

# Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing

# English Language Arts 30–1

From the January 2011 Diploma Examination

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

Government  
of Alberta ■

Alberta ■

Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

This document was written primarily for:

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

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We would be pleased to hear from you.

## ***Introduction***

The written responses in this document are examples of English Language Arts 30–1 Diploma Examination writing that received scores of Satisfactory (S), Proficient (Pf), or Excellent (E). These sample responses are taken from the January 2011 administration. Along with the commentaries that accompany them, they should help you and your students to understand the standards for English Language Arts 30–1 Diploma Examination writing in relation to the scoring criteria.

The purpose of the sample responses is to illustrate the standards that governed the January 2011 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 2011 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 2011 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 2011 English Language Arts 30–1 Diploma Examination.

## ***Cautions***

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

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

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

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

The student writing in this document illustrates *just a few of the many* successful organizational and rhetorical strategies used in January 2011.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**5. For further information regarding student performance on the Part A: Written Response, access the [English Language Arts 30–1 Assessment Highlights](#).**

*English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011*  
*Writing Assignments*

***English Language Arts 30–1***  
***Part A: Written Response***  
*Grade 12 Diploma Examination*

***Description***

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

Plan your time carefully.

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

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

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

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

***Instructions***

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

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

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

## PERSONAL RESPONSE TO TEXTS ASSIGNMENT

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

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

### THE JACKHAMMER SYNDROME

Once I wanted things so badly  
they tended to heat up while I looked at them  
glowing cherry red and disappeared  
thus it was common on the streets  
of my hometown twenty  
years ago to hear young ladies utter  
cries of dismay as their coiffures started  
smoking and they vanished like rainbows  
while I stared fixed and lasciviously  
They say if you wish hard enough long  
enough you'll get what you wish for  
I maintain the opposite or nearly  
one alternates wanting and not-wanting  
at unpredictable intervals which  
might be called the jackhammer syndrome  
For example  
I play pool with my brother-in-law  
and nearly always lose at first  
until finally I don't give a damn  
then start to win  
The balls jostle in genetic pairs  
drop dead  
true in side pockets and caroms click  
like new false teeth in orbit with a steak  
I play like a blind mathematician  
give the ball underspin curves  
straight from my draughtsman brain  
and realize I'm winning by god winning  
fifty mounted horsemen in the red desert  
draw swords and swear fealty  
my spaceship darts with unerring skill  
among excreta of constipated planets

which turn out to be radium in fact  
I can do anything  
and encounter myself in the past thinking  
of hide-and-seek and run-sheep-run  
in my old hometown  
where the kid was pretty funny  
He will not know me now no  
one does there  
among those dream-circumstances  
but patches of emotion hover still  
on the streets where I lost all my battles  
But I retain the memory of winning  
close to my vest as a belly button  
which is one advantage of total recall  
and totally recall swimming  
across a river meeting a girl halfway  
along the wet footpath and going  
on together to the other  
side for an hour doing  
nothing dizzily balanced  
on the moment managing  
to outwit myself carefully  
not looking at her  
There are moments of such elation  
in a man's life it's like being struck  
alive on the street by the first  
god one meets at an intersection  
whom one must believe in a second  
time after twenty years of atheism  
You press the stomach of your business  
suit flat and stride on into the sunset  
pretending to be serious

*Al Purdy*

## from THE ORCHID THIEF

John Laroche is a tall guy, skinny as a stick, pale-eyed, slouch-shouldered, and sharply handsome, in spite of the fact that he is missing all his front teeth. He has the posture of al dente spaghetti and the nervous intensity of someone who plays a lot of video games. Laroche is thirty-six years old. Until recently he was employed by the Seminole Tribe of Florida, setting up a plant nursery and an orchid-propagation laboratory on the tribe's reservation in Hollywood, Florida.

Laroche strikes many people as eccentric. The Seminoles, for instance, have two nicknames for him: Troublemaker and Crazy White Man. Once, when Laroche was telling me about his childhood, he remarked, "Boy, I sure was a *weird* little kid." For as long as he can remember he has been exceptionally passionate and driven. When he was about nine or ten, his parents said he could pick out a pet. He decided to get a little turtle. Then he asked for ten more little turtles. Then he decided he wanted to breed the turtles, and then he started selling turtles to other kids, and then he could think of nothing *but* turtles and then decided that his life wasn't worth living unless he could collect one of every single turtle species known to mankind, including one of those sofa-sized tortoises from the Galapagos. Then, out of the blue, he fell out of love with turtles and fell madly in love with Ice Age fossils. He collected them, sold them, declared that he lived for them, then abandoned them for something else—lapidary<sup>1</sup> I think—then he abandoned lapidary and became obsessed with collecting and resilvering old mirrors. Laroche's passions arrived unannounced and ended explosively, like car bombs. When I first met him he lusted only for orchids, especially the wild orchids growing in Florida's Fakahatchee Strand. I spent most of the next two years hanging around with him, and at the end of those two years he had gotten rid of every single orchid he owned and swore that he would never own another orchid for as long as he lived. He is usually true to his word. Years ago, between his Ice Age fossils and his old mirrors, he went through a tropical-fish phase. At its peak, he had more than sixty fish tanks in his house and went skin-diving regularly to collect fish. Then the end came. He didn't gradually lose interest: he renounced fish and vowed he would never again collect them and, for that matter, he would never set foot in the ocean again. That was seventeen years ago. He has lived his whole life only a couple of feet west of the Atlantic, but he has not dipped a toe in it since then.

Laroche tends to sound like a Mr. Encyclopedia, but he did not have a rigorous formal education. He went to public school in North Miami; other than that, he is self-taught. Once in a while he gets wistful about the life he thinks he would have led if he had applied himself more conventionally. He believes he would have probably become a brain surgeon and that he would have made major brain-research breakthroughs and become rich and famous. Instead, he lives in a frayed Florida bungalow with his father and has always scratched out a living in unaverage ways. One of his greatest assets is optimism—that is, he sees a profitable outcome in practically every life situation, including disastrous ones. Years ago he spilled toxic pesticide into a cut on his hand and suffered permanent heart and liver damage from it. In his opinion, it was all for the best because he was able

<sup>1</sup>lapidary—the cutting, polishing, or engraving of gemstones

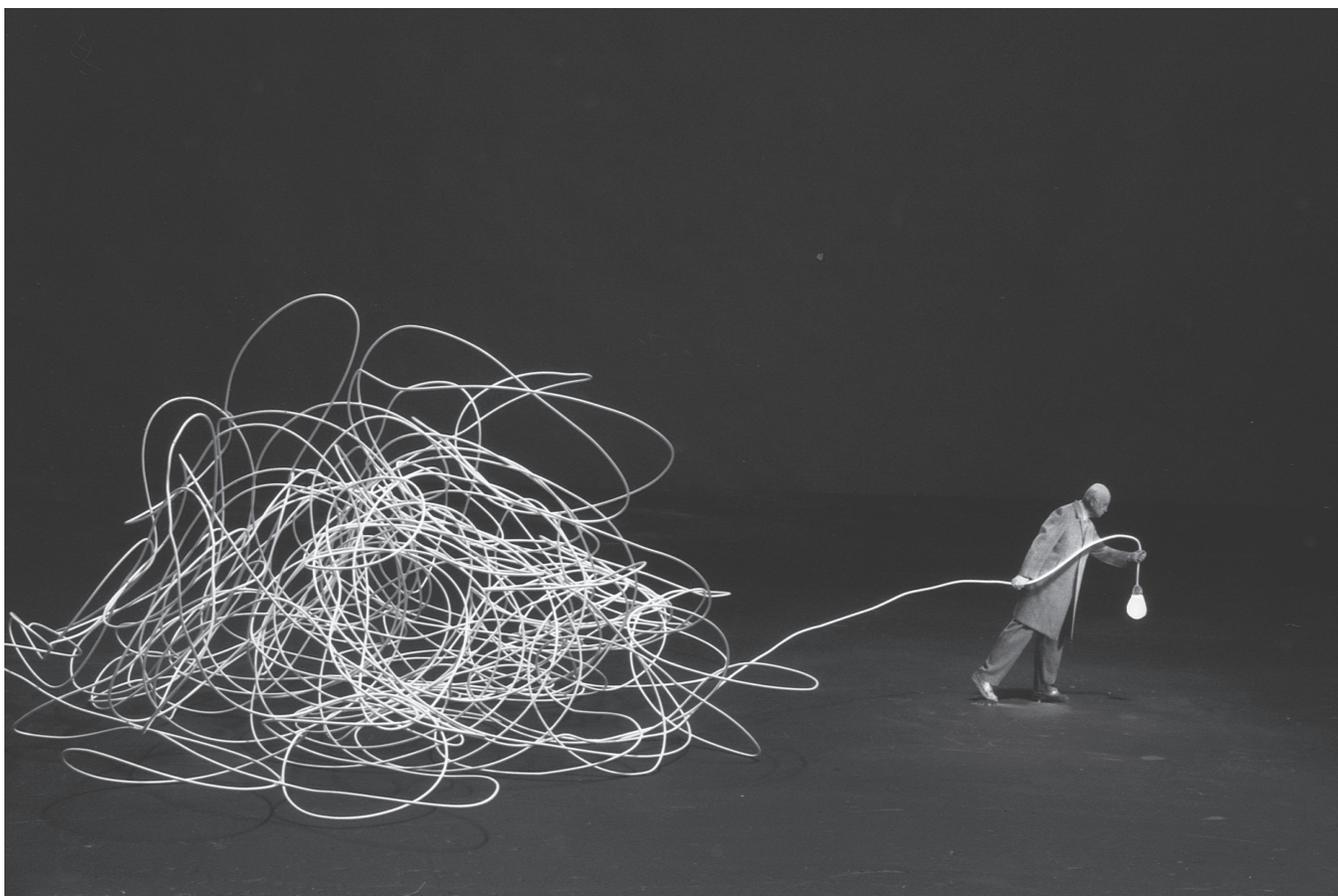
to sell an article about the experience (“Would You Die for Your Plants?”) to a gardening journal. When I first met him, he was working on a guide to growing plants at home. He told me he was going to advertise it in *High Times*, the marijuana magazine. He said the ad wouldn’t mention that marijuana plants grown according to his guide would never mature and therefore never be psychoactive. The guide was one of his all-time favorite projects. The way he saw it, he was going to make lots of money on it (always excellent) *plus* he would be encouraging kids to grow plants (very righteous) *plus* the missing information in the guide would keep these kids from getting stoned because the plants they would grow would be impotent (incalculably noble). This last fact was the aspect of the project he was proudest of, because he believed that once kids who bought the guide realized they’d wasted their money trying to do something illegal—namely, grow and smoke pot—they would also realize, thanks to John Laroche, that crime doesn’t pay. Schemes like these, folding virtue and criminality around profit, are Laroche’s specialty. Just when you have finally concluded that he is a run-of-the-mill crook, he unveils an ulterior and somewhat principled but always lucrative reason for his crookedness. He likes to describe himself as a shrewd bastard. He loves doing things the hard way, especially if it means that he gets to do what he wants to do but also gets to leave everyone else wondering how he managed to get away with it. He is quite an unusual person. He is also the most moral amoral person I’ve ever known.

I met John Laroche for the first time a few years ago, at the Collier County Courthouse in Naples, Florida. I was in Florida at the time because I had read a newspaper article reporting that a white man—Laroche—and three Seminole men had been arrested with rare orchids they had stolen out of a Florida swamp called the Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve, and I wanted to know more about the incident. The newspaper story was short but alluring. It described the Fakahatchee as a wild swamp near Naples filled with exceptional plants and trees, including some that don’t grow anywhere else in the United States and some that grow nowhere else in the world. All wild orchids are now considered endangered, and it is illegal to take them out of the woods anywhere, and particularly out of a state property like the Fakahatchee. According to the newspaper, Laroche was the ringleader of the poachers. He provided the arresting officers with the proper botanical varietal names for all the stolen plants and explained that the plants were bound for a laboratory where they were going to be cloned by the millions and then sold to orchid collectors around the world....

Sometimes this kind of story turns out to be something more, some glimpse of life that expands like those Japanese paper balls you drop in water and then after a moment they bloom into flowers, and the flower is so marvelous that you can’t believe there was a time when all you saw in front of you was a paper ball and a glass of water.

*Susan Orlean*

*Diogène ou la Lucidité – Diogenes<sup>1</sup> or Lucidity, 2005*



© Gilbert Garcin / Courtesy of Stephen Bulger Gallery

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

**PERSONAL RESPONSE TO TEXTS ASSIGNMENT**

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

You have been provided with three texts on pages 1 to 4. In “The Jackhammer Syndrome” by Al Purdy, the speaker recalls transcendent moments of elation as he walks about in his business suit. In the excerpt from *The Orchid Thief* by Susan Orlean, Laroche is characterized as an individual who pursues his personal obsessions while maintaining an unconventional code of conduct. In Gilbert Garcin’s *Diogenes or Lucidity*, a man in an overcoat and business suit carries a light bulb.

**The Assignment**

**What do these texts suggest about the conflict between pursuing a personal desire and choosing to conform? Support your idea(s) with reference to one or more of the texts presented and to your previous knowledge and/or experience.**

**In your writing, you must**

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

## Personal Response to Texts Assignment

### *Initial Planning*

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 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 practiced in English Language Arts 30–1. You may respond using a personal, creative, or analytical perspective. Do NOT use a poetic form.

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

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

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

**The Assignment**

**Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the conflict between pursuing a personal desire and choosing to conform.**

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

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

## Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

### *Initial Planning*

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

Literary Text and  
Text Creator

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*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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Additional space is provided for *Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text* on the following page.

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

### *Background*

For all diploma examination scoring sessions, 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 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 marking session, the example papers that received scores of Satisfactory (S), Proficient (Pf), and Excellent (E) are posted on the Alberta Education website at [education.alberta.ca](http://education.alberta.ca) in the documents entitled [Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing](#).

During the standards confirmation process,

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

*Examples of Students' Writing with Teachers' Commentaries*

English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory–1 (S)

**Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

*Initial Planning*

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

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What idea 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.

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English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory–1 (S)

Pursue or Conform

Pursuing a personal desire often leads to a conflicts between your personal desire and choosing to conform to the universal norms. How you respond to the pressure will affect the outcome greatly, living your dreams will have risks involved, where as conforming you would have a stable job or even life style but would live with the regret of not accomplishing your dreams. The story of John Lroche is a perfect example of pursuing a personal desire.

John Lroche in “The Orchid Thief” did not conform, instead he chased after his personal desires. His desires changes frequently, as did the character in “The Jackhammer Syndrome”, this however did not prevent him from giving up on his dreams, he decided not to conform to a “normal” life. Instead at each new interest, he would passionately pursue it until the curiosity was lost and another opportunity opened up for the chasing. He had the choice to go to school, settle down, make money, live a conformed life, but he chose the life of pursuing his desires as they came along. John spent his time doing the things he loved, not worried about what the world thought about his actions, even if his desires led him on a tangled chase then ended right back where he had started, just as in the picture of Diogenes with the cord all twisted around because of the quest he was on, looking for an honest man who had not conformed. Both Diogenes and John were seeking something, and no matter where the path of their desires led, they followed, even if it meant ending up exactly where they began. Finally John was caught trying to get

(Page 2 of 3)

English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory–1 (S)

away with another of his crazy ideas or fantasies, if he had conformed and quite using his imagination he would not have been caught stealing.

Now when you look at the conflict between pursuing your personal desire and choosing to conform, there is no easy answer. When you conform there is less chance of failure and embarrassment, but a regret is left about not achieving your dreams and the possibilities that could have opened up if they were accomplished. On the other hand, choosing to pursue the personal desire can lead you on an exciting path, but with the excitement there are risks and failures that you will have to be prepared for. Because your desire will change, and it may leave you with nothing except a fresh start but there wont be the regret of not giving it a try. This is the conflict between pursuing a personal desire and choosing to conform, the choice is simply yours.

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY–1**

<b>SCORING CRITERIA</b>	<b>RATIONALE</b>
<p><b>Ideas and Impressions (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s exploration of the topic is generalized.</li> <li>• Perceptions and/or ideas are straightforward and relevant.</li> <li>• Support is adequate and clarifies the student’s ideas and impressions.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>In addressing the conflict in the topic, the student <b>explores</b> the notions that “How you respond to the pressure will affect the outcome greatly, living your dreams will have risks involved, where as conforming you would have a stable job or even life style but would live with the regret of not accomplishing your dreams” (2) in a <b>generalized</b> manner. When referring to “The Orchid Thief”, the student offers <b>adequate support</b>, acknowledging that John “had the choice to go to school, settle down, make money, live a conformed life, but he chose the life of pursuing his desires” (2). In discussing the visual, the student <b>further clarifies the ideas and impressions</b> of risks being involved when asserting that like John, Diogenes’ “desires led him on a tangled chase then ended right back where he had started, ... with the cord all twisted around because of the quest he was on” (2). In weighing the pros and cons of choosing between pursuing one’s personal desire and conforming, the student ultimately arrives at the <b>straightforward and relevant</b> conclusion that “there is no easy answer” (3).</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY–1**

<b>SCORING CRITERIA</b>	<b>RATIONALE</b>
<p><b>Presentation (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice created by the student is apparent.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices are adequate and the student’s creation of tone is conventional.</li> <li>• The unifying effect is appropriately developed.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>The student’s voice is <b>apparent</b> and a <b>conventional tone</b> is developed in sentences such as “When you conform there is less chance of failure and embarrassment, but a regret is left about not achieving your dreams and the possibilities that could have opened up if they were accomplished” (3) and “Both Diogenes and John were seeking something, and no matter where the path of their desires led, they followed, even if it meant ending up exactly where they began” (2). <b>Stylistic choices</b> remain <b>adequate</b> as in “Instead at each new interest, he would passionately pursue it until the curiosity was lost and another opportunity opened up for the chasing” (2).</p> <p>The student’s <b>unifying effect is appropriately developed</b> through the examination of how one’s responses to pressures to conform will “affect the outcome greatly” (2) in one’s life, as well as exploring the “risks involved” (2) in “living your dreams” (2). Though arriving at the notion that the answers are not easy when dealing with this conflict, the student concludes on the very straightforward assertion that “the choice is simply yours” (3).</p>

English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
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?

The Orchid Thief - personal desires vs. logic  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

Logic doesn't always achieve everyone's personal desires, conformity is sometimes logical.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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.

Creative  
\_\_\_\_\_

English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory–2 (S)

*Planning*

Father wants son to be a lawyer.

- follow in his footsteps
- promising future
- willing to pay for tuition/fees
- pays well

Son wants to be a musician.

- it's what he wants to do
- "funner" future
- less monotonous
- laid back

English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory–2 (S)

Written Work

I knew this talk would eventually come. It happened to my brother when he graduated two years ago. My father, a well-noted lawyer (and a compulsive liar), had wanted my brother to follow in his footsteps. He had different plans though. Tyler let his partner drag him around, distracting him from any post-secondary education. Now he lives in a condo about two blocks from home.

My day was just a little bit long. I was still recovering from the graduation ceremony (I was a little drunk.) and my bandmates had wanted to jam. I think that we have the potential to make it big, if my dad didn't get in the way. Soon after, I came home, relaxed a bit, then supper time rolled around.

"How was your day?" My father asked.

"Pretty boring. My buddies and I jammed today. We came up with some neat riffs!" I say as I picked the imaginary strings of an air guitar.

English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory–2 (S)

"Ah, I see. Have you thought about getting a job yet? Or better yet, a degree? I hear lawyers are in demand in the workforce."

"Well dad, don't get me wrong, but law isn't exactly what I'm looking for. Sure it pays well, but it's so... boring. You should know about that."

"I just want to see you do well in life. What are your goals?"

"The music scene is where my interests lie. I think that we have what it takes to make it big. I might even go to college to study theory. I think it's more rewarding than helping known criminals." ~~That, you just want to be a lawyer.~~

~~ever.~~ "Maybe that limelight you keep dreaming about will shed some light on the truth. The music business can be dangerous."

"Education to be a lawyer is expensive. How should one get the money for that?"

"I would be more than willing to pay for your tuition. Only if you desire to be a lawyer, though."

"You're the only one with that desire! I don't want to lie to bring the next meal on the table. I'm going to achieve stardom!"

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory–2 (S)

With that, I wipe my mouth with my napkin, and toss it on the plate. I excuse myself from the table, and go upstairs. I sit down on my bed, where I see my guitar sitting on its throne. I pick up the guitar, where I play and dream about the good life.

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY–2**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Ideas and Impressions (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s exploration of the topic is generalized.</li> <li>• Perceptions and/or ideas are straightforward and relevant.</li> <li>• Support is adequate and clarifies the student’s ideas and impressions.</li> </ul>	<p>On the Initial Planning pages (1, 2) the student indicates a <b>straightforward</b> development of the short story based on a conflict between the father and the son. The exploration of the conflict between conformity and personal desire is <b>generalized</b> through the characters of the father who “had wanted my brother to follow in his footsteps” (3) and the son who “wanted to jam” (3). The father in the role of antagonist represents conformity while the son becomes the protagonist pursuing a personal desire.</p> <p>The description of the brother who “let his partner drag him around,” (3) and the protagonist’s own confidence in his “potential to make it big, If my dad didn’t get in the way” (3) supports the <b>relevant</b> perceptions that the child’s personal desires might be in conflict with the parent’s desire for conformity.</p> <p>The cliché characterization of the father as “a well-noted lawyer” (3) and the implied father-son conflict through the parenthetical comment “(and a compulsive liar)” (3) contributes to a <b>straightforward exploration of the topic</b>.</p> <p>Likewise, the direct characterization of the son as one who “might even go to college to study theory” (4) is qualified by the idea that the son’s goal is “to achieve stardom” (4). The perception that the son’s desire and confidence is sufficient to justify his decision to reject the father’s offer is further developed through the <b>relevant</b> idea: “The music scene is where my interests lie. I think that we have what it takes to make it big” (4). The father’s cynicism as evident in “The music business can be dangerous” (4), yet his desire for his son’s success, is reinforced by the detail “I would be more than willing to pay for your tuition. Only if you desire to be a lawyer though” (4). This <b>straightforward</b> development of stock characters and of the father-son conflict <b>adequately clarifies the student’s ideas and impressions</b>.</p> <p>The student provides <b>adequate support</b> for the son’s desires and values relating to his chosen profession, as in “I came home, relaxed a bit”(3), and “We came up with some neat riffs!” (3) and “I think that we have what it takes to make it big”(4). The student also provides <b>adequate</b> evidence of the father’s concerns with “What are your goals?” (4) and “The music business can be dangerous” (4).</p>

**S**

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2011  
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**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY–2**

<b>SCORING CRITERIA</b>	<b>RATIONALE</b>
<p><b>Presentation (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice created by the student is apparent.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices are adequate and the student’s creation of tone is conventional.</li> <li>• The unifying effect is appropriately developed.</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>S</b></p>	<p>The characters are developed through their dialogue and through the use of the son as narrator. The son establishes an <b>apparent voice</b> with the opening sentence: “I knew this talk would eventually come” (3). A negative atmosphere is <b>appropriately</b> reinforced with “My day was just a little bit long” (3). The son’s response to his father’s inquiry “Pretty boring”(3) develops not just the tone of the story but their relationship. The nature of the conflict emerges further when in response to his father’s statement “lawyers are in demand” (4), the son replies: “Sure it pays well, but it’s so ... boring. You should know about that” (4). Such dialogue creates a <b>conventional tone</b>.</p> <p>Stylist choices are <b>adequate</b> as the <b>voice</b> of the protagonist reflects the stock characterization of a stereotypical teenager who, disdainful of a parent’s career, declares: “I think it’s more rewarding than helping known criminals” (4). The <b>voice</b> created for the father also remains <b>apparent</b> as this stock character lacks the articulate talents for oratory expected from a lawyer: “Only if you desire to be a lawyer though” (4).</p> <p>The unifying effect is <b>appropriately developed</b> with a <b>conventional</b> exposition as the characters and conflict are introduced through both the telling incident with the brother that happened “two years ago” (3) and through the rising action when the father comes home and asks the <b>conventional</b> question “‘How was your day?’” (3), leading to the conflict which is then complicated by the son’s disregard for his father’s life choices “but law isn’t exactly what I’m looking for” (4). The conflict is resolved in the protagonist’s mind: “I play and dream about the good life” (5).</p>

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient–1 (Pf)

**Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

*Initial Planning*

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

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What idea 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.

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English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient–1 (Pf)

There is that age old conflict, that between going with or against the flow. The conflict all must face at some point in their life, between choosing to pursue personal desires, or choosing to conform and be 'normal'. We all desire to be accepted. At the end of the day, we want to feel secure, but at what cost? The writing 'Orchid Thief' by Susan Orlean, describes the slightly eccentric fellow, John Laroche. Laroche lives out his life following whatever desire that catches his fancy, and whatever this desire may prove to be, he embraces with intensity. Laroche appears to be a man that has no qualms with going against the flow. Though realizing that it would perhaps be wise for him to go about a more conventional way of life, and perhaps sometimes considering it, Laroche is unable to conform. As stated in the writing 'Orchid Thief', 'once in a while he gets wistful about the life he thinks he would have led if he had applied himself more conventionally.'

Although slightly over eccentric, Laroche seems to demonstrate an ideal. The ideal that we can be happy if we do not conform, that although the world may not entirely accept us for being different, that we can throw care to the wind and be our own persons. We may view a person like Laroche and wonder, 'why can't I be like that?' And why can't we be not afraid? Yet, though most of us dream of breaking away from the 'norm', in the end we tend to, as the poem 'The Jackhammer Syndrome' puts it: 'press the stomach of [our] business suit[s] flat and stride on into the sunset pretending to be serious.' It is accepted in society that we wear that business suit and go about our business like good citizens, sowing a life of security and conformity. We read a novel and love it because we are told that it is a great read. We see fashion in the media and we accept it as good because we are told to. We accept the ideas that the world throws at us, often simply because we want to be like everyone else. Where are our personalities in all of this? We

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient–1 (Pf)

each have personal desires, we each have identities that are unique and beautiful in themselves, yet it seems we would rather not let them be seen. It seems we would rather have security than freedom to dream for ourselves.

To break from the norm does not need to be a big thing. It can be little things, little pieces of personal desire, which we allow ourselves to show. Recently I had some friends over and we were going to watch a movie which we had randomly picked out at the movie store. What I didn't tell them at first was that it was a movie I had seen before, and had really liked it. Turns out, they all thought that it was a weird movie, and initially, as they sat there pulling it apart, I felt a little piece of myself protest. I had liked it and it seemed wrong that I should sit there allowing my true opinion to be squashed simply because I was scared to be different. I heard my voice protesting. They all stopped, turned to stare at me, almost incredulous that I had spoken in support of the movie. "I liked it," I heard myself say again. They laughed but assured me that I was entitled to my own opinion. *I am*, I thought to myself, setting down to argue my case about the movie. Why not let them see what I truly think? Why not show them a piece of myself instead of hiding, instead of conforming my ideas to the crowd?

At first Laroche appears to be just an over eccentric but I think he demonstrates to us a way that we all wish we could be. He gives us a glimpse of life that appears unconventional and unacceptable at first, but then, as the petals open and we truly see what he has to show us, we see a beauty in being ourselves. Like the last lines of the writing 'The Orchid Thief', 'sometimes this kind of story turns out to be something more, some glimpse of life that expands like those

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**Example Scored Proficient–1 (Pf)**

**Japanese paper balls . . . that bloom into flowers, . . . and the flower is so marvellous that you can't believe there was a time when all you saw in front of you was a paper ball.'**

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT–1**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Ideas and Impressions (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s exploration of the topic is purposeful.</li> <li>• Perceptions and/or ideas are thoughtful and considered.</li> <li>• Support is specific and strengthens the student’s ideas and impressions.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>The student begins the response with a study of John Laroche, characterizing him as one who acts “with intensity” (2), who is “unable to conform” (2), and who “seems to demonstrate an ideal” (2). This <b>considered perception</b> of a man who cannot control his passions yet still serves as an ideal for others is <b>thoughtful</b>. The student builds on this portrayal with a discussion of conformity by asking: “why can’t we be not afraid?” (2) The student’s answer, that we “go about our business like good citizens, sowing a life of security and conformity” (2) and that “It seems we would rather have security than freedom to dream for ourselves” (3) demonstrates a <b>purposeful exploration of the topic</b>.</p> <p>The student then explores and supports this observation with a personal anecdote of watching a film with friends. The student’s conformity is clear: “What I didn’t tell them at first was that it was a movie I had seen before, and had really liked it” (3). This conformity continues when the others “thought that it was a weird movie” (3) and the student remains silent because “I was scared to be different” (3). Upon voicing dissent, however, the student learns that although the others laugh, they also “assured me that I was entitled to my own opinion” (3) implying that the student’s fears were groundless and that in this case, only fear itself has held back an expression of self. The progression through this anecdote provides <b>specific support</b> that <b>strengthens</b> the overarching idea that we should not fear “being ourselves” (3).</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT–1**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Presentation (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice created by the student is distinct.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices are specific and the student’s creation of tone is competent.</li> <li>• The unifying effect is capably developed.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>The student creates a <b>voice</b> that is <b>distinct</b> and appropriate to the context of a personal reflective piece. The voice is personal but not colloquial, which is particularly distinct given that the response is narrated from the perspective of an adolescent and has a section describing the social interactions of adolescents, all explored without adopting a more vernacular narrative style. Examples are found in diction, as in “qualms” (2) and “conventional” (2), or when describing the interaction of those peers: “They all stopped, turned to stare at me, almost incredulous that I had spoken in support of the movie” (3).</p> <p>The quality of syntactic structures, such as the complex “He gives us a glimpse of life that appears unconventional and unacceptable at first, but then, as the petals open and we truly see what he has to show us, we see a beauty in being ourselves” (3), and short declarative phrases as in “I liked it” (3) and “<i>I am</i>” (3), as well as the rhetorical questions such as “Where are our personalities in all of this?” (2) are examples of <b>specific stylistic choices</b>. As well, parallelism as in “We read a novel” (2), “We see fashion” (2), and “We accept the ideas” (2) <b>creates a tone</b> best described as <b>confident</b>.</p> <p>The development begins with a portrayal of Laroche who, unmoved by fear, “seems to demonstrate an ideal” (2). The response then explores the idea that in general people conform out of fear, and then presents a specific personal memory wherein the student learns that those fears are largely (in this case) groundless. The return to Laroche and the lessons that he has to offer, after opening with an analysis of his character, closes the response with a symmetry that demonstrates a <b>capably developed unifying effect</b>.</p>

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Example Scored Proficient–2 (Pf)

*Initial Planning*

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

The Orchid Thief - John Laroche is a man who chose to pursue his own various personal desires ~~over~~ a more stable future as a brain surgeon because it is what makes him truly happy

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

• Even though conformity is a powerful force, one must pursue their own personal desires if they wish to find happiness in life  
• Conformity vs. personal desire is a neverending battle that could go either way

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.

Short Story

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient–2 (Pf)

The Leptons

All my life I have wanted to be in a rock and roll band. My parents utterly despise rock and roll music, for their musical sensibilities will forever be stuck in the long forgotten era of big band and swing. Ever since I could remember, it seemed I always had a guitar in my hand. I have been taking lessons since the age of 7, and over the course of my teenage years, developed a real knack for it. I have never had a girlfriend; my friends like to taunt me by saying that my guitar is my only love interest. The dismal truth is that they are right. To the dismay of my parents, three of my closest friends and I started a rock band in Grade 10. We called ourselves The Leptons (corresponding with a Physics concept we were learning about at the time). We were primarily influenced by classic rock legends like Led Zeppelin, The Velvet Underground, and Hendrix too. Things started out slowly, we practiced a lot and played a show every once in a while but that was about it. Now in Grade 12, we had started to play quite a few more shows and were beginning to amass a sizeable fan base. The question is, what happens after high school?

It was the month of November now and that time when one had to start applying for the post-secondary program of their choice was approaching faster than I could comprehend. My parents were keen on me pursuing a career as a geologist. Does a career in geology sound appealing to me? Not whatsoever. The career I really wanted to pursue more than anything was one in music, but I couldn't just tell my parents that for fear that their heads would explode with disbelief and shame. I knew that I needed to tell them of my true hopes and dreams; all that was left was to conceive the best possible way in which to do so. I decided it would be best to wait and approach them at a different time

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Example Scored Proficient–2 (Pf)

with a more diplomatic resolution in mind. So I settled on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November as the optimal day on which to break the news to them that I really didn't want to be a geologist, but a musician. Despite my eagerness towards rock and roll, I couldn't help but get the feeling that maybe geology did indeed represent the most stable future I could hope for. I quickly put the thought out of my mind and went on with my life as usual.

Over the course of November I thought long and hard about what I really wanted to do. I was still torn with indecision about my future. I felt like music and geology each had hold of one of my arms and were engaged in a vicious never-ending tug-of-war. The last few weeks had been pretty spectacular. The Leptons won the city's Junior Battle of the Bands competition, which was a pretty big deal to us. But at the same time my grades in Physics just kept going up and up to the point where I was practically top of my class. How I could do so well in a class that I loathed just utterly astounded me. Today was the 21<sup>st</sup> of November and that meant I had to talk with my parents. The future was upon me now; there was nothing I could do to stop it. The wheel had begun to turn. I had reached a fork in the road of life. Two paths lay at my feet, to the left my career in music and to the right my career in geology. Each had its pros and cons. Geology was wildly uninteresting but it represented a more stable future, and it was what my parents and all my teachers wanted me to pursue. Music is the love of my life but it is a high risk-high return type of situation. As I walked home from school that day I thought about the countless number of people that have also come directly between the conflicting forces of conformity and personal aspiration. To know what every other person had chosen wouldn't have eased the weight of the decision that was weighing heavily on my mind by even a little bit. As I walked in the door I knew what I had to do. I had finally taken a side. I knew what I had

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**Example Scored Proficient–2 (Pf)**

**to do to truly be happy in this life. The world will get by just fine without another geologist. The Leptons will live on forever.**

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2011  
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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT–2**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Ideas and Impressions (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s exploration of the topic is purposeful.</li> <li>• Perceptions and/or ideas are thoughtful and considered.</li> <li>• Support is specific and strengthens the student’s ideas and impressions.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>The student <b>purposefully explores the topic</b> by creating a narrative that involves a protagonist who comes to realize that “Even though conformity is a powerful force, one must pursue their own personal desires if they wish to find happiness in life” (1) and that “Conformity vs. personal desire is a neverending battle that could go either way” (1) as stated on the Initial Planning page.</p> <p>A narrative that juxtaposes the protagonist’s desire to become a rock musician, “a high risk-high return” (3) profession, rather than pursue the more conventional of “Two paths” (3) and become a geologist, is <b>thoughtful</b>. The implicit, but unmistakable, references to both John’s moment of regret over medical school in “The Orchid Thief” through “Geology was wildly uninteresting but it represented a more stable future” (3) and to the speaker’s tendency in “The Jackhammer Syndrome” to win at pool only when he stopped trying through “How could I do so well in a class that I loathed just utterly astounded me” (3) are <b>considered</b>.</p> <p>The student’s choice to contrast the protagonist’s musical tastes: “Led Zeppelin, The Velvet Underground, and Hendrix too” (2) with his parents’: “the long forgotten era of big band and swing” (2); the naming of his band “The Leptons (corresponding with a Physics concept we were learning about at the time)” (2); and his selection and repetition of a specific date: “the 21st of November as the optimal day on which to break the news to them that I really didn’t want to be a geologist, but a musician” (3) are all <b>specific</b>. The narrator’s feeling that “music and geology each had hold of one of my arms and were engaged in a vicious never-ending tug-of-war” (3), his reflection “about the countless number of people that have also come directly between the conflicting forces of conformity and personal aspiration” (3) and the recognition the “The world will get by just fine without another geologist” (4) <b>strengthens</b> the student’s two-pronged controlling idea as outlined on the Initial Planning page.</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1 January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT–2**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Presentation (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice created by the student is distinct.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices are specific and the student’s creation of tone is competent.</li> <li>• The unifying effect is capably developed.</li> </ul>	<p>By choosing a first-person narrative, the student creates a <b>distinctive voice</b> for a protagonist faced with making a decision about his future, as in “that time when one had to start applying for the post-secondary program of their choice was approaching faster than I could comprehend” (2), and “I knew I needed to tell them of my true hopes and dreams” (2), and “Over the course of November I thought long and hard about what I really wanted to do” (3).</p> <p>The <b>tone</b> of uncertainty, as the protagonist works through the dilemma between pursuing his personal desire and conforming to his parents’ wishes is <b>competently</b> established with the questions: “The question is, what happens after high school?” (2) and “Does a career in geology sound appealing to me?” (2), as well as the statements: “the feeling that maybe geology did indeed represent the most stable future I could hope for” (3) and “I was still torn with indecision about my future” (3). Despite some awkward phrasing and cliché expressions, the student makes <b>specific stylistic choices</b> in diction: “My parents utterly despise rock and roll music” (2), “keen on me pursuing a career as a geologist” (2), “for fear that their heads would explode with disbelief and shame” (2), and “Geology was wildly uninteresting” (3). The student also demonstrates <b>specific stylistic choices</b> in syntax: “I have never had a girlfriend; my friends like to taunt me by saying that my guitar is my only love interest” (2), “I quickly put the thought out of my mind and went on with my life as usual” (3), and “Each had its pros and cons” (3).</p> <p>The student has <b>capably developed a unifying effect</b>, not only by weaving the thread of uncertainty throughout the narrative before the final realization: “As I walked in the door I knew what I had to do” (3), but also in the opening and closing lines: “All my life I have wanted to be in a rock and roll band” (2) and “The Leptons will live on forever” (4).</p>

Pf

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent–1 (E)

*Initial Planning*

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

The Orchid Thief

- I can relate really well with John Laroche.
- I agree with the things he does only because they happen to have good intentions

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

- my experiences with being different and what it has showed me about the benefits and limitations of individualism
- I will not go into more depth about laws and illegal activity because that only complicates things and is irrelevant to my experiences.

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 perspective

English Language Arts 30-1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent-1 (E)

Planning

Sometimes choosing to conform <sup>to societal norms</sup> can make <sup>one's</sup> ~~your~~ life less full than it can be. In the case of John Larocche, choosing to pursue his personal desires has raised more than a few eyebrows

It is sometimes hard to judge how one should ~~behave~~ behave in society - whether one should prioritize one's personal ~~de~~

John Larocche is a model of individualistic  
he balances morals with adventure  
exploration

English Language Arts 30-1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent-1 (E)

Written Work

It is often hard to judge how one should behave in society. Prioritizing one's personal desires over societal norms - or vice-versa, can mean the difference between living and not living one's life to the fullest. In the case of John Laroche, choosing to pursue his personal desires has raised more than a few eyebrows, including those of the narrator, because of how eccentric they are relative to the "normal" standards. While I was never obsessed with turtles or Ice Age fossils or old mirrors, I can identify with Laroche because "weird" is what my peers called me up until high school when other girls my age moved on to skinny jeans, I continued wearing my baggy jeans that I found more comfortable. I have many acquaintances but fewer friends; someone is a friend in my view if they can put up with the strange ~~idea~~ (but completely vegetarian) food I eat, my frequent rants about math, art, and philosophy (sometimes combined, sometimes separate), and how I will laugh hysterically about something I saw or heard years ago. I chose to attend Mathcamp for three summers in a row. No matter how much liking math seems "uncool" or out of the ordinary, I learned more<sup>math</sup> at camp than I was ever taught in school. One of [Laroche's] greatest assets is

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Example Scored Excellent–1 (E)

Mothcamp

- other conferences have looked at us in disbelief

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Example Scored Excellent-1 (E)

optimism<sup>on</sup>." In my opinion, Laroche's ~~is the type kind of individualistic~~ <sup>individualism is the kind of individualism</sup> that people pursuing happiness should ~~have~~ have. One should not conform to societal norms if it will impede creativity or venture, but the other bound is that one cannot directly violate the rights of someone else. Spontaneity without rationality is foolishness.

Back in ~~middle~~ <sup>elementary</sup> school, I wore the clothes I liked best and did whatever made me happy, which included rallying up people to sing "Phantom of the Opera" at recess. I'd be hypocritical in saying that I was completely shameless (sometimes we sang horribly...) because there was a small degree of conformity involved. The more eccentric of my peers found peace in numbers. In retrospect, I realize that we didn't conform to the standard for the sake of being different; it was just a matter of exploring ~~for~~ our interests and creating an opportunity for others who secretly want to do the same. Now, I still wear what I want even though my preferred colours are brighter than ~~what~~ <sup>whites,</sup> the grays, and blacks my peers wear. I sing in choir and feed ~~the~~ people's energy by bringing music into my every day experiences. It makes people happy, on a more tangible scale than Laroche's plant-growing guide.

Some of my fondest memories come from "math-odd's" on the whiteboards of my junior high school.

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Example Scored Excellent-1 (E)

Yes, people found the "Asian Ladder of Marks" strange and the five proofs of Pythagorean Theorem perplexing, but in the end I can say that it only yielded benefit. I was upfront about my<sup>academic</sup> interests. Mark Twain said that "the unexamined life may not be worth living, but the life too closely examined may not be lived at all." I keep a balance of that in my intellectual pursuits. However odd they might seem, they at least enhance my<sup>views of the</sup> world, if not the views of others.

My final point is quite bold, and it is that most students in high school have no real idea of what mathematics actually is. Almost everyone lives their life just fine ~~without~~ this understanding, but I feel that part of the reason why so few people adore math is because of societal norms. Our curriculum can only accommodate certain concepts, and it tries to be as straightforward as possible. But to really appreciate or become acquainted with an aspect of the mathematical universe, one must step outside the norm. It may involve seeking sources outside of school, or investing education in the subject in higher education. For me, I attend Mathcamp because the math I learned there makes me want to be a math major. I will either become an actuary or a professor. When

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent-1 (E)

it comes to career choices, what is the societal norm? There shouldn't be one; at some point, people have to be "different". It's the only way ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> have innovation or <sup>to</sup> gain knowledge. Laroche's attempt at stealing orchids, for example, is a noble one, and was a creative attempt at saving endangered species. However, there ~~isn't~~ <sup>is</sup> risk in everything we do outside of the social norm.

My ventures in eccentricity are no where near as deviant or shocking as ~~the~~ Laroche's. However, I identify with him because I too see the benefit of choosing one's personal desires over conforming with societal norms. Of course, we are on similar grounds because nothing we ever tried to do seriously harmed someone else, as far as we know. I always settle the conflict between pursuing a personal desire and conforming to social norms by evaluating which ~~decision~~ will produce the greatest amount of happiness as long as there is no calculatable suffering. It's worked so far.

**English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT–1**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>I</b></p> <p><b>Ideas and Impressions (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s exploration of the topic is insightful.</li> <li>• Perceptions and/or ideas are confident and discerning.</li> <li>• Support is precise and aptly reinforces the student’s ideas and impressions.</li> </ul>	<p>The student begins the response by outlining the dilemma facing every member of society – the extent to which one should engage in “Prioritizing one’s personal desires over societal norms” (4) and <b>confidently</b> suggests the correct choice will determine fulfilment in life. The student establishes a sympathetic tone by personally connecting with John Laroche, whose choices “raised more than a few eyebrows” (4), through asserting “I can identify with Laroche because ‘weird’ is what my peers called me up until high school” (4). The student perceives that “‘One of [Laroche’s] greatest assets is optimism’” (4, 5) which is necessary for “creativity or venture” (5), but also concludes the first paragraph with the <b>insightful</b> framing of the idea that “Spontaneity without rationality is foolishness” (5).</p> <p>The student moves on to tie in personal experiences that parallel Laroche’s situation, maturely recognizing that “My ventures in eccentricity are no where near as deviant or shocking as Laroche’s” (7). The <b>precise</b> support ranges from elementary escapades of singing “‘Phantom of the Opera’ at recess” (5), with the student’s <b>discerning</b> reflection that the act was not “completely shameless” (5) because “The more eccentric of my peers found peace in numbers” (5), thus conforming to their chosen group. The student then explores a fond junior high recollection of the “‘mathoff’s on the whiteboards” (5), recognizing like Mark Twain, the need for a balance between a life examined and a life lived, pursuing personal desires of an “intellectual” (6) nature in contrast to conformity. The student concludes the math vignette with the <b>confident</b> idea that “few people adore math” (6) because “Our curriculum can only accomodate certain concepts” (6) due to societal norms, <b>aptly reinforcing the student’s ideas and impressions</b>.</p> <p>The student concludes by reiterating that “people have to be ‘different’. It’s the only way to have innovation or to gain knowledge” (7) and reflects that “I always settle the conflict between pursuing a personal desire and conforming to social norms by evaluating which decision will produce the greatest amount of happiness as long as there is no calculatable suffering” (7), alluding with <b>insight</b> that this is perhaps not the only option, but in the student’s brief life “It’s worked so far” (7).</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT–1**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Presentation (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice created by the student is convincing.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices are precise and the student’s creation of tone is adept.</li> <li>• The unifying effect is skillfully developed.</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>E</b></p>	<p>Confident and complex structures are used throughout the response, such as “I have many acquaintances but fewer friends; someone is a friend in my view if they can put up with the strange (but completely vegetarian) food I eat, my frequent rants about math, art, and philosophy (sometimes combined, sometimes separate), and how I will laugh hysterically about something I saw or heard years ago” (4), demonstrating the creation of a <b>convincing voice</b> that is maintained throughout the response.</p> <p>Stylistically, the student convincingly melds an examination of the text with personal accounts that ring true and create an <b>adept tone</b>. Diction is <b>skillfully chosen</b> and <b>precise</b>, for example: “It makes people happy, on a more tangible scale than Laroche’s plant-growing guide” (5) or to “become acquainted with an aspect of the mathematical universe, one must step outside the norm” (6).</p> <p><b>The unifying effect is skillfully developed</b> through the student’s transition from literary discussion to personal life experience. The student begins by applying the central idea that living life to the fullest means optimistically, but rationally, following creative impulses to the prose excerpt and then adeptly traces that pattern in the personal narrative. The student concludes by acknowledging that an evaluation of the happiness vs. suffering factor has been a valuable guideline in life “so far” (7).</p>

English Language Arts 30-1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent-2 (E)

*Initial Planning*

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

Diogène ou la Lucidité - Diogenes or Lucidity, 2005.  
Diogène is a social outcast, a loner. He lives  
on only his beliefs which are different from  
those of the people around him. No one understands  
him

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

The affect that living according to his own  
beliefs and not conforming to those that are  
more conventional has on him, illustrating  
a way of life that is different and the  
pursuit of it despite criticism.

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.

Creative - Narrative

- \* Lamp in the day - he is searching for an "honest man", even though it is light outside it takes a different or another kind of light to find that.
- Convention - social customs
- Lucidity - easily understood, sane.
- Cynic - a morose, surly or sarcastic person.

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Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent-2 (E)

How he lives searching for  
an "honest man": One who  
lives sincerely and  
for himself.

Diogenes

Diogenes comes to  
realize the end  
after realizing how few  
that the "honest  
man" he searches  
for is himself

The people in the town  
make fun of him and  
don't understand what  
he means.

English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent–2 (E)

Diogenes sits along in his study. The light from his lamp dimly illuminates the shady room. The feather quivers in his hand as it races along the parchment as rain streaks the window in a continuous downpour. His mind is aflutter with all of his many ideas fighting to secure their spot as written words for the world to see. Sleep pulls at his eyelids and soon his writing hand begins to falter and he drifts into a deep slumber. The people of the village know of Diogenes. The old man who lives alone in the stone house on the corner of town. Some of the children, when telling ghost stories use Diogenes as the main personality. They speak of fabricated accounts of the birds the old man would catch out of mid air and brings them back to his study to open up their soft bellies and prod at their tiny inner workings and if he caught one of them alone at night he might give them the same treatment. The children's parents are nearly as insolent. Every time Diogenes leaves his home to walk the streets with his familiar lamp in his hand the women dart behind walls to occasionally peer through stained windows and the men snicker at the lonesome unfortunate fate the aged man has come to. Diogenes did not however, give any of his neighbours one reason to speak of him the way they do. Although he kept to himself, he was polite the rare occasions he was spoken to and he by no means caused an innocent bird harm never mind a child. He lived by his own means and his alone and that was the thing that made him different, the thing the townspeople feared.

The sun shone through the glass prying open the eyes of the sleeping man. He stands up slowly from his chair to awaken his stiff body. Diogenes reaches for the lamp on the table and

English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Texts Assignment

Example Scored Excellent–2 (E)

dons his coat. The morning air is crisp but the town is awake, people jostle on the streets getting ready for the day ahead of them. Diogenes holds the lamp high above his head. Once, one of the valiant young men of the town had asked him why he needed a lamp to see in broad daylight. Diogenes coolly replied that he was looking for an honest man, he had then held the lamp directly in the face of the young man. "Not you," he had said and carried on his way. Diogenes now recognizes that as soon as he was on the street and heading towards the heart of the town the people seemed to have evaporated. He carries on a while longer then decides to return home. His life studies lay splayed out on his desk. Notes on what it means to live true to one's own self, sincerely, truthfully and honestly. Notes on what it means to be an honest man. Looking down at his work he suddenly has an epiphany, maybe the man he was seeking was so hard to find because he merely lived in the night, so he waits for the blanket of darkness to fall on the town and embarks on his midnight discovery. The town sleeps as Diogenes holds the lamp in front of him lighting the way of his feet. Far up the street he hears a din, a shuffle of some sort. He is certain that it is the man he is looking for. Diogenes hurries as hasty as his aged joints will allow. There is a small stone structure he can see past the light of his lamp that the sound had come from and at last he reaches it. He ambles up to the window, lifts his lantern up to the glass and presses his forehead against its cold surface. At first he sees nothing but darkness, he steps back disappointed with himself for getting so enthused -but then, he sees him. The man he has always been searching for, the man who is honest. Diogenes can see the knowledge within the man's mind as an aura that radiates behind his head, a light powered by insightful ideas. He can feel his determined and self-assured character fill his own lungs with

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**Example Scored Excellent–2 (E)**

**strength. The man looking back at him is the one he has constantly been looking for, the man looking back at him is the one he has known all along.**

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Personal Response to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT–2**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Ideas and Impressions (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s exploration of the topic is insightful.</li> <li>• Perceptions and/or ideas are confident and discerning.</li> <li>• Support is precise and aptly reinforces the student’s ideas and impressions.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">E</p>	<p>The student utilizes the Initial Planning page to indicate that Diogenes is “living according to his own beliefs and not conforming to those that are more conventional” (1) as the central issue for an <b>insightful exploration of the topic</b>. In the short story, the student <b>confidently</b> asserts that Diogenes does not “give any of his neighbours one reason to speak of him the way they do” (3); rather, he “lived by his own means and his alone and that was the thing that made him different, the thing the townspeople feared” (3). <b>Precise evidence</b> of the townspeople’s fear is developed in their avoidance of Diogenes and his <b>discerning</b> recognition that “as soon as he was on the street and heading towards the heart of the town the people seemed to have evaporated” (4).</p> <p>Much of the student’s <b>insightful exploration of the topic</b> is achieved through implied references and through the <b>precise</b> use of symbolism that <b>aptly reinforces the ideas and impressions</b>. The student uses the light from “Diogene ou la Lucidite” as one of the controlling symbols for Diogenes’ personal desire that begins with Diogenes’ “light from his lamp dimly [illuminating] the shady room” (3). Using light as a motif for the quest for understanding is <b>reinforced</b> with the parallel motif of windows that begin with rain streaking down “in a continuous downpour” (3). The student’s <b>confident and discerning</b> development of <b>perceptions</b> is evident in Diogenes’ moment of understanding when the two symbols are brought together: Diogenes “lifts his lantern up to the glass and ... at first he sees nothing but darkness” (4). However, when “he steps back ... he sees him. The man he has always been searching for, the man who is honest” (4). The student’s planning indicates that Diogenes’ conflict in “resisting conformity” (2) would result in a realization of self-awareness and is <b>aptly reinforced</b> in the final lines: “The man looking back at him is the one he has constantly been looking for, the man looking back at him is the one he has known all along” (5). “The man” (5) is Diogenes himself.</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Personal Response to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT–2**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Presentation (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice created by the student is convincing.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices are precise and the student’s creation of tone is adept.</li> <li>• The unifying effect is skillfully developed.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">E</p>	<p>The student employs <b>precise</b> detail and description to create the <b>convincing voice</b> of a character who the people in the village know as “The old man who lives alone in the stone house on the corner of town” (3). Furthering this sense of an alienated protagonist are details such as: “Some of the children, when telling ghost stories...speak of fabricated accounts of the birds” (3) that Diogenes allegedly “would catch out of mid air” (3) and then “open up their soft bellies and prod at their tiny inner workings” (3). The adults, too, contribute to Diogenes’ isolation, with the “women [who] dart behind walls to occasionally peer through stained windows and the men [who] snicker at the lonesome unfortunate fate the aged man has come to” (3).</p> <p>The student’s strong establishment of character also carries through in the development of other elements expected in a short story. In order to establish the setting, the student <b>adeptly</b> uses <b>precise stylistic choices</b> such as personification to create the atmosphere of a living town that in the “crisp” (4) morning air “is awake” (4) and “sleeps” (4) under the “blanket of darkness” (4). The student also uses <b>precise</b> diction, <b>skillful</b> parallel repetition and deliberate sentence fragments in describing Diogenes’ work: “His life studies lay splayed out on his desk. Notes on what it means to live true to one’s own self, sincerely, truthfully and honestly. Notes on what it means to be an honest man” (4).</p> <p>The student’s narrative, although lacking distinct paragraphing, employs clear time transitions and incorporates antecedent action when “Once, one of the valiant young men of the town had asked him why he needed a lamp to see in broad daylight” (4). The student also <b>skillfully</b> establishes a window motif and creates the contrasting patterns of light and dark, as well as sleep and waking, to further the <b>unifying effect</b> of the entire piece.</p>

# Examples of Students' Writing with Teachers' Commentaries

English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
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

Arthur Miller Death of a Salesman

*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.

- Willy Loman chooses to conform in society and to live of a salesman leads him to unhappiness
  - Wants to be well liked and well known
  - doesn't make lots of money
  - no time for kids.
  -

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

Personal Desire vs. Conforming

Choosing to pursue personal desire or choosing to conform and be like everyone else is a conflict that is put in front of us at least once in our lives. Pursuing personal desires can lead to a life of happiness and knowing that the decision you made is the one that has made you who you are today. Conforming in society and following by the rules, regulations, thoughts and ideas set out by others doesn't always lead to a life of happiness and a sense of fulfillment. Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman represents the conflict between the pursuit of personal desire and choosing to conform all too perfectly. Willy Loman, husband to Linda Loman, father of Biff and Happy Loman, is a character that has chosen to conform in the life of salesman, and is unhappy in his life because of the decision he has made. Biff and Happy Loman are two sons who have chosen to conform and follow their father's ways in the life of a salesman. Can conforming and following the life of a businessman make these three characters happy or is the pursuit of personal desires what lead to happiness.

Willy Loman is an average everyday man living the American dream. Willy Loman is a salesman who has two kids, a wife, and lives pay check to pay check and struggling to get by. Willy Loman constantly slips from reality going back to the good old days where everything was okay and life was good. Willy Loman once heard a story about Dave Singleman, who was a salesman just like himself. Dave Singleman had everything, he made lots of money, was well liked and had a widely attended funeral. Willy wanted to have a life just like that. That was what he desired. Willy constantly struggled with the idea of being liked, he put on a fake facade for his family and friends that everyone liked him and that he was needed everywhere. Willy tries to

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

seek comfort in Linda with his problem of not being liked, and how people call him a walrus and other harmful names. He struggles with money as well, he is a strictly commissions salesman. Willy doesn't have many sales, and is forced to borrow money from his best friend Charley, knowing all too well that he won't be able to pay Charley back. Willy tries to tell his sons that the life of a salesman is the job that they should take. He also tells his sons Biff and Happy that if you are well liked and popular that you will succeed in life. Willy follows what he thinks are his own personal desires his whole life, but in reality he is truly conforming in the life of a salesman. Conforming in the life of a salesman leads Willy to live a normal life, unknowingly he lives an unhappy life as well, in turn seeking out happiness from his children which he has taught to adapt or conform in the life of a salesman.

Biff Loman is a Willy's eldest son, who Willy has taught everything to and who Willy has taken preference of his whole life. At a young age Biff, was taught by his father that if you are popular and well liked, that you will succeed. Biff followed this idea his whole childhood. Biff was the quarterback of his high school football team and was always the most popular. Willy always wanted Biff to grow up and be a salesman just like him as he wanted Biff to succeed in life and not be a bum. Biff followed this idea during high school, trying to work his way up the ladder at a sports store, but that didn't happen as he was fired for stealing. Which was something else that Willy had taught him As Biff grew older he started growing away from the life of a businessman, he wanted to follow his own desires in life, which were to work in the outdoors with his hands. Biff struggled to find himself and find a way to reach his goal, he often came home trying to figure out who he was and how he was going to reach his goal. Biff was pursuing his desire the whole time working at a ranch, he didn't know it though, as Willy had

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

taught him to adapt to the life of a salesman. Biff had an epiphany one day though, and realized that what he wanted to do was work outdoors and that conforming and trying to live the life of a salesman wasn't what made him happy, it was what made Willy happy. Biff struggled with the conflict between pursuing his own desires and choosing to conform his whole life. Only when he had the epiphany, did he realize that pursuing his own personal desires was what made him happy.

Happy Loman was always the second child in Willy's life never getting the attention he deserved. He was always behind Biff no matter what. Willy also taught Happy that living the life of a salesman was the right way to go in life. Happy chose to conform in this idea that Willy presented him and became a salesman. He was the son who grew up and made lots of money and was able to send his parents on vacation. Although Happy had lived up to his father expectation, he still wasn't Willy's favourite boy. Choosing to conform and live the life of a salesman just like Willy had, didn't make Happy, content with himself. He drew happiness from sleeping with the secretaries and lying to others to get where he wants. Not choosing to pursue his own personal desires left Happy with a life of unhappiness.

The struggle between choosing to pursue one's own personal desires or choosing to conform, can lead you on a path to unhappiness, or on a path of contentment. The struggle between these two ideas is one which will lead you to live a life that you are happy with. Willy's choice to conform and live the life of a businessman lead to him being unhappy in his life, and seeking happiness from his son. Happy's choice to follow the ways that his father taught him and conform in the life of a salesman, lead him to not being able to be content with where he was in

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment**

**Example Scored Satisfactory (S)**

**his life. Biff was the only Character who figured out that conforming in the life of a businessman, didn't make him happy and that following his own personal desires to work outdoors at a ranch was what made him happy. Choosing to follow one's personal desire's instead of choosing to conform, is the choice that will make you happy.**

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 Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Thought and Understanding (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideas are relevant and straightforward, demonstrating a generalized comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic.</li> <li>• Literary interpretations are general but plausible.</li> </ul>	<p>The student’s idea that pursuing personal desires rather than conforming to society will “lead to a life of happiness and a sense of fulfillment” (2) is <b>relevant</b> and <b>straightforward</b>. The student develops this idea through an analysis of Willy, who “has chosen to conform in the life of salesman” (2) and expects his sons Biff and Happy to follow his example. Presented as a controlling idea, the student asks “Can conforming and following the life of a businessman make these three characters happy or is the pursuit of personal desires what lead to happiness” (2), demonstrating a <b>generalized comprehension of the text and topic</b>.</p> <p>The student’s directing use of the idea “Pursuing personal desires” (2) is examined initially through Willy who tries to live “the American dream” (2) but “unknowing he lives an unhappy life” (3). In applying this idea to Biff, the student begins with Willy’s influence on Biff’s “childhood” (3) and “high school” (3) years, then shifts to Biff’s eventual “epiphany” (4) that “pursuing his own personal desires was what made him happy” (4). Lastly, the student considers Happy: “Choosing to conform and live the life of a salesman just like Willy had, didn’t make Happy, content with himself” (4). The closing observation that “The struggle between choosing to pursue one’s own personal desires or choosing to conform, can lead you on a path to unhappiness, or on a path of contentment” (4) is a <b>general but plausible literary interpretation</b>.</p>

S

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Supporting Evidence (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support is general, adequate, and appropriately chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in an acceptable way but occasionally may lack persuasiveness.</li> <li>• A reasonable connection to the student’s ideas is suitably maintained.</li> </ul>	<p>The student’s thesis is <b>reinforced</b> through an <b>appropriately chosen</b> examination of the characters Willy, Biff and Happy.</p> <p>The student’s description of Willy as choosing the life of a salesman based on “a story about Dave Singleman” (2) which promises “lots of money”(2) and popularity is <b>adequate support</b>. Additional <b>general support</b> includes how Willy “struggles with money” (3) and looks to Linda for comfort “with his problem of not being liked” (3).</p> <p>Biff is presented as the son “who Willy has taught everything to” (3) but who as he “grew older he started growing away from the life of a businessman, he wanted to follow his own desires in life, which were to work in the outdoors with his hands” (3), both examples of <b>adequate appropriately chosen support</b>.</p> <p><b>General adequate support</b> is given for Happy, who is presented as the conforming son “who grew up and made lots of money and was able to send his parents on vacation” (4) and therefore “lived up to his father expectation,” (4) yet he only “drew happiness from sleeping with the secretaries and lying to others to get where he wants” (4).</p> <p>The supporting evidence <b>lacks persuasiveness</b> because Biff’s epiphany is never examined and Happy does not make significant amounts of money nor is his “life of unhappiness” (4) explained. Nevertheless, a <b>reasonable connection to the student’s ideas is suitably maintained</b>.</p>

S

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Form and Structure (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A straightforward arrangement of ideas and details provides direction for the discussion that is developed appropriately.</li> <li>• The unifying effect or controlling idea is presented and maintained generally; however, coherence may falter.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>In this five paragraph essay, the student presents a <b>straightforward arrangement of ideas and details</b> that <b>provides direction for the discussion</b> of the controlling idea: “Can conforming and following the life of a businessman make these three characters happy or is the pursuit of personal desires what lead to happiness” (2). In successive independent paragraphs, the student applies this controlling idea to Willy, Biff and Happy.</p> <p>The progression of ideas – from Willy’s facade of conformity, to Biff’s struggle to “find a way to reach his goal” (3), to Happy’s unhappy conformity – provides a character-based approach to the discussion. The student’s decision to follow the Willy, Biff, Happy organizational pattern reinforces the <b>straightforward arrangement of the discussion that is developed appropriately</b>. Beginning with the father who “taught” (3) his sons that “living the life of a salesman was the right way to go in life” (4), then moving to Happy, the son who “chose to conform in this idea” (4) but was not “content with himself” (4), and ending with Biff, the son whose epiphany makes him “realize that pursuing his own personal desires was what made him happy” (4) would have strengthened the development of the discussion and enhanced the <b>unifying effect</b>, leading to the student’s final statement: “Choosing to follow one’s personal desire’s instead of choosing to conform, is the choice that will make you happy” (5).</p> <p>In addition, <b>coherence does falter</b> because the characters’ motivations are not fully developed within the supporting paragraphs; however, the <b>unifying effect and controlling idea is maintained generally</b>.</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Choice (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diction is adequate.</li> <li>• Syntactic structures are straightforward, but attempts at complex structures may be awkward.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a conventional composition with an appropriate voice.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>Throughout this response the student’s <b>diction is adequate</b>, as in “everything was okay and life was good” (2). The student’s diction is characterized by functional but general phrases, with awkward exceptions such as “fake facade” (2) and “Happy Loman was always the second child in Willy’s life” (4).</p> <p>The students’ response is typified by <b>straightforward syntactic structures</b>, such as “Willy doesn’t have many sales, and is forced to borrow money from his best friend Charley, knowing all too well that he won’t be able to pay Charley back” (3) and “Not choosing to pursue his own personal desires left Happy with a life of unhappiness” (4). <b>Attempts at complex sentence structures are awkward</b>, as in “Conforming in the life of a salesman leads Willy to live a normal life, unknowingly he lives an unhappy life as well, in turn seeking out happiness from his children which he has taught to adapt or conform in the life of a salesman” (3).</p> <p>Overall, <b>stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a conventional composition with an appropriate voice</b>, as evidenced in “Biff was the quarterback of his high school football team and was always the most popular” (3).</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1, January 2011  
Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—SATISFACTORY**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Correctness (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</li> <li>• There may be occasional lapses in control and minor errors; however, the communication remains clear.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>The student’s response <b>demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, grammar, and mechanics</b>. An inconsistent application of punctuation, particularly the comma, contributes to a response with <b>occasional lapses in control</b> but <b>the communication remains clear</b>, as is evident in: “Biff followed this idea during high school, trying to work his way up the ladder at a sports store, but that didn’t happen as he was fired for stealing. Which was something else that Willy had taught him As Biff grew older he started growing away from the life of a businessman, he wanted to follow his own desires in life, which were to work in the outdoors with his hands” (3) and “Happy’s choice to follow the ways that his father taught him and conform in the life of a salesman, lead him to not being content with where he was in his life” (4, 5).</p> <p><b>Control of the basics of usage</b> is evident, for example “unknowingly he lives an unhappy life as well” (3) and “seeking happiness from his son” (4). Generic word choices do not lend themselves to many errors in usage.</p>

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

## The Assignment

Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the conflict between pursuing a personal desire and choosing to <sup>[conform.]</sup>

Findley develops the idea that in situations where an individual must reject their personal values

↳ doing what is expected in addition to following other reactions of

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).

• individual's personal desires > ability to conform  
- develop his personal values. → then talk

Robert Ross

• individualism & his personal values conflict with his ability to conform.

① Whores of Lousetown

- though hidden and untold to the public, going to a whorehouse was what was expected.

② Robert going against Captain Leather

- Strong correlation between authority & conformity.

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*Initial Planning*

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

Literary Text and  
Text Creator

The Wars, by Timothy Findley

*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.

- Robert Ross is a dynamic character in the novel who holds strongly to his values of purity and the preservation of life.
- these values reflect his personal desires, and oftentimes conflict with choosing to conform.
- demonstrates through his experiences at war that in cases that diverge/hinder his personal values, he is unable to conform
- conform = not only following the actions of others, but doing what is expected of him.

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Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

*Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text*

- ① • what does it mean to conform?  
- following the actions of others (modern sense)  
- can also mean doing what is expected/  
following orders  
observed by ~~the~~ Robert RASS.

My planning is continued here:

• Findley develops the idea that individuals will reject conformity in ~~the~~ circumstances where their personal desires and values may be sacrificed or hindered.

• ① Whores of Lousetown

② rejecting orders of Captain Leather.

③ refusing to kill ~~the~~ Rowena's rabbits.

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

Written Work

~~Often~~ Contending Against Conformity

Often times the phrase, "to conform" has been associated with, and accepted as an individual following the actions of others. A closer look at conformity, however, reveals that it can also encompass an individual adhering to instructions and doing what is expected of him. Though many of us experience conformity through the former definition, Robert Ross, the protagonist in Timothy Findley's The Wars, experiences both aspects of conformity. Thrust into the palpable buzz of World War I, Robert is forced to make decisions that will either adhere to, or reject <sup>the idea of</sup> conformity. <sup>From his decision</sup> ~~In this way~~, Findley develops the <sup>notion</sup> ~~idea~~ that individuals will reject conformity in circumstances where their personal desires and values may be sacrificed.

Robert is a dynamic character who undergoes several emotive and psychological transitions as the novel progresses. Despite these changes, however, he is a character who holds strongly to values such as purity and the

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

preservation of life. These values stem from Robert's close relationship with his deceased sister, Rowena. As she suffered from a debilitating brain condition that ~~prevented~~<sup>bound</sup> her ~~from~~<sup>to</sup> leaving her wheelchair, Robert entrusted himself with the responsibility to care for Rowena. This responsibility developed into the values Robert possesses in the novel: the innocence and chaste nature of Rowena in her wheelchair develops Robert's value for purity, and his devotion to ~~educate~~<sup>protect</sup> Rowena's life and subsequent guilt for not being able to ~~prevent her death~~ underlies his desire for the preservation of life. Robert's values are first challenged by conformity when his mother orders him to kill Rowena's rabbits following her <sup>own</sup> death. As an authoritative figure over Robert, her orders reflect the aspect of conformity where an individual is expected to adhere to and execute ~~given instructions~~ instructions given ~~to~~ by authority. However, Robert cannot fathom killing the rabbits, as they symbolically represent Rowena and killing them would mean sacrificing his value for the preservation of life. Even after Robert's mother hires Teddy Buge to kill the rabbits,

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

Robert attacks Teddy, yelling "You bastard! Is this what soldiers are for?" These scathing remarks, coupled by Robert's <sup>future</sup> assault on Teddy, reflect the magnitude of Robert's value for the preservation of life and his rejection of conformity.

Upon enlisting in the war, Robert is put into another circumstance where he must choose whether or not to reject conformity. Though the practice <sup>of visiting, where houses</sup> itself was not favored or accepted by society, it was expected and assumed that the soldiers of the war would visit such places as a means of escape from the brutalities experienced by trench warfare. Though many soldiers accepted and even enjoyed these visits, Robert expressed unease, ~~and~~ at the thought of going to a whorehouse. His value for purity overpowered the social expectations of him, resulting in ~~the~~ aberration ~~from~~ <sup>of his</sup> the actions from the rest of the men. By choosing not to have any sexual encounters with the whores from Louse town, ~~and~~ unlike the rest of the soldiers, Robert rejects conformity in the sense that he does not follow the actions of others. This rejection of conformity is particularly

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

significant in the novel, as it demonstrates and foreshadows Robert's perpetual conflict with his personal desires and the expectations of him as a soldier.

Quite possibly Robert's most striking and forceful rejection of conformity occurs towards the end of the novel, when Robert disregards Captain Leather's orders and attempts to save the horses in the burning barn. This incident represents the ~~acme~~ acme of Robert's perpetual conflict, as he rejects both aspects of conformity for the sake of both ~~of~~ his values of purity and the preservation of life. In this incident, Robert confronts Captain Leather and asks to release the horses from the barn, as keeping them there would result in imminent death from the German artillery. Captain Leather denies Robert's request, and because Robert is of a lower rank in military status, he is expected as a soldier to obey the captain's command. However, Robert disregards Captain Leather's command, and proceeds to release the horses. His ~~best~~ decision to ~~save~~ save the horses represents the rejection typifier

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Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

*Written Work*

his value for the preservation of life. ~~of both aspects of conformity, Robert cannot allow the horses to die as an unintended death that could be preventable, and his decision to act out against Captain Leather.~~

Robert relates saving the horses' lives to saving Rowena's. Just as Robert felt as if he could have prevented Rowena's death, he expressed the same feeling towards the horses, triggering him to release them from the barn. This action rejects both aspects of conformity: it acts out against the order and expectations of an authoritative figure, and also deviates from the actions most soldiers ~~would do~~. In addition, Robert's murder of Captain Leather and defiant gesture of ripping off his military badges represent his value for purity. Because Robert sees the injustices ~~done~~ committed during the war, he no longer wishes to be affiliated with the military, and attempts to become "pure" by killing Captain Leather and ripping off his badges. ~~This incident best exemplifies an incident~~ Fraught with violence and raw emotion, this incident ~~to~~ exemplifies Findley's powerful message

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

that conformity will be rejected by individuals who feel their values are at stake.

Conformity is a powerful social tool. It is the driving force behind social order, and sometimes individuals conform ~~without even knowing it~~. Sub-consciously without even knowing. Often, individuals will choose to conform because it is expected of them and provides structure to their daily lives. ~~Other~~ As Timothy Findley contends, however, individuals will reject the security of ~~the~~ conformity should their personal desires be compromised. Demonstrated by Robert Ross, an individual's values will take precedence over choosing to conform to the expectations ~~of~~ and orders of others. Robert's encounters with Ravena's rabbits, the whores of Lowetown and confrontation with Captain Leather are all instances where his values for purity and the preservation of life were compromised, ~~and~~ his actions within these incidents demonstrate his effusive efforts to maintain his values and likewise, his rejection of conformity. His actions prove to readers that choosing to conform may not be as easy as a "Yes" or "No" answer,

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Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

but rather entails a complex understanding  
of one's values and character.

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Thought and Understanding (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideas are thoughtful and considered, demonstrating a competent comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic.</li> <li>• Literary interpretations are revealing and sensible.</li> </ul> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 20px;">Pf</p>	<p>In working with a specific definition of conformity that moves beyond “an individual following the actions of others” (4) to “an individual adhering to instructions and doing what is expected of him” (4), and then applying this definition to Robert Ross’s experiences in <i>The Wars</i>, the student demonstrates a <b>competent comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic</b>. In the thesis, the student proposes the <b>thoughtful idea</b> that through Robert’s decisions, “Findley develops the notion that individuals will reject conformity in circumstances where their personal desires and values may be sacrificed” (4). The <b>considered idea</b> that Robert’s “values such as purity and the preservation of life” (4, 5) are more important to him than conforming to authority or expectations demonstrates a <b>sensible and revealing literary interpretation of <i>The Wars</i></b>.</p> <p>The student <b>thoughtfully</b> suggests that being entrusted with Rowena’s care “develops Robert’s value for purity” (5), and that his “subsequent guilt for not being able to prevent her death underlies his desire for the preservation of life” (5). His values are “challenged by conformity when his mother orders him to kill Rowena’s rabbits” (5); however, “as they symbolically represent Rowena” (5), Robert will not sacrifice “his value for the preservation of life” (5). <b>Literary interpretations are revealing and sensible</b> as the student continues to develop the conflict between personal desires and choosing to conform with a discussion of Robert’s visit to Lousetown, where his “value for purity overpowered the social expectations of him” (6) as he “does not follow the actions of others” (6), and the final confrontation with Leather where Robert “acts out against the order and expectations of an authoritative figure” (8).</p> <p>The student concludes with the <b>considered idea</b> that “Conformity is a powerful social tool. It is the driving force behind social order, and sometimes individuals conform sub-consciously without even knowing” (9), and then offers the <b>revealing and sensible literary interpretation</b> that Findley demonstrates through Robert’s life experiences: “an individual’s values will take precedence over choosing to conform to the expectations and orders of others” (9).</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Supporting Evidence (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support is specific and well chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in a persuasive way.</li> <li>• A sound connection to the student’s ideas is capably maintained.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p><b>Support is specific, and well chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in a persuasive way.</b> The decision to choose <b>specific</b> evidence from the beginning and end of the novel is effective. The student presents Robert first in his innocence and naiveté, noting how “the chaste nature of Rowena in her wheelchair” (5) and Robert’s “devotion to protect Rowena’s life” (5) conflicts with “instructions given by authority” (5). The authority, in this case, is specifically identified as Robert’s mother who “orders him to kill Rowena’s rabbits following her death” (5). The transition to Robert’s attack on Teddy Budge reflects “the magnitude of Robert’s value for the preservation of life and his rejection of conformity” and is strengthened with the <b>specific</b> detail about “choosing not to have any sexual encounters with the whores from Lousetown, [because] unlike the rest of the soldiers, Robert rejects conformity” (6).</p> <p>The scene with Leather is <b>well chosen</b> as the defining moment of “Robert’s most striking and forceful rejection of conformity” (7). The details <b>reinforce the student’s ideas</b> about the conflict Robert faces: keeping the horses there “would result in imminent death from the German artillery” (7) but “because Robert is of a lower rank in military status, he is expected as a soldier to obey the captain’s command” (7). <b>A sound connection is capably maintained</b> by the student’s idea that “Robert relates saving the horses’ lives to saving Rowena’s” (8); and just as he feels “he could have prevented Rowena’s death, he expresses the same feeling towards the horses, triggering him to release them” (8). <b>Supporting the student’s ideas in a persuasive way, the specific</b> details in Robert’s “defiant gesture of ripping off his military badges” (8) and his “attempts to become ‘pure’ by killing Captain Leather” (8) demonstrate that “conformity will be rejected by individuals who feel their values are at stake” (9).</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Form and Structure (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A purposeful arrangement of ideas and details contributes to a controlled discussion that is developed capably.</li> <li>• The unifying effect or controlling idea is coherently sustained and presented.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p><b>A purposeful arrangement of ideas and details is developed</b> as the student first defines two aspects of conformity and then establishes the connection with Robert who “experiences both aspects” (4). The student’s discussion of the conflict presented in Robert’s “decisions that will either adhere to, or reject the ideas of conformity” (4) is <b>presented</b> throughout the essay in a <b>controlled discussion</b> of “emotive and psychological transitions” (4) discussed in chronological order.</p> <p>The <b>unifying effect</b> of Robert’s core values in conflict with expectations is <b>coherently sustained</b>: “he is a character who holds strongly to values such as purity and the preservation of life” (4, 5), and “Robert’s perpetual conflict with his personal desires and the expectations of him as a soldier” (7), and his “decision to save the horses typifies his value for the preservation of life” (7, 8).</p> <p>In the conclusion, the student unites text and topic to complete the <b>capably developed</b> analysis by asserting that Robert’s “actions prove to readers that choosing to conform may not be as easy as a “Yes” or “No” answer, but rather entails a complex understanding of one’s values and character” (9, 10).</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Choice (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diction is specific.</li> <li>• Syntactic structures are generally effective.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a considered composition with a capable voice.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>Throughout the student’s essay, <b>diction is specific</b>. For example: “psychological transitions” (4), “chaste nature” (5), “scathing remarks” (6), “perpetual conflict” (7), and “effusive efforts” (9).</p> <p><b>Syntactical structures are generally effective</b>, as demonstrated in: “As she suffered from a debilitating brain condition that bound her to her wheelchair, Robert entrusted himself with the responsibility to care for Rowena” (5), and “Though the practice of visiting whorehouses itself was not favoured or accepted by society, it was expected and assumed that the soldiers of the war would visit such places as a means of escape from the brutalities experienced by trench warfare” (6).</p> <p><b>Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a considered composition with a capable voice</b>: “Fraught with violence and raw emotion” (8), and “As Timothy Findley contends, however, individuals will reject the security of conformity should their personal desires be compromised” (9).</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Correctness (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This writing demonstrates confidence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</li> <li>• The relative absence of error is impressive considering the complexity of the response and the circumstances.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">E</p>	<p>Throughout the essay, the student <b>demonstrates confidence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics</b>: “This action rejects both aspects of conformity: it acts out against the order and expectations of an authoritative figure” (8), and “Demonstrated by Robert Ross, an individual’s values will take precedence over choosing to conform to the expectations and orders of others” (9).</p> <p>In the context of timed exam writing and first draft writing, and given the length of the response and the nature of handwriting, the <b>relative absence of error is impressive</b>.</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT**

**The Assessment Sector diligently attempts to secure student permission to post all of the Examples of Students' Writing.**

**In the case of the Excellent Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment for January 2011, however, permission to use the student's response was not granted.**

## Scoring Categories and Criteria

### Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2010–2011 Personal Response to Texts Assignment

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

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

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

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

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

### Ideas and Impressions (10% of total examination mark)

Cross-Reference to the *Program of Studies for Senior High School English Language Arts* 2.1 2.2 2.3 4.1

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

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

#### Excellent

### E

The student's exploration of the topic is insightful. Perceptions and/or ideas are confident and discerning. Support is precise and aptly reinforces the student's ideas and impressions.

#### Proficient

### Pf

The student's exploration of the topic is purposeful. Perceptions and/or ideas are thoughtful and considered. Support is specific and strengthens the student's ideas and impressions.

#### Satisfactory

### S

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

#### Limited

### L

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

#### Poor

### P

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

#### Insufficient

### INS

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

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

**Scoring Categories and  
Scoring Criteria for  
2010–2011  
Personal Response  
to Texts Assignment  
(continued)**

**Presentation** (10% of total examination mark)

Cross-Reference to the *Program of Studies for Senior High School English Language Arts* 3.1 3.2 4.1 4.2

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

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

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

**Excellent**

**E**

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.

**Proficient**

**Pf**

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.

**Satisfactory**

**S**

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.

**Limited**

**L**

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.

**Poor**

**P**

The voice created by the student is obscure. Stylistic choices impede communication and the student's creation of tone is ineffective. A unifying effect is absent.

**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2010–2011 Critical / Analytical Response to Texts Assignment**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Excellent**

**E**

Ideas are insightful and carefully considered, demonstrating a comprehension of subtle distinctions in the literary text(s) and the topic. Literary interpretations are perceptive and illuminating.

**Proficient**

**Pf**

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

**Satisfactory**

**S**

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

**Limited**

**L**

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

**Poor**

**P**

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

**Insufficient**

**INS**

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

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

**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2010–2011 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.

**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2010–2011 Critical / Analytical Response to Texts Assignment (continued)**

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

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

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

**Excellent**  
**E** 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**  
**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.

**Satisfactory**  
**S** 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**  
**L** 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**  
**P** 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 2010–2011 Critical / Analytical Response to Texts Assignment (continued)**

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

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

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

**Excellent**  
**E**

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

**Proficient**  
**Pf**

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

**Satisfactory**  
**S**

Diction is adequate. Syntactic structures are straightforward, but attempts at complex structures may be awkward. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a conventional composition with an appropriate voice.

**Limited**  
**L**

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

**Poor**  
**P**

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

**Scoring Categories and Scoring Criteria for 2010–2011 Critical / Analytical Response to Texts Assignment (continued)**

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

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

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

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

**Excellent**

**E**

This writing demonstrates confidence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The relative absence of error is impressive considering the complexity of the response and the circumstances.

**Proficient**

**Pf**

This writing demonstrates competence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. Minor errors in complex language structures are understandable considering the circumstances.

**Satisfactory**

**S**

This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. There may be occasional lapses in control and minor errors; however, the communication remains clear.

**Limited**

**L**

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

**Poor**

**P**

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

