



Exit Level Scoring Guide for Reading and Written Composition

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INTRODUCTION

The reading and written composition sections of the TAKS English language arts test are based on three thematically linked reading pieces, called a “triplet”—a literary selection, an expository selection, and a visual representation. The test includes two performance tasks: three short answer reading items and a written composition. The literary and expository selections are published pieces, and the visual representation is a created piece, although it may include some published elements, such as photographs. Using published selections on TAKS makes the assessment more authentic and, therefore, a more valid and reliable measure of student learning in reading at the high school level.

Short Answer Items

The three short answer items on each test assess two skills. First, students must be able to generate clear, reasonable, thoughtful ideas or analyses about some aspect of the published literary and expository selections. Second, students must be able to support these ideas or analyses with relevant, strongly connected textual evidence.

On each test one short answer item is based on the literary selection only (Objective 2), one is based on the expository selection only (Objective 3), and one is based on students’ ability to connect the literary and expository selections (also Objective 3). Short answer items are not used to measure Objective 1, since this objective focuses on basic understanding.

Objective 2

The student will demonstrate an understanding of the effects of literary elements and techniques in culturally diverse written texts.

To appreciate the literature they read in high school, students must develop an understanding of the literary elements that are at the heart of all stories. This understanding must go beyond mere identification to encompass the ways in which the parts of a story, singly and in combination, contribute to its overall meaning. Students must also understand the ways in which an author uses literary techniques and language to craft a story. In short answer items assessing Objective 2, students must write a short response analyzing how literary elements, literary techniques, or figurative language function in a story.

Objective 3

The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze and critically evaluate culturally diverse written texts and visual representations.

To read well at the high school level, students must go beyond their initial understanding or impressions of a selection. Students must be able to develop their own interpretations, make thoughtful judgments about what they read, examine how a selection relates to their own lives, and find meaningful connections across parts of a single selection or between two selections. Students must also be aware of the way an author crafts a selection. An author’s purpose for writing, organizational decisions, point of view or attitude toward the subject, and unique use of language all affect the way a reader reads and understands a selection. In short answer items assessing Objective 3, students must write a short response analyzing or evaluating some aspect of the expository selection or some aspect of text common to or based upon both selections.

TAKS short answer items are holistically scored on a scale of 0 (insufficient) to 3 (exemplary). For each score point, this scoring guide presents the rubric as well as four student responses with explanatory annotations. Using this scoring guide will help you to better understand not only your students’ reading development but also the strengths and weaknesses of your school’s reading program.

Written Composition

Writing is a life skill. As students move from grade to grade, writing skills are critical for academic progress. Students who have difficulty putting their thoughts into writing struggle to succeed in social studies, science, and many areas other than English language arts. Because good writing requires good thinking, the act of writing helps students learn to clarify their thoughts and focus their ideas.

The writing prompt is thematically linked to the three reading selections. In this way, students have a built-in context that they may draw from as they plan their compositions. Note, however, that while students may include an analysis or reference to one or more reading selections, this is not a requirement. Students may respond to the prompt in any way they choose.

The composition section of the TAKS English language arts test assesses the knowledge and skills grouped under Objectives 4 and 5. Objective 4 focuses on the quality of the composition's content, while Objective 5 focuses on how clearly and effectively the student communicates his or her ideas. These objectives are inextricably linked because good writing must be both substantial and mechanically sound.

Objective 4

The student will, within a given context, produce an effective composition for a specific purpose.

The ability to communicate thoughts and ideas through writing helps students become successful, not only in school but throughout their lives. In order to communicate effectively, students must organize and develop ideas in a logical, coherent, and interesting manner that is easy for the reader to follow and understand. Objective 4 tests each student's ability to produce an organized and well-developed composition in response to a prompt. The prompt is worded so that students have broad latitude in crafting an individual response. Students can use any organizational strategy that allows them to write an effective piece—they can write a story, a description, a philosophical piece, an expository piece, a response to reading—or they can combine approaches. However students choose to respond, it is important that the composition they write is uniquely theirs—that it is authentic and represents their best thinking and writing.

Objective 5

The student will produce a piece of writing that demonstrates a command of the conventions of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure.

To write well, students must be able to apply the conventions of the English language. First, when students write a composition, they are able to follow the rules of correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, grammar, usage, and sentence structure. Second, they are able to write effective sentences and use words and phrases that enhance the reader's understanding of their ideas. Although students are not expected to produce absolutely error-free writing on the test, they are expected to write as clearly and correctly as possible. The stronger the writing conventions are, the more likely it is that students will be able to produce an effective composition.

TAKS compositions are holistically scored on a scale of 1 (ineffective) to 4 (highly effective). For each score point, this scoring guide presents the rubric as well as four student compositions with explanatory annotations. Using this scoring guide will help you to better understand your students' writing development and the strengths and weaknesses of your school's writing program.

The First Day

by Edward P. Jones

1 In an otherwise unremarkable September morning, long before I learned to be ashamed of my mother, she takes my hand and we set off down New Jersey Avenue to begin my very first day of school. I am wearing a checkeredlike blue-and-green cotton dress, and scattered about these colors are bits of yellow and white and brown. My mother has uncharacteristically spent nearly an hour on my hair that morning, plaiting and replaiting so that now my scalp tingles. Whenever I turn my head quickly, my nose fills with the faint smell of Dixie Peach hair grease. The smell is somehow a soothing one now and I will reach for it time and time again before the morning ends. All the plaits, each with a blue barrette near the tip and each twisted into an uncommon sturdiness, will last until I go to bed that night, something that has never happened before. My stomach is full of milk and oatmeal sweetened with brown sugar. Like everything else I have on, my pale green slip and underwear are new, the underwear having come three to a plastic package with a little girl on the front who appears to be dancing. Behind my ears, my mother, to stop my whining, has dabbed the stingiest bit of her gardenia perfume, the last present my father gave her before he disappeared into memory. Because I cannot smell it, I have only her word that the perfume is there. I am also wearing yellow socks trimmed with thin lines of black and white around the tops. My shoes are my greatest joy, black patent-leather miracles, and when one is nicked at the toe later that morning in class, my heart will break.

My notes about what I am
reading

2 I am carrying a pencil, a pencil sharpener, and a small ten-cent tablet with a black-and-white speckled cover. My mother does not believe that a girl in kindergarten needs such things, so I am taking them only because of my insistent whining and because they are presents from our neighbors, Mary Keith and Blondelle Harris. Miss Mary and Miss Blondelle are watching my two younger sisters until my mother returns. The women are as precious to me as my mother and sisters. Out playing one day, I have overheard an older child, speaking to another child, call Miss Mary and Miss Blondelle a word that is brand new to me. This is my mother: When I say the word in fun to one

of my sisters, my mother slaps me across the mouth and the word is lost for years and years.

3 All the way down New Jersey Avenue, the sidewalks are teeming with children. In my neighborhood, I have many friends, but I see none of them as my mother and I walk. We cross New York Avenue, we cross Pierce Street, and we cross L and K, and still I see no one who knows my name. At I Street, between New Jersey Avenue and Third Street, we enter Seaton Elementary School, a timeworn, sad-faced building across the street from my mother's church, Mt. Carmel Baptist.

4 Just inside the front door, women out of the advertisements in *Ebony*¹ are greeting other parents and children. The woman who greets us has pearls thick as jumbo marbles that come down almost to her navel, and she acts as if she had known me all my life, touching my shoulder, cupping her hand under my chin. She is enveloped in a perfume that I only know is not gardenia. When, in answer to her question, my mother tells her that we live at 1227 New Jersey Avenue, the woman first seems to be picturing in her head where we live. Then she shakes her head and says that we are at the wrong school, that we should be at Walker-Jones.

5 My mother shakes her head vigorously. "I want her to go here," my mother says. "If I'da wanted her someplace else, I'da took her there." The woman continues to act as if she has known me all my life, but she tells my mother that we live beyond the area that Seaton serves. My mother is not convinced and for several more minutes she questions the woman about why I cannot attend Seaton. For as many Sundays as I can remember, perhaps even Sundays when I was in her womb, my mother has pointed across I Street to Seaton as we come and go to Mt. Carmel. "You gonna go there and learn about the whole world." But one of the guardians of that place is saying no, and no again. I am learning this about my mother: The higher up on the scale of respectability a person is—and teachers are rather high up in her eyes—the less she is liable to let them push her around. But finally, I see in her eyes the closing gate, and she takes my hand and we leave the building. On the steps, she stops as people move past us on either side.

6 "Mama, I can't go to school?"

7 She says nothing at first, then takes my hand again and we are down the steps quickly and nearing New Jersey

¹*Ebony* is a magazine for African Americans. For many years it was the one national publication that featured stylish black women and men in advertisements.

Avenue before I can blink. This is my mother: She says, "One monkey don't stop no show."²

My notes about what I am
reading

8 Walker-Jones is a larger, newer school and I immediately like it because of that. But it is not across the street from my mother's church, her rock, one of her connections to God, and I sense her doubts as she absently rubs her thumb over the back of her hand. We find our way to the crowded auditorium where gray metal chairs are set up in the middle of the room. Along the wall to the left are tables and other chairs. Every chair seems occupied by a child or adult. Somewhere in the room a child is crying, a cry that rises above the buzz-talk of so many people. Strewn about the floor are dozens and dozens of pieces of white paper, and people are walking over them without any thought of picking them up. And seeing this lack of concern, I am all of a sudden afraid.

9 "Is there where they register for school?" my mother asks a woman at one of the tables.

10 The woman looks up slowly as if she has heard this question once too often. She nods. She is tiny, almost as small as the girl standing beside her. The woman's hair is set in a mass of curlers and all of those curlers are made of paper money, here a dollar bill, there a five-dollar bill. The girl's hair is arrayed in curls, but some of them are beginning to droop and this makes me happy. On the table beside the woman's pocketbook is a large notebook, worthy of someone in high school, and looking at me looking at the notebook, the girl places her hand possessively on it. In her other hand she holds several pencils with thick crowns of additional erasers.

11 "These the forms you gotta use?" my mother asks the woman, picking up a few pieces of the paper from the table. "Is this what you have to fill out?"

12 The woman tells her yes, but that she need fill out only one.

13 "I see," my mother says, looking about the room. Then: "Would you help me with this form? That is, if you don't mind."

14 The woman asks my mother what she means.

15 "This form. Would you mind helpin me fill it out?"

16 The woman still seems not to understand.

²An African American proverb reflecting the importance of perseverance despite difficulties. This proverb has been popularized as the title of several twentieth-century blues songs and theatrical productions.

- 17 "I can't read it. I don't know how to read or write, and I'm askin you to help me." My mother looks at me, then looks away. I know almost all of her looks, but this one is brand new to me. "Would you help me, then?"
- 18 The woman says Why sure, and suddenly she appears happier, so much more satisfied with everything. She finishes the form for her daughter and my mother and I step aside to wait for her. We find two chairs nearby and sit. My mother is now diseased, according to the girl's eyes, and until the moment her mother takes her and the form to the front of the auditorium, the girl never stops looking at my mother. I stare back at her. "Don't stare," my mother says to me. "You know better than that."
- 19 Another woman out of the *Ebony* ads takes the woman's child away. Now, the woman says upon returning, let's see what we can do for you two.
- 20 My mother answers the questions the woman reads off the form. They start with my last name, and then on to the first and middle names. This is school, I think. This is going to school. My mother slowly enunciates each word of my name. This is my mother: As the questions go on, she takes from her pocketbook document after document, as if they will support my right to attend school, as if she has been saving them up for just this moment. Indeed, she takes out more papers than I have ever seen her do in other places: my birth certificate, my baptismal record, a doctor's letter concerning my bout with chicken pox, rent receipts, records of immunization, a letter about our public assistance payments, even her marriage license—every single paper that has anything even remotely to do with my five-year-old life. Few of the papers are needed here, but it does not matter and my mother continues to pull out the documents with the purposefulness of a magician pulling out a long string of scarves. She has learned that money is the beginning and end of everything in this world, and when the woman finishes, my mother offers her fifty cents, and the woman accepts it without hesitation. My mother and I are just about the last parent and child in the room.
- 21 My mother presents the form to a woman sitting in front of the stage, and the woman looks at it and writes something on a white card, which she gives to my mother. Before long, the woman who has taken the girl with the drooping curls appears from behind us, speaks to the sitting woman, and introduces herself to my mother and

me. She's to be my teacher, she tells my mother. My mother stares.

My notes about what I am
reading

22 We go into the hall, where my mother kneels down to me. Her lips are quivering. "I'll be back to pick you up at twelve o'clock. I don't want you to go nowhere. You just wait right here. And listen to every word she say." I touch her lips and press them together. It is an old, old game between us. She puts my hand down at my side, which is not part of the game. She stands and looks a second at the teacher, then she turns and walks away. I see where she has darned one of her socks the night before. Her shoes make loud sounds in the hall. She passes through the doors and I can still hear the loud sounds of her shoes. And even when the teacher turns me toward the classrooms and I hear what must be the singing and talking of all the children in the world, I can still hear my mother's footsteps above it all.

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Unforgettable Miss Bessie

by Carl T. Rowan

My notes about what I am
reading

- 1 She was only about five feet tall and probably never weighed more than 110 pounds, but Miss Bessie was a towering presence in the classroom. She was the only woman tough enough to make me read *Beowulf*¹ and think for a few foolish days that I liked it. From 1938 to 1942, when I attended Bernard High School in McMinnville, Tenn., she taught me English, history, civics—and a lot more than I realized.
- 2 I shall never forget the day she scolded me into reading *Beowulf*.
- 3 “But Miss Bessie,” I complained, “I ain’t much interested in it.”
- 4 Her large brown eyes became daggerish slits. “Boy,” she said, “how dare you say ‘ain’t’ to me! I’ve taught you better than that.”
- 5 “Miss Bessie,” I pleaded, “I’m trying to make first-string end on the football team, and if I go around saying ‘it isn’t’ and ‘they aren’t,’ the guys are gonna laugh me off the squad.”
- 6 “Boy,” she responded, “you’ll play football because you have guts. But do you know what *really* takes guts? Refusing to lower your standards to those of the crowd. It takes guts to say you’ve got to live and be somebody fifty years after all the football games are over.”
- 7 I started saying “it isn’t” and “they aren’t,” and I still made first-string end—and class valedictorian—without losing my buddies’ respect.
- 8 During her remarkable 44-year career, Mrs. Bessie Taylor Gwynn taught hundreds of economically deprived black youngsters—including my mother, my brother, my sisters and me. I remember her now with gratitude and affection—especially in this era when Americans are so wrought-up about a “rising tide of mediocrity” in public education and the problems of finding competent, caring teachers. Miss Bessie was an example of an informed, dedicated teacher, a blessing to children and an asset to the nation.

¹ *Beowulf* is a classic epic poem.

- 9 Born in 1895, in poverty, she grew up in Athens, Ala., where there was no public school for blacks. She attended Trinity School, a private institution for blacks run by the American Missionary Association, and in 1911 graduated from the Normal School² (a “super” high school) at Fisk University in Nashville. Mrs. Gwynn, the essence of pride and privacy, never talked about her years in Athens; only in the months before her death did she reveal that she had never attended Fisk University itself because she could not afford the four-year course.
- 10 At Normal School she learned a lot about Shakespeare, but most of all about the profound importance of education—especially, for a people trying to move up from slavery. “What you put in your head, boy,” she once said, “can never be pulled out by the Ku Klux Klan, the Congress or anybody.”
- 11 Miss Bessie’s bearing of dignity told anyone who met her that she was “educated” in the best sense of the word. There was never a discipline problem in her classes. We didn’t dare mess with a woman who knew about the Battle of Hastings, the Magna Carta and the Bill of Rights—and who could also play the piano.
- 12 This frail-looking woman could make sense of Shakespeare, Milton, Voltaire, and bring to life Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois. Believing that it was important to know who the officials were that spent taxpayers’ money and made public policy, she made us memorize the names of everyone on the Supreme Court and in the President’s Cabinet. It could be embarrassing to be unprepared when Miss Bessie said, “Get up and tell the class who Frances Perkins³ is and what you think about her.”
- 13 Miss Bessie knew that my family, like so many others during the Depression, couldn’t afford to subscribe to a newspaper. She knew we didn’t even own a radio. Still, she prodded me to “look out for your future and find some way to keep up with what’s going on in the world.” So I became a delivery boy for the Chattanooga *Times*. I rarely made a dollar a week, but I got to read a newspaper every day.

² A normal school was a school for training mainly elementary school teachers.

³ Frances Perkins (1880–1965) was Labor Secretary under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, perhaps best known for the Social Security Act of 1935.

- 14 Miss Bessie noticed things that had nothing to do with schoolwork, but were vital to a youngster's development. Once a few classmates made fun of my frayed, hand-me-down overcoat, calling me "Strings." As I was leaving school, Miss Bessie patted me on the back of that old overcoat and said, "Carl, never fret about what you *don't* have. Just make the most of what you *do* have—a brain."
- 15 Among the things that I did not have was electricity in the little frame house that my father had built for \$400 with his World War I bonus. But because of her inspiration, I spent many hours squinting beside a kerosene lamp reading Shakespeare and Thoreau, Samuel Pepys and William Cullen Bryant.
- 16 No one in my family had ever graduated from high school, so there was no tradition of commitment to learning for me to lean on. Like millions of youngsters in today's ghettos and barrios, I needed the push and stimulation of a teacher who truly cared. Miss Bessie gave plenty of both, as she immersed me in a wonderful world of similes, metaphors and even onomatopoeia. She led me to believe that I could write sonnets as well as Shakespeare, or iambic-pentameter verse to put Alexander Pope to shame.
- 17 In those days the McMinnville school system was rigidly "Jim Crow,"⁴ and poor black children had to struggle to put anything in their heads. Our high school was only slightly larger than the once-typical little red schoolhouse, and its library was outrageously inadequate—so small, I like to say, that if two students were in it and one wanted to turn a page, the other one had to step outside.
- 18 Negroes, as we were called then, were not allowed in the town library, except to mop floors or dust tables. But through one of those secret Old South arrangements between whites of conscience and blacks of stature, Miss Bessie kept getting books smuggled out of the white library. That is how she introduced me to the Brontës, Byron, Coleridge, Keats and Tennyson. "If you don't read, you can't write, and if you can't write, you might as well stop dreaming," Miss Bessie once told me.

⁴ Jim Crow refers to discrimination against African Americans, either by custom or as codified in law.

19 So I read whatever Miss Bessie told me to, and tried to remember the things she insisted that I store away. Forty-five years later, I can still recite her "truths to live by," such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's lines from "The Ladder of St. Augustine":

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight.
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

20 Years later, her inspiration, prodding, anger, cajoling and almost osmotic infusion of learning finally led to that lovely day when Miss Bessie dropped me a note saying, "I'm so proud to read your column in the *Nashville Tennessean*."

21 Miss Bessie was a spry 80 when I went back to McMinnville and visited her in a senior citizens' apartment building. Pointing out proudly that her building was racially integrated, she reached for two glasses and a pint of bourbon. I was momentarily shocked, because it would have been scandalous in the 1930s and '40s for word to get out that a teacher drank, and nobody had ever raised a rumor that Miss Bessie did.

22 I felt a new sense of equality as she lifted her glass to mine. Then she revealed a softness and compassion that I had never known as a student.

23 "I've never forgotten that examination day," she said, "when Buster Martin held up seven fingers, obviously asking you for help with question number seven, 'Name a common carrier.' I can still picture you looking at your exam paper and humming a few bars of 'Chattanooga Choo Choo.' I was so tickled, I couldn't punish either of you."

24 Miss Bessie was telling me, with bourbon-laced grace, that I never fooled her for a moment.

25 When Miss Bessie died in 1980, at age 85, hundreds of her former students mourned. They knew the measure of a great teacher: love and motivation. Her wisdom and influence had rippled out across generations.

26 Some of her students who might normally have been doomed to poverty went on to become doctors, dentists and college professors. Many, guided by Miss Bessie's example, became public-school teachers.

27 “The memory of Miss Bessie and how she conducted her classroom did more for me than anything I learned in college,” recalls Gladys Wood of Knoxville, Tenn., a highly respected English teacher who spent 43 years in the state’s school system. “So many times, when I faced a difficult classroom problem, I asked myself, *How would Miss Bessie deal with this?* And I’d remember that she would handle it with laughter and love.”

28 No child can get all the necessary support at home, and millions of poor children get *no* support at all. This is what makes a wise, educated, warm-hearted teacher like Miss Bessie so vital to the minds, hearts and souls of this country’s children.

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HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR



LISTEN PATIENTLY Give a young person enough time to explain what they think and feel.

BUILD A RELATIONSHIP Don't expect to earn a person's trust immediately. Schedule time regularly to talk or just hang out.

NURTURE SELF-SUFFICIENCY Encourage confidence and independent thinking.

BE CONSTRUCTIVE Provide feedback regularly. Be honest with praise and kind when delivering words of criticism.

SHARE YOURSELF Invite the person you are mentoring to observe you at work. Share your failures as well as your successes.

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SHORT ANSWER ITEMS

Rubrics and Sample Responses

Objective 2 – Literary Selection

How does the mother in “The First Day” show how much she cares for her daughter? Support your answer with evidence from the selection.

READING RUBRIC—LITERARY SELECTION OBJECTIVE 2

SCORE POINT 0 — INSUFFICIENT

In **insufficient** responses, the student

- may offer an incorrect theme, character trait, conflict, or change
- may offer a theme, character, conflict, or change that is too general or vague to determine whether it is reasonable
- may incorrectly analyze a literary technique or figurative expression
- may offer an analysis that is too general or vague to determine whether it is reasonable
- may present only a plot summary
- may not address the question in any way or may answer a different question than the one asked
- may offer only incomplete or irrelevant textual evidence

In addition, insufficient responses may lack clarity.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 0 Guide Responses for Objective 2 – Literary Selection

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RG-1

She don't care for her daughter at all because she did not want to buy her any school supplies or in fact she does not want her to get a education.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

This student attempts to support the idea that the mother does not care for her daughter because she does not want her daughter to get an education. The idea is incorrect and cannot be supported.

RG-2

She woke her up in the morning, she got her dressed. They went walking to school, but she could not go to that school cause she belonged in a new school. The Mother walked back to the other school and stayed there till she finally got registered and she walked her daughter to her class and she told her that she was going to pick her up by 12:00 noon.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student presents only a plot summary and does not identify how the mother shows how much she cares for her daughter.

Her mother cares about her alot. She just sounds a little strict. She wants what she thinks is best for her daughter, and at first didn't want to listen to what anyone had to say.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

In this response the student provides an idea that is too vague to determine if it is reasonable (she wants what she thinks is best for her daughter).

Her mother shows her compassion by getting her the things she wants. "I am carrying a pencil, a pencil sharpener, and a small ten-cent tablet."

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

This student offers only a general idea (her mother shows her compassion by getting her the things she wants). The textual support (I am carrying a pencil, a pencil sharpener, and a small ten-cent tablet) is irrelevant because the mother did not get these items for her daughter; they were presents from the neighbors.

READING RUBRIC—LITERARY SELECTION

OBJECTIVE 2

SCORE POINT 1 — PARTIALLY SUFFICIENT

In **partially sufficient** responses, the student

- may offer a reasonable theme, character trait, conflict, or change but provide only general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence or provide no textual evidence at all
- may offer a reasonable analysis of a literary technique or figurative expression but provide only general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence or provide no textual evidence at all
- may offer a reasonable idea or analysis and may provide textual evidence, but this evidence is only weakly connected to the idea or analysis
- may offer accurate/relevant textual evidence without providing an idea or analysis

In addition, partially sufficient responses may be somewhat unclear or vague.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 1 Guide Responses for Objective 2 – Literary Selection

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RG-5

The mother in "The First Day" shows how much she cares for her daughter by taking her to enroll in school and asking someone to help fill out the forms. I believe this shows how much she cares for her daughter because she had the courage to ask for help filling out the forms, just so her daughter could get a education.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student provides reasonable ideas (the mother shows how much she cares for her daughter by taking her to enroll in school and asking someone to help her fill out the forms) and a general text reference (she had the courage to ask for help). However, the student does not provide any specific textual evidence.

RG-6

In "The 'First Day'" the mother shows that she cares about her daughter alot when she is trying to look for the best school for her daughter. She wants the best education for her. "The higher up on the scale of respectability a person is - and teachers are rather high up in her eyes."

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

This student offers the reasonable idea of how the mother shows she cares (she wants the best education for her daughter). However, the text evidence (the higher up on the scale of respectability a person is – and teachers are rather high up in her eyes) does not directly support the idea that the mother desires for her daughter to receive a good education. For this reason, there is a weak connection between the student's idea and the textual evidence the student provides.

The mother shows how much she cares for her daughter by the mother saying "I want her to go here" and furthermore saying "If I'da wanted her someplace else, I'da took her there" In paragraph 5, which shows how much she loves her daughter.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student provides textual evidence (I want her to go here; if I'da wanted her someplace else, I'da took her there) without providing an idea or analysis. The concluding statement (which shows how much she loves her daughter) is just another way of saying she cares and is not an idea or analysis.

The mother in "The First Day" shows how much she cares for her daughter by expressing her desire for her child to have the best education available. By gaining the courage to argue with the teacher about her wish for her daughter to attend the better school - "I want her to go here." - she demonstrates her willingness to sacrifice pride for her daughter's education.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

The student presents the reasonable idea of how the mother shows she cares (by expressing her desire for her child to have the best education available). The textual evidence offered (I want her to go here) only partially supports the mother gaining courage to argue with the teacher. For this reason, there is a weak connection between the student's idea and the textual evidence the student provides. In addition, the student presents a second idea in the last sentence (demonstrates her willingness to sacrifice pride) that is not supported.

READING RUBRIC—LITERARY SELECTION
OBJECTIVE 2

SCORE POINT 2 — SUFFICIENT

In **sufficient** responses, the student

- must offer a reasonable theme, character trait, conflict, or change and support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence
- must offer a reasonable analysis of a literary technique or figurative expression and support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence

In addition, sufficient responses must be clear and specific.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 2 Guide Responses for Objective 2 – Literary Selection

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RG-9

The narrator's mother showed that she cares for her daughter in paragraph 22 "where my mother kneels down to me, her lips quivering, "I'll be back to pick you up at twelve o'clock. I don't want you to go anywhere. You just wait right here, and listen to every word she says!" By this little part in the story I can sum up that she cares for her daughter and want her to get a good education and feel safe at her new school.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

The student offers two reasonable and specific ideas (she wants her daughter to get a good education and feel safe at her new school). These ideas are supported with accurate, relevant textual evidence (And listen to every word she say; I'll be back to pick you up at twelve o'clock. I don't want you to go nowhere. You just wait right here).

RG-10

The mother in "The First Day" portrays how much she cares for her daughter when she puts her daughter's education in front of her dignity. "I don't know how to read or write, and I'm asking you to help me." Even though admitting to her inability to read and write shatters her dignity as a person, she realizes her daughter's education comes first. Through such a prime example I can clearly see how much a mother cares for her children.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student focuses on the idea that the mother shows she cares for her daughter by putting her daughter's education in front of the mother's dignity. This idea is supported with clear and specific textual evidence (I don't know how to read or write, and I'm asking you to help me).

The mother in "The First Day" shows that she cares about her daughter a lot. She did all that she possibly could to get her enrolled into school. "... she takes from her pocketbook document after document, as if they will support my right to attend school."

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

The student presents the reasonable idea that the mother did all she possibly could to get her daughter enrolled in school. The idea is supported with accurate, relevant textual evidence (she takes from her pocketbook document after document, as if they will support my right to attend school).

The mother in "The First Day" shows she cares for her daughter by striving to get her the best education possible. Even after the "guardian at Seaton, the school she has always dreamed of her daughter attending, turns her away, she continues to pursue the education given at the "crowded" Walker Jones school. Her persistence through the embarrassment of asking someone else for help because she cannot read and her over-preparation of bringing "document after document" shows how much she cares for her daughter and her education.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

The student provides the reasonable idea that the mother shows she cares for her daughter by striving to get her the best education possible. The idea is supported through a combination of clear and specific synopsis (even after the guardian at the school she has always dreamed of her daughter attending turns her away, her persistence through the embarrassment of asking someone else for help) and accurate, relevant text (document after document).

READING RUBRIC—LITERARY SELECTION
OBJECTIVE 2

SCORE POINT 3 — EXEMPLARY

In **exemplary** responses, the student

- must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful theme, character trait, conflict, or change and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence
- must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful analysis of a literary technique or figurative expression and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence

In addition, exemplary responses must demonstrate the student’s depth of understanding and ability to effectively connect textual evidence to the idea or analysis.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 3 Guide Responses for Objective 2 – Literary Selection

TAKS Exit Level
Spring 2006

RG-13

the mother outwardly shows her affection for her daughter through each loving and kind action she performs. On the daughter's first day of school, she notes how her mother sacrifices her time by uncharacteristically spending nearly an hour fixing her daughter's hair. Determined for her daughter to receive a successful education, the mother does not believe the "guardian of that place" and questions why the daughter cannot attend the school. Her determination reflects her love, as she says her final goodbyes, the mother's "lips are quivering," an attempt to conceal the challenge every caring parent faces when they give their children the chance to grow up.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

In this response the student presents the reasonable idea that the mother shows she cares by each loving and kind action she performs. Three carefully chosen events from the selection support the mother's actions (sacrificing her time fixing her daughter's hair, questioning the guardian why her daughter cannot attend the school, as she says her final good-byes). The student continues to integrate insightful analysis (the determination reflects her love, an attempt to conceal the challenge every caring parent faces) with meaningful, relevant text to effectively reflect depth of understanding.

RG-14

The mother shows how much she cares for her daughter by making sacrifices for her. Her mother "dabbed the stingiest bit" of her special perfume on her daughter, "the last present" she had received from the girl's father. The mother not only sacrifices superficial objects, but also sacrifices her dignity. She admits that she can't read or write and needs help to fill out the form to register her daughter into elementary school. By admitting this she "is now diseased" in the eyes of others. The mother doesn't care. She will do anything to get her daughter into school.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

The student focuses on the idea that the mother shows she cares by not only sacrificing superficial objects (her special perfume) but her dignity as well (she admits she can't read or write). The thoughtful analysis is supported with particularly effective textual evidence (dabbed the stingiest bit, is now diseased).

The mother in "First Day" shows how much she loves her daughter by the lengths she will go to ensure that her daughter will get an education. She will not let people in authority intimidate her. "The higher up on the scale of respectability a person is... the less she is liable to let them push her around." At the end of the story the daughter recognizes the depth of her illiterate mother's strength after they say goodbye when she hears her mother's footsteps above all the sounds in the school.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

In this response the student provides the idea that the mother shows how much she loves her daughter by the lengths she will go to ensure that her daughter will get an education (she will not let people in authority intimidate her). The idea is strongly supported with carefully chosen textual evidence (The higher up on the scale of respectability a person is... the less she is liable to let them push her around). The student's particularly thoughtful analysis of the events at the end of the story clearly illustrates the daughter's recognition of her mother's determination and love and reflects a deep understanding of the selection.

The mother in "The First Day" expresses her unending care and concern for her daughter through her willingness to do anything that will get her daughter the most important thing: an education. She states that she doesn't "know how to read or write" and asking someone to help "fill out a registration form for her child. Admitting that she is illiterate may humiliate the mother, but she has enough concern for her daughter that she is willing to do what is necessary to educate her child. The mother, striving to "support" her daughter's "right to attend school", retrieves "document after document" most of which are "not... needed". Through the mother's selfless actions for her little girl to be educated, she shows the immeasurable amount of compassion and care she has for her child.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

This student skillfully conveys the mother's willingness to do anything that will get her daughter an education (admitting she is illiterate, retrieving document after document). The student strongly supports the analysis by consistently interweaving specific, relevant textual evidence (she doesn't know how to read or write, right to attend school) to create a particularly thoughtful response.

Objective 3 – Expository Selection

Do you think Miss Bessie was a good teacher?
Explain your answer and support it with evidence
from the selection.

READING RUBRIC—EXPOSITORY SELECTION

OBJECTIVE 3

SCORE POINT 0 — INSUFFICIENT

In **insufficient** responses, the student

- may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is not based on the text
- may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that does not address the question
- may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is not reasonable
- may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is too general or vague to determine whether it is reasonable
- may incorrectly analyze or evaluate a characteristic of the text
- may not address the question in any way or may answer a different question than the one asked
- may offer only incomplete or irrelevant textual evidence

In addition, insufficient responses may lack clarity.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 0 Guide Responses for Objective 3 – Expository Selection

TAKS Exit Level
Spring 2006

RG-17

I think Miss Bessie was a good teacher because she taught alot of things that happened in the past that is good for children now these days to know about.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The idea in this response is too general to determine if it is reasonable.

RG-18

Well, I think that Miss Bessie was not a supportive teacher. For example, she yelled at Carl about football.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student incorrectly analyzes the selection. Asserting that Miss Bessie was not a supportive teacher because “she yelled at Carl about football” indicates that the student does not understand what is happening in this part of the selection.

I do 'cause of the things she would tell him. Such as
"I shall never forget..." In other words telling
someone to do something they don't want to.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student presents an idea that is too vague to determine if it is reasonable (the things she would tell him). Neither the text provided (I shall never forget) nor the last sentence clarifies this idea.

Miss Bessie was a good teacher because in her
days to get an education was very hard.
They didn't have the money to go to Private
schools only to Public schools. They didn't
have all the resources to have the best education
we do now.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student does not explain why Miss Bessie was a good teacher. The student provides only general ideas about why it was hard to get an education.

READING RUBRIC—EXPOSITORY SELECTION

OBJECTIVE 3

SCORE POINT 1 — PARTIALLY SUFFICIENT

In **partially sufficient** responses, the student

- may draw a reasonable conclusion, offer a reasonable interpretation, or make a reasonable prediction that is supported only by general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence or provide no textual evidence at all
- may offer a reasonable analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of the text that is supported only by general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence or provide no textual evidence at all
- may offer a reasonable idea, analysis, or evaluation and may provide textual evidence, but this evidence is only weakly connected to the idea, analysis, or evaluation
- may offer accurate/relevant textual evidence without drawing a conclusion, offering an interpretation, making a prediction, or providing an analysis or evaluation

In addition, partially sufficient responses may be somewhat unclear or vague.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 1 Guide Responses for Objective 3 – Expository Selection

TAKS Exit Level
Spring 2006

RG-21

Any teacher who leads a pupil into success, inquisition of friendship, kind home visits, self respect, and a column in a newspaper deserves the gratitude of not only great, but a spectacular teacher. Her determined self and techniques have affected a wide spread diverse group of people for having taught so well and so long.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

The student provides the reasonable analysis that Miss Bessie was a good teacher because she led pupils to success, to inquire about friendship, to have self respect, and to have a column in a newspaper. However, the student does not provide any textual evidence.

RG-22

I think Miss Bessie is a great teacher she encouraged the students by telling her past and how she got to teach. "many guided by Miss Bessie's example, became public school teachers."

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student presents the reasonable idea that Miss Bessie was a good teacher because she encouraged the students (by telling her past and how she got to teach). However, the textual evidence (many guided by Miss Bessie's example became public school teachers) does not directly support her encouraging her students by telling them about her past. For this reason, there is a weak connection between the student's idea and the textual evidence that the student provides.

I believe Miss Bessie was an excellent teacher. Even though she never "attended Fisk University," she was an "educated, warm-hearted teacher." I wish we had more teachers like her.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

The student in this response offers relevant textual evidence (educated, warm-hearted teacher) for why Miss Bessie was a good teacher, but the student provides no analysis.

I think that Miss Bessie was a good teacher, as well as a good mentor to her students. She was persistent in making sure that her students received a good education. During times of hardship for black Americans, Miss Bessie, no matter what the consequences were, smuggled books from the white libraries for her students to read. In addition to providing an education for her students, Miss Bessie would also encourage them and give them words of advice in avoiding peer pressure.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

This student provides an initial reasonable idea that Miss Bessie was a good teacher because she was persistent in making sure her students received a good education and supports this idea with relevant text (smuggled books from the white libraries for her students to read). However, the student also provides additional ideas (Miss Bessie would also encourage them and give them words of advice in avoiding peer pressure) that are not supported with textual evidence. Therefore, the response is only partially sufficient.

READING RUBRIC—EXPOSITORY SELECTION
OBJECTIVE 3

SCORE POINT 2 — SUFFICIENT

In **sufficient** responses, the student

- must draw a reasonable conclusion, offer a reasonable interpretation, or make a reasonable prediction and must support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence
- must offer a reasonable analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of the selection and must support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence

In addition, sufficient responses must be clear and specific.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 2 Guide Responses for Objective 3 – Expository Selection

TAKS Exit Level
Spring 2006

RG-25

Miss Bessie was a good teacher because she showed compassion with her students. It just wasn't about education, but about learning about that child and comforting them in their time of need. "Miss Bessie noticed things that had nothing to do with school work." "A student made fun of my jacket and Miss Bessie said, "Carl, never fret about what you don't have, make most of what you do have—a brain."

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student offers the reasonable idea that Miss Bessie was a good teacher because she showed compassion for her students (comforting in their time of need). Accurate, relevant textual evidence supports this idea (Carl, never fret about what you don't have, make the most of what you do have – a brain).

RG-26

I believe that Miss Bessie was an extremely positive influence on every one of her students. She gave them the motivation to be successful in their lives. She made them believe they could be better than the best. "She led me to believe that I could write sonnets as well as Shakespeare, or iambic-pentameter to put Alexander Pope to shame."

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

This student presents the idea that Miss Bessie was an extremely positive influence on her students (she gave them the motivation to be successful, she made them believe they could be better than the best). Clear and specific textual evidence supports this idea (She led me to believe that I could write sonnets as well as Shakespeare, or iambic-pentameter to put Alexander Pope to shame).

Miss Bessie was a good teacher that influenced many young lives on how to succeed and be a better person. She helped those in poverty become a highly educated person. "Some of her students who might normally have been doomed in poverty went on to become doctors, dentist and college professors. Many, guided by Miss Bessie's example, become public school teachers.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student provides the reasonable idea that Miss Bessie was a good teacher because she influenced many young lives and helped them succeed and be a better person. The student further clarifies this idea (she helped those in poverty become highly educated) and accurately supports it with specific textual evidence.

Miss Bessie is the model teacher because she did whatever she had to for her students to have the best education. She helped the author "make sense of Shakespeare, and brought to life Booker T. Washington" for him to see the importance of education. She truly was "a dedicated teacher, a blessing to children and an asset to the nation," for her commitment to her students.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

This student provides the idea that Miss Bessie was a good teacher because she did whatever she had to for her students to have the best education. This idea is strengthened by accurate, relevant textual evidence (she helped the author make sense of Shakespeare; she brought to life Booker T. Washington; she was a dedicated teacher, a blessing to children and an asset to the nation).

READING RUBRIC—EXPOSITORY SELECTION
OBJECTIVE 3

SCORE POINT 3 — EXEMPLARY

In **exemplary** responses, the student

- must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful conclusion, interpretation, or prediction and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence

- must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of the text and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence

In addition, exemplary responses show strong evidence of the student's depth of understanding and ability to effectively connect textual evidence to the idea, analysis, or evaluation.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 3 Guide Responses for Objective 3 – Expository Selection

TAKS Exit Level
Spring 2006

RG-29

Miss Bessie, because of her "love and devotion", was able to inspire and teach her students not only school lessons, but also life lessons. she "noticed things that had nothing to do with school work, but were vital to a youngster's development." she taught the narrator to not "lower your standards to those of the crowd", the "profound importance of education", and that "what you put in your head... can never be pulled out by... anybody." Miss Bessie was a good teacher because "her students who might normally have been doomed to poverty went on to become doctors, dentists and college professors."

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

This student interweaves analysis and textual support to explain why Miss Bessie was a good teacher (she was able to inspire and teach her students not only school lessons, but also life lessons). The student effectively demonstrates depth of understanding by further integrating analysis (Miss Bessie had a lasting impact) with meaningful, relevant text (students who might normally have been doomed to poverty went on to become doctors, dentists and college professors).

RG-30

Miss Bessie qualifies as a good teacher because she had a lasting impact on her students. In her classroom, an "osmotic infusion of learning" helped impoverished black youths become "doctors, dentists, and college professors." However, even beyond her students' education, Miss Bessie "truly cared" and this had an impact that "rippled out across generations." Miss Bessie was the only source of encouragement and discipline to many blacks who might otherwise been confined to mediocrity.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

In this well-woven response, the student skillfully combines specific textual evidence (osmotic infusion of learning; to become doctors, dentists, and college professors; rippled out across generations) and paraphrase (Miss Bessie was the only source of encouragement and discipline to many blacks) to support the idea that Miss Bessie was a good teacher because she had a lasting impact on her students.

The best teachers are those who expect the best from their students concerning their education but also concerning their personal characteristics. Miss Bessie exhibited both of these things. She wanted the author to succeed and be valedictorian but also make 1st string on the football team. She taught him "Shakespeare, Milton, & Voltaire and bring to life Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. De Bois" but also that "it takes guts to live & be somebody 50 years after all the football games are over." Miss Bessie was an excellent teacher because she cared about the education of her students but also looked out for them on a personal level.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

This student offers the insightful idea that the best teachers are those who expect the best from their students concerning their education and personal characteristics. This analysis is then specifically applied to Miss Bessie and strongly supported with accurate synopsis (she wanted the author to succeed and be a valedictorian but also make first string on the football team) and particularly relevant textual evidence (Shakespeare, Milton, Voltaire and bring to life Booker T. Washington).

Yes, I believe Miss Bessie was a wonderful teacher she instilled knowledge that one student remembered "forty-five years later." She was "tough enough" to get her point across but had a "softness" to reach into students lives. She not only taught "English, history..." but "a lot more than I realized;" the author suggests. She was committed to teaching for a "44-year career" and "taught hundreds" while being an "informed" and "dedicated teacher" proving to be an "asset to the nation." She taught kids to "look out" for their future, and she "noticed things" that were "vital" to her student's development. As one student recalled, she "did more for me than anything I learned in college." All in all Miss Bessie taught students the basic classes but also important life skills needed to succeed in life.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

In this response the student presents a thorough analysis of the idea that Miss Bessie was a good teacher because she not only taught the basic classes but important skills needed to succeed in life. The analysis is strongly supported with particularly relevant textual evidence (English, history – and a lot more than I realized; noticed things that were vital to her students' development), which reflects an in-depth understanding of the selection.

Objective 3 – Literary/Expository Selection

- How is education important in “The First Day” and “Unforgettable Miss Bessie”? Support your answer with evidence from **both** selections.

READING RUBRIC
LITERARY/EXPOSITORY CROSSOVER
OBJECTIVE 3

SCORE POINT 0 — INSUFFICIENT

In **insufficient** responses, the student

- may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is not based on the selections
- may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that does not address the question
- may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is not reasonable
- may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, or make a prediction that is too general or vague to determine whether it is reasonable
- may incorrectly analyze or evaluate a characteristic of text based on both selections
- may not address the question in any way or may answer a different question than the one asked
- may offer only incomplete or irrelevant textual evidence from one or both selections

In addition, insufficient responses may lack clarity.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 0 Guide Responses for Objective 3 – Literary/Expository Selection

TAKS Exit Level
Spring 2006

RG-33

In both of the short stories talks about the education always comes first. In the story "The First Day" The mom wanted her to go to school, but teachers thought that she wasn't ready. In the second story "unforgettable miss Bessie" Carl gets a better education, thanks for miss Bessie. The mom of the girl and miss Bessie, wants what is best for who they care about. And some day they are going to tell them thanks for this education.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

This response is incorrect. The student presents an analysis of "The First Day" (Education comes first because the mom wanted her to go to school, but teachers thought she wasn't ready) that is not reasonable.

In "The first Day" and "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" education is important because the mother could not read or write. (paragraph 7). "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" She taught English, history, civics and a lot more than I realized. (paragraph 1)

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student does not offer an interpretation of how education is important in either selection. For the first selection, the student simply indicates why education is important to the mother. For the second selection, the student only offers textual evidence.

Education is an important factor in life. Miss Bessie said "If you don't read you can't write, and if you can't write, you might as well stop dreaming." Today in all jobs, careers, and professions, people have to read and write. These two things are necessary in order to move forward in life. The least amount of education you need to have so you can't work in a good profession is a high school diploma. In other words you need to be educated to reach your goals in life.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

In this response the student provides an analysis and textual evidence that only applies to "Unforgettable Miss Bessie." Because there is no clear idea that applies to both selections or a separate analysis and textual evidence that applies to "The First Day," the response does not answer the question asked.

The parents had no education but the mom wanted her daughter to have one, and the boy wanted to get one too. they never gave up even if it was hard for them they did not care what nobody thought. they just worked for what they wanted and they got it. and they both had somebody there to support them the hole way through it.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student presents an analysis that is too vague to determine if it is reasonable (The parents had no education but the mom wanted her daughter to have one, and the boy wanted to get one). The explanation that follows this vague analysis is unclear and further confuses the response. Additionally, no textual evidence is offered.

READING RUBRIC
LITERARY/EXPOSITORY CROSSOVER
OBJECTIVE 3

SCORE POINT 1 — PARTIALLY SUFFICIENT

In **partially sufficient** responses, the student

- may draw a reasonable conclusion, offer a reasonable interpretation, or make a reasonable prediction based on both selections but supported only by general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence from one or both selections
- may draw a reasonable conclusion, offer a reasonable interpretation, or make a reasonable prediction based on both selections but may offer textual support from only one selection or may offer no textual support at all
- may offer a reasonable analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of text based on both selections that is supported only by general, incomplete, or partially accurate/relevant textual evidence from one or both selections
- may offer a reasonable analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of text based on both selections but may offer textual support from only one selection or may offer no textual support at all
- may offer a reasonable idea, analysis, or evaluation based on both selections and may provide textual evidence from both selections, but this evidence is only weakly connected to the idea, analysis, or evaluation
- may offer accurate/relevant textual evidence from both selections but may draw a conclusion, offer an interpretation, make a prediction, or provide an analysis or evaluation based on only one selection
- may offer accurate/relevant textual evidence from both selections without drawing a conclusion, offering an interpretation, making a prediction, or providing an analysis or evaluation

In addition, partially sufficient responses may be somewhat unclear or vague or may indicate that the student has difficulty making connections across selections.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 1 Guide Responses for Objective 3 – Literary/Expository Selection

TAKS Exit Level
Spring 2006

RG-37

Education is important in both short stories, because both narrators are being supported by people who lived in a time when it was difficult, or in most cases impossible for them to get an education. In "The First Day" you are shown how important education is to the mother by the lengths she goes to to get her daughter registered in school. In "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" this is portrayed by how passionate she was about passing on her knowledge to her students.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student offers a reasonable analysis that applies to both selections (both narrators are being supported by people who lived in a time when it was difficult...for them to get an education). However, the student offers only general text references rather than specific textual evidence to support the analysis.

In both of these short stories, education is a major issue. Education is important to the mother in "The First Day" because it is a chance for her to provide her daughter with more opportunities than she had. "Is there... school?" (par 9). The "unforgettable miss Bessie" talks of how a caring and loving teacher, through education, touches the lives of her students for the better. "This is what... country's children" (par. 29)

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

The student offers a reasonable analysis for each selection (it is a chance for her to provide her daughter with more opportunities than she had; touches the lives of her students for the better). However, the textual evidence offered is incomplete for both selections; the ellipses represent so much of the intended text support that the meaning of these quotes is lost.

Education is proved to be vital in both selections. In "The First Day," the author shows the importance of having an education by showing the effects of not having one, "I don't know how to read or write, and I'm asking you to help me." Whereas in "Unforgettable Miss Bessie," the narrator exemplifies the successful outcome of a great education, "No child can get all the necessary support at home".

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student provides a general analysis that education is important in both selections because it is shown to be vital. Further clarification (by showing the effects of not having one) and textual evidence (I don't know how to read or write) is presented for the first selection. For the second selection, the student clarifies the analysis (exemplifies the successful outcome of a great education), but the textual evidence presented (no child can get all the necessary support at home) is only weakly connected to the analysis.

The growing need for education is expressed, in both selections, in the way that the characters portray their experience with public education. Miss Bessie taught that "what you put in your head" ... "can never be pulled out by the [world]" in a time when the world was famous for taking everything else. Education is a means of fighting back against repetition in history. Miss Bessie grew up in poverty and then went on to teach others how to rise up out of poverty and ^{go against} the "rising tide of mediocrity." The Mother in "The First Day" had to endure humility and self-sacrifice in hopes of allowing her daughter to "learn about the whole world."

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student reasonably attempts to illustrate the importance of education in the selections by describing the characters' experiences with public education. The idea is explained and supported with textual evidence for the expository selection. For the literary selection, the student explains the mother's experience (humility and self-sacrifice) and motivation behind it (in hopes of allowing her daughter to "learn about the world") but does not provide textual evidence showing both humility and self-sacrifice.

READING RUBRIC
LITERARY/EXPOSITORY CROSSOVER
OBJECTIVE 3

SCORE POINT 2 — SUFFICIENT

In **sufficient** responses, the student

- must draw a reasonable conclusion, offer a reasonable interpretation, or make a reasonable prediction based on both selections and must support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence from both selections

- must offer a reasonable analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of text based on both selections and must support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence from both selections

In addition, sufficient responses indicate that the student is able to make clear and specific connections across selections.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 2 Guide Responses for Objective 3 – Literary/Expository Selection

TAKS Exit Level
Spring 2006

RG-41

In "The First Day" the diligent ^{mother} strives to attain a good education for her daughter and in "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" Miss Bessie pushes to give her students the best education she can. Education is the driving force for both of these women. The mother in "The First Day" is dedicated to get her daughter the education that she was deprived of. She declares each time they pass Seaton "You gonna go there and learn about the whole world." Miss Bessie, like the mother, wanted the younger generation to attain a good education. She knew that it was hard for black children to learn in such harsh conditions, but she insisted to "just make the most of what you do have - a brain" to the narrator. Without education our society wouldn't evolve and these women knew ^{that}.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

The student offers the reasonable interpretation that education is important because it is the driving force for the mother striving to attain a good education for her daughter and Miss Bessie pushing her students to get the best education. Direct textual evidence is presented for both selections (You gonna go there and learn about the whole world; Just make the most of what you do have – a brain).

Education is important in both stories because it gave the narrators an opportunity to enhance the way they live their lives. In "The First Day," the girl's mom tells her in stanza 5, "You gonna go there and learn about the whole world." Her mother wanted her to have what she didn't. In "Unforgettable Miss Besie," the boy contemplates how Ms. Bessie helped him to receive an education. He says, "I needed the push and stimulation of a teacher who truly cared." I think that education is just as important as the support you need to pursue it.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student offers a reasonable analysis based on both selections (it gave the narrators an opportunity to enhance the way they live their lives). Direct textual evidence from both selections supports this analysis (You gonna go there and learn about the whole world; I needed the push and stimulation of a teacher who truly cared).

In "The First Day," the uneducated mother is first turned away from Seaton and then subjects herself to public humiliation by exposing the fact that she "doesn't know how to read," all to reach her goal of her daughter obtaining an education and therefore, a future. In "Unforgettable Miss Bessie," it exemplifies how the education comprised of "love and motivation," of one "tiny" woman could "inspire" a plethora of her students, "previously doomed to poverty," to become doctors, dentists, and college professors.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

The student provides two separate interpretations of how education is important. The idea that education is important in "The First Day" (it is the uneducated mother's goal to provide her daughter a future) is supported by a combination of specific synopsis (turned away from Seaton) and direct quotations (doesn't know how to read). The interpretation that education is important in "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" (it inspired a plethora of students) is supported with textual evidence showing the effect of that inspiration (previously doomed to poverty; become doctors, dentists, and college professors).

In both "The First Day" and "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" education holds the power to create a better future for each student. When the mother in "The First Day" says, "I don't know how to read or write, and I'm askin' you to help me," she risks humiliation to get her daughter a better education than she did; she knew she had to give her daughter a better future. Miss Bessie proclaimed, "What you put in your head boy...can never be pulled out by the Ku Klux Klan, the Congress or anybody," proving that education becomes a foundation that can't be stolen.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student offers the reasonable but general analysis that education is important in both selections because it provides an opportunity for a better future. The student explains the analysis for "The First Day" by asserting that education is important because the mother risks humiliation to give the daughter a better future and supports this assertion with direct textual evidence (I don't know how to read or write, and I'm askin' you to help me). For "Unforgettable Miss Bessie," the student clarifies how education provides a better future because it is a foundation that can't be stolen and supports this assertion with direct textual evidence (what you put in your head boy...can never be pulled out).

READING RUBRIC
LITERARY/EXPOSITORY CROSSOVER
OBJECTIVE 3

SCORE POINT 3 — EXEMPLARY

In **exemplary** responses, the student

- must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful conclusion, interpretation, or prediction based on both selections and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence from both selections

- must offer a particularly thoughtful or insightful analysis or evaluation of a characteristic of text based on both selections and strongly support it with accurate/relevant textual evidence from both selections

In addition, exemplary responses indicate that the student is able to make meaningful connections across selections. These responses show strong evidence of the student's depth of understanding and ability to effectively connect textual evidence to the idea, analysis, or evaluation.

Evidence may consist of a direct quotation, a paraphrase, or a specific synopsis.

Score Point 3 Guide Responses for Objective 3 – Literary/Expository Selection

TAKS Exit Level
Spring 2006

RG-45

Education is important in "The First Day" and "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" because it is the clear path that can take underprivileged children through the dark jungle of adversity. In "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" it was revealed that "...her students who might have been doomed to poverty went on to be doctors, dentists and college professors." Miss Bessie's students who all thrived in her teaching, rose from their predestined lot in life to a higher standard all by means of education. In "The First Day" the wise mother says to her young daughter "And listen to every word she say". Though the grammatically incorrect advice is subtle the insinuations are extremely pervasive that by saying this to her daughter, it is proven that education, if listened to, can help any child learn about the whole world, even past the doom of an uneducated mother.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

In this response the student effectively connects strongly linked textual evidence (students who might have been doomed to poverty went on to be doctors, dentists...listen to every word she say...learn about the whole world) to a thorough analysis of how education can take underprivileged children through adversity to achieve a higher standard.

Education is important because it imparts a sense of dignity and respect. The mother in "First Day" wants her daughter to get a good education so she will be able to command the same dignity + respect that Miss Bessie did. Miss Bessie's "bearing of dignity told anyone... that she was educated... and there was never a discipline problem in her class." No one wanted to "mess" with her due to her education. The mother in "First Day" must fight to maintain dignity in the eyes of others + get respect because she isn't educated. The woman with money as curlers appears "happier and more satisfied with everything" because she can view the mother as "diseased" once she finds out that the mother can not read. Even though the mother also displays tremendous strength, courage and manners, people look down on her just because of her lack of education.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

This exemplary response presents the analysis that education is important because "it imparts a sense of dignity and respect." The student then demonstrates depth of understanding by using a combination of direct quotations and specific synopsis (bearing of dignity told anyone...that she was educated; no one wanted to mess with her due to her education; happier and more satisfied with everything because she can view the mother as diseased) to support an insightful explanation that the mother wants her daughter to command dignity and respect as Miss Bessie did; due to being uneducated, the mother must fight to maintain her dignity, even though she displays the same strength, courage, and manners as Miss Bessie.

Education is important in the stories because it represents the way out of poverty. The mother in "First Day" is illiterate and you know the family is poor because the mother brings records of their public assistance payments to the school. While the uneducated mother wears darned socks and modest gardenia perfume, the educated woman at the schools are represented as affluent, looking as if they are out of advertisements in Ebony magazine. This indirectly illustrates the power of education: The chance to have a better quality of life. In "Unforgettable Miss Bessie," the connection between education and a better life is explicit. Miss Bessie taught "economically deprived black youngsters" who without her "might normally have been doomed to poverty." But with the education Miss Bessie fought so hard for them to have, many successfully "moved up from slavery" and found better lives as doctors, dentists, schoolteachers or even newspaper columnists.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

In this response the student offers an insightful analysis that education is important because it represents a way out of poverty. The student then skillfully interweaves textual evidence in the form of specific synopsis for "The First Day" (mother brings records of their public assistance payments; uneducated mother wears darned socks and modest gardenia perfume) and direct quotations for "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" (might normally have been doomed to poverty; moved up from slavery) to support the analysis.

In "The First Day" the daughter says, "I know almost all her looks, but this one is new to me" about her mother. That look is shame. The mother is embarrassed and ashamed that she has the "disease" of illiteracy and cannot enroll her daughter in school without help. In later years, the daughter will learn to be ashamed of her mother as well, probably in large part due to her mom's illiteracy. In "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" the author was almost ashamed of his "frayed hand me down overcoat" but Miss Bessie tells him not "to fret" about that and the teasing, but to make the most of his brain as he did, he would come to believe that he could write as well as Shakespeare or Pope and his teacher would eventually "be proud to read his column" in the newspaper. So the importance of education in these stories is that the character's sense of pride and worth, for themselves and others, depends on being educated.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

In this insightful response, the student skillfully interweaves specific textual evidence (I know all her looks, but this one is new to me; Miss Bessie tells him not to fret...but to make the most of his brain) with strong analysis to effectively illustrate the importance of education as the characters' source of "pride and worth, for themselves and others."