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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The student’s writing demonstrates a confidence in control of correct sentence construction, as in “In Tennessee Williams’ modern play *A Streetcar Named Desire*, the character of Blanche DuBois struggles with facing her own adverse past but has a unique way of avoiding such a confrontation” (4), “Death surrounds Blanche and as such a delicate ‘moth’, she is far from equipped to handle it” (4), and “Things have clearly crumbled for Blanche in the past and try as she might to deal with the situation, reality and Stanley Kowalski just drag her further down” (5–6). Correct word usage, such as “façade” (4), “tarnished” (4), “idyllic” (5), “flourish” (5), “consumed” (6), “pristine”, “entrenched” (6), and “futile” (6), is impressive, as is the student’s confidence with the mechanics of weaving quotations smoothly and effectively into sentences, such as “Obviously deeply saddened and affected by his death, her ‘intimacies with strangers’ at hotels are all that would ‘fill her empty heart’” (4).

The relative absence of errors considering the complexity and length of the response is impressive. The student demonstrates a confidence and expertise in this first-draft writing.
**Scoring Categories and Criteria**

**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2014–2015**

**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.


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.”


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### 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong> E</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proficient</strong> Pf</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> S</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Limited</strong> L</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poor</strong> P</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **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 OR  
- there is no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the task presented in the assignment |
### 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pf</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2014–2015**

**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.


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.”


### 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excellent (E)</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proficient (Pf)</strong></td>
<td>Ideas are thoughtful and considered, demonstrating a competent comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are revealing and sensible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfactory (S)</strong></td>
<td>Ideas are relevant and straightforward, demonstrating a generalized comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are general but plausible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Limited (L)</strong></td>
<td>Ideas are superficial or oversimplified, demonstrating a weak comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are incomplete and/or literal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poor (P)</strong></td>
<td>Ideas are largely absent or irrelevant, and/or do not develop the topic. Little comprehension of the literary text(s) is demonstrated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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
- no reference has been made to literature studied
- the only literary reference present is to the text(s) provided in the first assignment
- there is no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the task presented in the assignment
Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2014–2015 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).

Excellent
E
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.

Proficient
Pf
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.

Satisfactory
S
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.

Limited
L
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.

Poor
P
Support is irrelevant, overgeneralized, lacks validity, and/or is absent. Little or no connection to the student’s ideas is evident.
**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

**Excellent**

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.

**Proficient**

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.

**Satisfactory**

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.

**Limited**

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.

**Poor**

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.

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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

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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.

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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.

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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.

**Poor**

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 2014–2015 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Diction is precise. Syntactic structures are effective and sometimes polished. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a skillful composition with a convincing voice.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>Diction is specific. Syntactic structures are generally effective. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a considered composition with a capable voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2014–2015**  
**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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>This writing demonstrates faltering control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The range of errors blurs the clarity of communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>This writing demonstrates lack of control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. Jarring errors impair communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.