

Exit Level
Scoring Guide
for Reading
and
Written
Composition

July 2006

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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.

In Search of Eels

from *The Tie That Binds*

by *Elisavietta Ritchie*

1 "Hi, Daddy, let's take a walk."

My notes about what I am
reading

2 It's a June day in Virginia. My father puts his hands on the arms of his wheelchair, whispers something I can't understand. I try to help him up but he is limp, resistant, heavy.

3 "Come for a walk, Daddy. Please."

4 The breeze billows white curtains into the room. The lawns have just been mowed and the fragrance of grass wafts inside.

5 He shivers, murmurs something about blizzards. Then, slightly more audibly, "It's cold, I'm tired. Can't we go home now?"

* * *

6 Suddenly we're far beyond Lake Shore Drive, in a part of the waterfront I've never seen before. December, Chicago, I'm five, and cold. One mitten's lost. My feet are tired. His legs are longer, he walks too quickly through yellowing snow, gritty slush, toward buildings like airplane hangars with cavernous mouths. Menacing.

7 He begins to tell me about ships and cargoes.

8 Usually I love to listen to his stories; he knows about everything in the world. But I've had enough walking. "I want to go home."

9 "Just as far as that warehouse." He strides on. "Right foot, left foot, you'll see—we could hike around the whole of Lake Michigan. Come on, hold my hand—*Forward, march!*"

10 "I don't want to hike around Lake Michigan."

11 But we reach the warehouse, shed he calls it, though it is 100 times bigger than any shed in anyone's backyard. By the pier beyond are big boats: tugs and freighters and tankers and tramps. Huge anchors. I keep hoping someone will drop them with a splash into the water. But the ships are docked with thick hawsers, nooses to choke the pilings. Funnels and cranes. Crates taller than my father sit on the wharves. Sunday and no one is working.

- 12 Suddenly the nearest freighter bellows from her funnel and I jump. From excitement, I insist, not fear.
- 13 This is the most exciting place I have ever been. I could walk along here forever. At least until I find out how to get aboard one of the boats.
- 14 Smaller sheds now, smaller boats, a green diner. Odor of fish, and smoke. We enter a shack. Barrels of brine, string bags of clams, crates of fish laid out on ice, their eyes terribly wide.
- 15 "Daddy, look at that snake!"
- 16 "No, that's an eel," says Daddy. "Smoked. We'll take a chunk home for supper."
- 17 "I certainly won't eat that!"
- 18 "All right," he says, and carries the smelly package. As we walk back, he tells me about migrations of eels to the Sargasso Sea: how eels come down Dalmatian rivers and swim across the Mediterranean and then the whole Atlantic, and eels come from the rivers of North America, too, until they reach the warm Sargasso Sea. Here they spawn, though I'm not quite sure what spawn means. Then the baby elvers swim back to the native rivers of their parent eels. My father explains that spawn is the proper word for something my grandmothers say people aren't supposed to discuss. But about eels, that's okay.
- 19 "Someday I will take one of these big ships. No," I correct myself, "a real ship with sails—and steer it to the Sargasso Sea."
- 20 He warns me that in the Sargasso Sea, the rudder, or the propeller screw, might get stuck in seines of floating algae. I'd never get home again.
- 21 Home is already far, Lake Michigan is too large, and although he sings old army marching songs to urge me to pick up my steps, toward the end of the journey he lets me ride home on his shoulders.
- 22 Back at last in the apartment, he unwraps the eel, opens his Swiss Army penknife (though he could have used the big kitchen knife) and slices carefully.
- 23 "I won't eat it," I say firmly.
- 24 "Try one bit, just for me."
- 25 "I won't like it."

- 26 While he hangs up our coats, finally I test one crumb. Awfully smelly, smokey, and salty.
- 27 He goes into the kitchen to heat milk for my cocoa, and tea for himself in the samovar from Tula. I test one more sliver. Then another.
- 28 He returns with the steaming cups. The eel is gone.
- 29 Because it is Sunday and I am five, he forgives me.

* * *

- 30 Later, I am seven, or twelve, or fifteen. We are walking along the canal, or a river, or best of all, a beach. I mostly keep up. No eels now, but we see frogs and ducks, water snakes, minnows. He tells me about everything in the world. We talk about fishing.
- 31 Sometimes at the ocean we cast from a rock or pier or the beach, though it is always the wrong bait or wrong tide. Or we drop handlines over the side of somebody's boat. On rare occasions, we catch a keeper. Then he takes out his Swiss Army knife and teaches me to gut, clean, and filet. His hair sparkles with scattered fish scales. So does mine. Often we spread a picnic: black bread, smelly cheese, a tin of sardines. I eat only my share.
- 32 At nineteen, during my college vacation, I fly out to join my parents in Japan. My father and I climb Mount Fuji. High above the Pacific, and hours up the cindery slope, we picnic on dried eel, seaweed crackers, cold rice wrapped in the skin of an eel. He reaches the peak first.
- 33 Through years we hike along a beach in Cyprus, beside a river in Lebanon, the Seine, Alpine streams, and picnic by various other waters and weathers. We overtake one another. I've never known anyone with such energy.

* * *

- 34 Time rots like old fish.
- 35 Today in the nursing home in Virginia I beg him, "Please, Daddy, just a little walk. You are supposed to exercise."
- 36 The nurses are supposed to walk him daily, but they are always too busy. I try to walk him whenever I visit, but seldom lately has he felt up to more than a step or two.
- 37 "Come, Daddy, forward, march . . ."

38 He can't get out of his chair. I've forgotten to untie the straps of the "posey" which restrains him. Not that he often gets up on his own, but once in a while he'll suddenly have a spurt of strength, then is likely to topple over. I crouch to lift his feet from the foot pedals, fold back the metal pieces which too often bruise his paperthin skin.

39 "Come, now you can stand."

40 He struggles, but cannot move. I place his hands on the rubberized handholds on the metal walker. "Hold tightly and you can pull yourself up."

41 He grips the walker and struggles forward. He still cannot make it to his feet. I am about to lift him, when the nurse comes down the corridor.

42 "Lunch trays are up," she calls out. "Everyone hurry to the solarium!"

43 As if anyone here could do much hurrying.

44 I push his wheelchair to the dining room. His plastic plate is heaped with pureed tuna—he's been having trouble swallowing lately—but he ignores his lunch. The ice cream turns to milk in its styrofoam dish.

45 I hand him a spoon. It slips from his fingers. Some days I sing him old songs, tell stories, but one of the residents turns the television on full blast and he can't even hear my repeated, "Won't you eat, Daddy, please?"

46 I lift a spoonful of grey fishy stuff to his mouth.

47 He whispers, politely, "I don't care for any."

48 Nor would I.

49 Suddenly I go into action, wheel him to the nurses' station, sign him out for the afternoon. It has been a while since I've taken him out, the weather has been too cold or too hot, I haven't had time between work and children and travels, he has had so many bad days of late, he has often been asleep when I've come by, it's a hassle to get him into the car, and how much would he take in anymore anyway.

50 We head full speed for the elevator, downstairs, out the main door, out into the parking lot. An orderly helps me get him into my car, and fits the folded wheelchair into the trunk. I adjust our seat belts.

51 Off we go, down the road, over the bridge toward town.

52 “We’re crossing the Potomac River now, Daddy. Ahead are the Kennedy Center and Watergate, and to the right—can you see the Washington Monument? Remember when we climbed up there, ignored the elevator? And the Smithsonian Museum—how many rainy Saturdays did we spend in museums? And look at those flower beds—”

53 He doesn’t say much to my running travelogue, but seems to be staring out the car window and taking in at least something of a scene he used to know well. The sky is very blue, and so is the river.

54 We turn south from Independence Avenue past some warehouses and pull in by my favorite wholesale fish market.

55 “I’ll be back in a moment, Daddy. Please wait for me—”

56 As if he had a choice.

57 Inside the cool building men in hip boots are sloshing around carrying 16-pound sea trout by the tails. Fish scales fly through the moist air. Frozen boxes of squid and string bags of clams are awaiting pick-up for some restaurant. A curly-haired man is hosing down the floor. I step over the puddles and ask him if by any chance he has any eel today.

58 “We haven’t had any in a year, Ma’am. But it just happens that today—if you don’t mind smoked eel—”

59 He wraps a large chunk in waxy white paper. I pay and hurry out to the car where my father is watching with interest a forklift loading crates of mussels into a truck.

60 “I’ve brought you a surprise.”

61 “Why, thank you, dear!” His voice is stronger than I’ve heard it for months, and he stretches forward for the package with interest. He loves presents, and reaches with awkward fingers to try to open it. The smell fills the car. His fingers can’t undo it, but he holds it while I drive down to the river and find a parking place near the marina. Somehow I wrestle the wheelchair from the car, set it up, wrestle him into it, push him out to a level area.

62 “I’d like a bit of a walk,” he says clearly.

63 Gradually I lift and push and pull him to his feet. Now he is standing, unsteadily, then gains a sort of balance.

64 “See, you made it! That’s wonderful . . . First take a deep breath . . . All right? I’ll be right behind you, my hand is in the small of your back. Now—Forward, march!”

65 He shuffles a couple of steps along the quai. I am holding him securely, somehow maneuvering the wheelchair behind him in case he gets tired. I steady him as he pauses to watch the sail and motorboats on the river. He manages a few more steps, and a few more, along the quai. He hasn't walked this far in months, and seems pleased with himself. There is a small bench ahead and, abandoning the wheelchair, we sit down together.

66 Again for the first time in months, he begins to talk. He remarks on the red dress of a young woman striding by, he wonders what day it is, he inquires about the children. It is some sort of a miracle, this return to "normalcy," however brief. I cherish every instant.

67 "And what about your dinner plans?" he asks with his old graciousness, and invites me out for supper. Of course I accept, we'll manage it somehow. Meanwhile, it is only mid-afternoon, too soon for restaurants, but he has worked up an appetite.

68 I run over and buy something like lemonade from a vendor. Then I take the small smelly package wrapped in glazed ivory paper from its plastic bag.

69 "Look, Daddy. The fishmonger actually had some smoked eel."

70 We unwrap it, then I take out the Swiss Army knife my stepmother gave me "for safekeeping," open the bottles and thinly slice the silvery flesh.

71 "What a beautiful picnic," my father beams.

72 He takes a swig of the lemonade, then with steady fingers picks up a slice of eel and downs it without difficulty. Then another, and another, until he eats the whole chunk.

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Living an Adventurous Life

by Nancy Mairs

1 Nearly ten years ago, I was told that I had a brain tumor, and this experience changed my attitude about adventure forever. I thought that I was going to die and that all my adventures were over. I did not have a brain tumor, it turned out, but rather multiple sclerosis, which meant that, although they were not over, the nature of my adventures would have to change.

My notes about what I am
reading

2 Each morning that I wake up, that I get out of bed, is a fresh event, something that I might not have had. Each gesture that I make carries the weight of uncertainty, demands significant attention: buttoning my shirt, changing a light bulb, walking down stairs. I might not be able to do it this time. Inevitably the minutiae of my life have had to assume dramatic proportions. If I could not delight in them, they would likely drown me in rage and in self-pity.

3 I admire the grand adventures of others. I read about them with zest. With Peter Matthiessen I have trekked across the Himalayas to the Crystal Mountain. One blistering July I moved with John McPhee to Eagle, Alaska, above the Arctic Circle. I have trudged with Annie Dillard up, down, into, and across Tinker Creek in all seasons. David Bain has accompanied me along 110 miles of Philippine coast, and Ed Abbey has paddled me down the Colorado River. I've ridden on the back of Robert Pirsig's motorcycle, climbed 95 feet to George Dyson's tree house, and grown coffee in Kenya with Isak Dinesen. I relish the adventures of these rugged and courageous figures, who can strike out on difficult trips—2 miles, 250 miles, 3,000 miles—ready to endure cold, fatigue, human and natural hostility—indeed not just to endure but to celebrate.

4 But as for me, I can no longer walk very far from the armchair in which I read. I'll never make it to Tibet. Maybe not even to Albuquerque. Some days I don't even make it to the backyard. And yet I'm unwilling to forgo the adventurous life: the difficulty of it, even the pain, the suspense and fear, and the sudden brief lift of spirit that graces a hard journey. If I am to have it too, then I must change the terms by which it is lived. And so I do.

5 I refine *adventure*, make it smaller and smaller. And now, whether I am feeding fish flakes to my bettas or crawling across the dining room helping my cat Burton look for his blind snake, lying wide-eyed in the dark battling yet another bout of depression, cooking a chicken, gathering flowers from the garden at the farm, meeting a friend for lunch, I am always having the adventures that are mine to have.

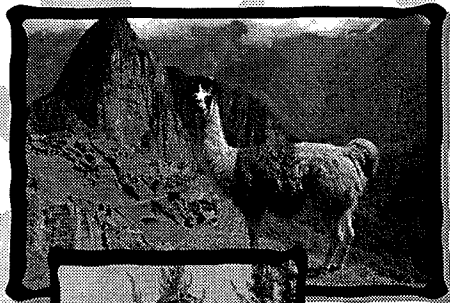
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My notes about what I am reading

Vision VOLUNTEERS

The Adventure You've Been Waiting For!

**Are you willing to spend your summer in the
Grand Canyon? How about in the mountains of Peru?**



*Vision can take
you places. Our
volunteers spend two
months each summer
helping out in some of
the most beautiful
places in the world.*

Volunteers help archaeologists catalog ancient ruins in Machu Picchu. They mark trails with park rangers and assist campers in U.S. national parks. They count loggerhead turtle eggs in Florida.

Experience the adventure of a lifetime. Become a Vision Volunteer. Learn how inside.

Where will Vision lead you?

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SHORT ANSWER ITEMS

Rubrics and Sample Responses

Objective 2 – Literary Selection

Explain how the narrator's actions reveal her feelings for her father in "In Search of Eels." 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

As she grows older she stops doing what she used to do with her father as when she was little. Now she's grown and she misses what they did like walking by the beach buying eels for supper.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student attempts to respond to the question; however, the student does not present a clear action that reveals the narrator's feelings for her father. In addition, no textual evidence is offered.

RG-2

In the story, the daughter believes her father to be the strongest, most well-educated man she has ever met. Even when he is too old to stand on his own, she just can't let go of the goodtimes they shared in the past. She knows her father lived ~~an~~ an adventurous life in the past and does not believe ageing would be a factor in it coming to an end.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

In this response the student presents some of the narrator's thoughts about her father (believes her father to be the strongest, most well-educated man she has ever met) but does not show how the narrator's actions reveal her feelings for her father. Furthermore, no textual evidence is offered.

The narrator has patience for her father in the story. She knows what he has managed to do with her before, and knows that in time he will come through and be the way he used to be.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

This student presents the idea that the narrator reveals her feelings for her father by being patient with him, which is too general to be considered reasonable. The student's attempt to explain this idea (knows that in time he will come through and be the way he used to be) is not a reasonable analysis within the context of the selection. In addition, no textual evidence is offered.

The narrator cares about him in a way that no one at the nursing home or anywhere else, for that matter, could. "The nurses are supposed to walk him daily, but they are always too busy."

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student attempts to respond to the question by presenting the idea that the narrator cares more for her father than the people at the nursing home do. The student also offers textual evidence to support that the father does not get the care he should (nurses are supposed to walk him daily, but they are always too busy). However, this student does not explain and support how the narrator's actions reveal her feelings for her father.

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

TAKS Exit Level
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RG-5

Her actions of making time to take her dad out on a picnic that he used to take her on, and of trying to get him up and help him walk shows she truly cares about him and his feelings because she's doing all she can to satisfy him and brighten ^{his} day.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

This student presents clear actions by the narrator (making time to take her dad out on a picnic, trying to get him up and help him walk) that reveal her feelings for her father. However, the student does not offer textual evidence to support this idea.

RG-6

In "In search of eels" the narrator reveals her feelings for her father by taking him out of the nursing home, and trying her best to make him walk and talk. "I cherish every instant" the narrator shows how much she cherishes when her father returned to brief "Normalcy."

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student presents a number of ways the narrator reveals her feelings for her father (taking him out of the nursing home and trying her best to make him walk and talk). However, the textual evidence offered by the student (I cherish every instant; when her father returned to brief "normalcy") supports the results of her efforts but not the actions themselves. This results in a weak link between the ideas and the textual evidence, causing the response to remain partially sufficient.

The narrator's actions for her father were when she told his father "I've brought you a surprise," and she took him down to the river and they ate eel and her father told her "what a beautiful picnic."

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

The student provides a combination of direct quotations and paraphrase of relevant text that would support a reasonable explanation of how the narrator's actions reveal her feelings for her father. However, the student does not present an analysis of the narrator's actions.

The narrator's love for her father shines through the persistence she exerts during the passage. As it states at the end, "for... months" she worked with her father "between work and children and travels." This level of commitment signifies the love she clearly has for her father and the travels they took together.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student explains how the narrator's actions reveal her feelings for her father (The narrator's love for her father shines through the persistence she exerts during the passage), which is a reasonable analysis, though somewhat general. However, the student attempts to support this analysis with textual evidence that is inaccurate ("for...months" she worked with her father "between work and children and travels"). Sufficient responses must be clear and specific and cannot contain inaccuracies.

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

In "In Search of Eels", the narrator's actions reveal her love for her father. She encourage her father to walk just like he did when she was five and didn't want to walk anymore. "Now - Forward, march!" Also she brought him smoked eel, which is the food she tried at five and ate it all without saving any for her father. Her actions show that she cherish and loves her past with her father.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

This student shows that the narrator's actions reveal that she loves her father and cherishes their past together. The student supports this analysis by combining paraphrase of relevant text with a direct quotation.

RG-10

Ever since the narrator was 5, her and her father have had a special kind of bond. "Try one bit just for me," as he asks his daughter to try eel. As she tries it she notices how much she liked it. They were adventurous even though it faded away with her father being put in a nursing home, but that didn't stop her from bonding. She cared for her daddy. "Please daddy, just a little walk you are supposed to exercise," she exclaims. Bonding with him she notes, "For the first time in months, he begins to talk."

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student presents the idea that the narrator's actions toward her father reveal the special bond that has formed between them since she was a small child. The student combines direct quotes with paraphrase and synopsis to explain and support a bond based on caring and trust.

The narrator's actions reveal true love for her father. Her actions show that she genuinely cares for her father and doesn't mind taking care of him, like he took care of her. "I try to walk him whenever I visit..." "some days I sing him old songs, tell stories..." "See you made it! That's wonderful... I'll be right behind you... forward march." "I cheer every instant."

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

The student presents the reasonable ideas that the narrator's actions reveal that she loves and genuinely cares for her father and takes care of him like he took care of her. The student clearly supports these ideas with a number of direct quotations of accurate/relevant textual evidence.

"In Search of Eels" the narrator was very loving towards her father. She loved him so much that she wanted him to walk. "I'll be right behind you now forward march!" She also loved him enough to buy him some of the favorite food he liked. "Look daddy, the fisherman actually had some smoked eel."

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student presents the idea that the narrator's actions reveal the narrator was very loving towards her father. The student explains that this love is shown by the narrator's desire for her father to walk and the fact that she bought him some of his favorite food. These ideas are supported by direct quotations of relevant textual evidence.

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

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RG-13

In the passage "In Search of Eels," the narrator reveals her love for her father by referring to her youth with her father and her present day life with him. As a child the narrator loved to listen to her father who "knows everything in the world." Entering adolescents, she tried to "keep up" with him, never knowing anyone with such energy. The narrator's deep admiration for her father in childhood helped her to develop a caring attitude when her father is old and less capable, "I lift...him to his feet."

"Allright? I'll be right behind you, my hand in the small of your back"

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

This student presents a particularly thoughtful response that tracks the narrator's love as it transforms from the deep admiration of a young child to the caring attitude of an adult. This analysis is strongly supported by a number of relevant direct quotations to create a highly effective response.

RG-14

The narrator does not reveal her feelings towards her father verbally, but does so with kind gestures and actions. The narrator takes her father out of the home because the lunch room is crowded, the TV too loud, and the food tasteless. Once out of the "home" she back tracks to help her father remember the good times like the climb up the Washington monument and the rainy Saturdays spent in museums. She attempts to refuel his vitality by encouraging him to walk, "Now forward march!" By going out of her way to get one of his favorite foods, smoked eel, and providing a "beautiful picnic" she shows her love.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

The student shows an in-depth understanding of how the narrator reveals her love for her father through kind gestures and actions. The student combines paraphrase and direct quotations of accurate/relevant textual evidence with insightful analysis to create a thorough and highly successful response.

The narrator feels a deep love and admiration for her father which she communicates through her care of the aging man. She continually dedicates her time to enlivening his now senile life and will "sing him old songs, tell stories" and "walk him whenever [she] visit[s]". She is "holding him securely" in a way that transcends the physical connotation of these words. As a doting daughter filled with beautiful memories of her father, she willingly assumes his former role of caretaker knowing that they "will manage it somehow!"

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

In this response the student presents a particularly insightful analysis that the narrator's actions reveal her love and admiration for her aging father and that her care for him transcends the physical to a deeper level of commitment for his overall well-being. The student strongly supports this analysis with a number of direct quotations of accurate/relevant text.

In the years before her father was placed in a home where he sits "limp" in a wheelchair, he would take her on great adventures "...a beach in Cyprus... a river in Lebanon, the Seine, Alpine streams..." As an adult now, the narrator knows the only way she can lift his spirits is to get him back into a scene he knows, the waterfront. In taking him out to get "some fresh air," lovingly urging him to walk, "now forward march!" and making him a "present" of one of his favorite foods, "smoked eel" the narrator was restoring, not only his health, but also his heart. "What a beautiful picnic," my father beams.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

This student shows a thorough understanding of how the narrator's actions reveal her feelings for her father by presenting an analysis that explores how the narrator's past adventures with her father give her insight and motivation to revive her father's love of adventure. The student interweaves direct quotations and paraphrase of relevant text to form a strong, specific synopsis.

Objective 3 – Expository Selection

Do you think that Nancy Mairs in “Living an Adventurous Life” is adventurous? 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
July 2006

RG-17

Personally, I think that she is a pretty adventurous woman. I doubt that in my life I'll be able to accomplish some of the things that she has. Nancy has overcome such experiences as "trekking across the Himalayas, trudging up and down Tinker Creek, and many other enduring activities Nancy Mairs has her own detiance of being adventurous, and although she hasn't yet crossed the line of being a daredevil, in my eyes, Nany Mairs is a true adventurer.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

This student attempts to answer the question that Nancy Mairs is adventurous by concluding that she has overcome experiences and many other enduring activities, which is general and vague. Furthermore, the text provided (trekking across the Himalayas, trudging up and down Tinker Creek) does not support Mairs' activities, since these are adventures that Mairs reads about but does not actually do.

RG-18

When she was younger, it sounds like she was adventurous, but later "she couldn't get far from her armchair, then she was able to do little things.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student attempts to address the question of Nancy Mairs being adventurous by presenting different phases in her life (When she was younger, but later, then); however, the ideas are simply too vague to be considered a reasonable conclusion. Furthermore, no textual evidence is offered.

since Nancy Mairs has multiple sclerosis, she uses her condition as an excuse to feel helpless which gives her less determination to be adventurous. "And yet I'm unwilling to forgo the adventurous life: the difficulty of it, even the pain, the suspense and fear, and the sudden brief lift of spirit that graces a hard journey."

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

In this response the student draws a conclusion that is not reasonable (she [Mairs] uses her condition as an excuse to feel helpless). Furthermore, the student offers textual evidence that would support the opposite conclusion. (And yet I am unwilling to forgo the adventurous life...). This response indicates a misreading of the selection and must be considered insufficient.

Nancy Mairs in "Living an Adventurous Life" is adventurous because at first she was on big adventures in paragraph three. Then she went to a big change in paragraph five. That is a challenge to go from a big thing to a little thing like that. Her life has changed alot and that is an adventure.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

This student concludes that Mairs is adventurous because she went from a big thing to a little thing, which is vague and partially inaccurate since the adventures in paragraph three are ones that she read about. Furthermore, the general citation of paragraphs is not an acceptable form of textual evidence.

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
July 2006

RG-21

Yes, Nancy Mairs is living an adventurous life. At the end of the story Nancy says "I am always having the adventures that are mine to have!" This is stating why Nancy Mairs is having a adventurous life.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

The student provides a direct quote of relevant text that would support a reasonable conclusion that Mairs is adventurous (I am always having the adventures that are mine to have); however, the student does not present an analysis, causing the response to remain partial.

RG-22

I definatley believe that Nancy Mairs is living an adventurous life. Not everyone is faced with the consequences of a physical handicap such as Nancy and not everyone percieves the word adventurous in the same way. To me an aduerturous person is someone who is willing to face the obstacles that life throws at them. An aduerturous person beats the odds and is determined to do and recieve only the best in life. To me a life with multiple sclerosis is an adventure in it self, and anyone who can overcome and deal with the hardships that come along with it, deserves to be called aduerturous and heroic.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

This student presents a thorough analysis to draw the conclusion that Mairs is adventurous for dealing with a crippling disease such as multiple sclerosis and going on with her life. However, the student does not offer any textual evidence to support this analysis.

NO! because she's just at home doing everyday things like feeding her fish. That's not a adventure that a obligation if you want a pet you have to feed it.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student draws a negative conclusion about Mairs being adventurous because she simply takes care of daily obligations like feeding a pet, which is a reasonable answer. The student does provide a text reference (feeding her fish), but this is not specific enough to be considered accurate/relevant textual evidence.

she is adventurous because she has taken a bad thing and made it into an adventure for herself. "I am always having the adventures that are mine to have." when doing everyday "simple" things, she makes them to be adventures.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

This student presents a mostly general idea about Mairs being adventurous (...she has taken a bad thing and made it into an adventure for herself) and supports it with a direct quote of relevant text. However, the student proceeds to present an additional idea about Mairs (When doing everyday "simple" things, she makes them to be adventures) but does not offer additional textual evidence for support. The student would need to support both ideas with relevant text in order to be eligible for a higher score point.

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
July 2006

RG-25

Although Nancy Mairs in "Living an Adventurous Life" has refined adventures, she is still very adventurous. She feeds her betta, ^{and} crawls across the dining room helping her cat Burton look for his blind snake. When she's not having a hands on adventure, she is embarking on other adventures with other adventures via books. For example, "With Peter Matthiessen I [she] trekked across the Himalayas to the Crystal Mountain."

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student presents two ideas to conclude that Mairs is adventurous (she refines her "hands on" adventures, she embarks on other adventures with other adventurers via books). The student supports the first idea with a paraphrase of relevant text and the second idea with a direct quote of relevant text.

RG-26

In "Living an Adventurous Life" Nancy Mairs is not adventurous. She is effected by sclerosis and it is hard for her to move.
Although she reads books to admire those who can be very adventurous, she can never be. "I can no longer walk very far from the armchair in which I read." Getting out and exploring is being adventurous, and she can only move very little. "Somedays I can't even make it to the backyard."

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

This student concludes that Mairs is not adventurous because she has multiple sclerosis; therefore, she is very limited in her ability to move and can only read books, admiring those who can be adventurous. The student supports this analysis with two direct quotes of relevant text.

I think more determined than adventurous. She's determined to not let her disability override her. "... crawling across the dining room helping my cat Burton look for his blind snake..." She is re-shaping the word "adventurous" to fit her life and what she goes through everyday. She may not be fighting the kind of struggle we understand but she's definitely fighting.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student concludes that Mairs is more determined than adventurous because she is re-shaping the word "adventurous" to fit her life and everyday struggles. The student offers an example of that struggle in the form of a direct quote (...crawling across the dining room helping my cat Burton look for his blind snake...) to support this conclusion.

In "Living an Adventurous Life" I think Nancy Mairs is adventurous because everything she used to do regularly is a struggle now. In para. 2 she says "Inevitably the minutiae of my life have had to assume dramatic proportions." Everytime and day she has to button her shirt, change a light bulb, or even walk down stairs is an adventure because she might not be able to do it. The uncertainty of herself makes her life that much more adventurous.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

The student reasonably concludes that Mairs is adventurous because everything she used to do on a regular basis is now a struggle. The student proceeds to support this conclusion with a combination of a direct quote and paraphrase of accurate/relevant text.

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
July 2006

RG-29

I believe that Nancy is adventurous because of her strong will and determination of never giving up in her life. Everyday is a struggle for her whether it is walking to the backyard or just buttoning her shirt. Even though her adventures are miniscule compared to those she has read about, they are what keep her living each day. She said, "I'm unwilling to forgo an adventurous life: the difficulty, even the pain, the suspense and fear, and the sudden brief lift of spirit that graces a hard journey... I am always having the adventures that are mine to have."

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

In this particularly thoughtful response the student concludes that not only is Mairs adventurous due to her strong will and determination to never give up on her ongoing struggle to get through her everyday routines, but it is this very same struggle that keeps her living each and every day. The student strongly supports this conclusion with paraphrase of relevant text embedded within the analysis, along with a direct quote of accurate/relevant text.

RG-30

Nancy Mairs in "Living an Adventurous Life" is as the title suggests, adventurous. Unable to "walk very far from the armchair in which [she] reads, she is forced to partake in the daily struggle of simply living, the minutia of life a full-scale battle which to others are trivial events. By participating in these small details of everyday life, from "lying wide-eyed in the dark" to "meeting a friend for lunch," she points out that her adventures are "[her's] to have."

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

This student shows an in-depth understanding of how Mairs' daily struggle takes on the magnitude of a full-scale battle in which she is forced to take part. The student interweaves direct quotes of relevant text into this vivid analysis to create a highly effective response.

Nancy Mairs is living an adventurous life because she has not given up even though she faces adversity. Many people would have despaired when met with the inability to do such common tasks as "buttoning a shirt or changing a lightbulb (par. 2)." She, however, still fights to have "adventures that we [hers] to have (par. 9)" This demonstration of courage and bravery certainly merits the title of adventures more than the "rugged and courageous figures (par. 7)" that the author applauds.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

The student concludes that Mairs is even more adventurous than the great adventurers she reads about because she demonstrates the courage and bravery to face adversity and fight her way through when others would have lost hope. The student strongly supports this insightful analysis with a number of direct quotes of relevant textual evidence.

I think that Nancy Mairs in "Living on Adventurous Life" is adventurous. Her adventures are just "refined" compared to others. Instead of being like, "... Ed Abbey and paddling down the Colorado river..." she goes on painful journeys that are literally in her "own backyard." For example, "... feed fish flakes to my betta or crawling across the dining room helping my cat... gathering flowers from the garden at the farm..." These tasks are adventures for Nancy Mairs. They are difficult, painful, and involve fear and concentration, the same as climbing Mt. Fuji. Since the definition of being adventurous is roughly "one who goes on adventures" I believe this describes Nancy Mairs.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

This student thoughtfully concludes that Mairs is adventurous in the sense that her journeys, even though refined, involve the same elements of difficulty, pain, fear, and concentration as paddling down rivers and climbing mountains, which are the adventures she reads about. This conclusion is strongly supported by relevant direct quotes that the student interweaves into the analysis to create a highly effective response.

Objective 3 – Literary/Expository Selection

What is one similarity between the narrators in “In Search of Eels” and “Living an Adventurous Life”? 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
July 2006

RG-33

The similarity between the narrators are the feeling of helplessness. Either it be with themselves, or with other people. One could blame herself, & the other could just deal with the problem, and go on living like there were no tomorrow.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

This response lacks clarity. The idea that the similarity between the narrators is a feeling of helplessness is too vague to determine if it is reasonable. The explanation (it be with themselves, or with other people) that follows is also vague and further confuses the response.

Some similarity's that the story's have is that they both talk about life and the things they like to do and how exciting it is to still be alive. Another thing is that they both have happy endings.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student presents several unsupported analyses that are too general to determine whether they are reasonable.

The way the girl's father is "In Search of Eels" is the way Nancy Mairs feels, in living an adventurous life. Because the girl's father use to do every thing with her like climb mountain and hike all over the place, but when he got older he couldn't do any of that any more. And the same with Nancy Mairs when she found out she had a brain tumor she could go on any adventures any more.

Score Point: 0 - Insufficient

This response is insufficient because the student answers a different question than the one asked.

Both Ritchie and Nains love to be on adventures especially Nancy who loves to adventure to "Eagle, Alaska, above the Arctic Circle." Ritchie loves to adventure along the waterfront with his father eating "smoked eel." Both Ritchie and Nancy adventure to places they find that make them happy. They can both find a place to reminisce into adventures.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

In this response the student's analysis indicates that the similarity between the narrators is that they both physically traveled on adventures. This is not a reasonable interpretation of the expository selection.

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
July 2006

RG-37

a similarity between the narrators in "In Search of Gold" and "Living an Adventurous Life" is that although both were faced with struggles and unexpected difficulties, they both ended their stories feeling content and satisfied. Nancy Mairs closes her selection with the positive remark that "I am always having the adventures that are mine to have." Also, Elisavietta Ritchie finishes her story with her and her father sharing a picnic where, "I cherish every instant" says Ritchie.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student offers two reasonable similarities between the narrators (both were faced with struggles and unexpected difficulties, both ended their stories feeling content and satisfied). Relevant textual evidence is presented to support the second idea. However, the student does not provide textual evidence to support that both were faced with struggles and unexpected difficulties.

A similarity between the narrators in "In Search of Eels" and "Living an Adventurous Life" is that they both loved adventures. The narrator in "In Search of Eels" went on her adventures physically with her father, and as they were driving she said, "He doesn't say much to my running travelogue," as she was describing memories from their past adventures. Nancy, however, went on her adventures mentally, and from her reading she said, "I relish the adventures of these rugged and courageous figures," as she envies the characters from her books.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student offers the reasonable idea that both narrators loved adventures. The student offers direct textual evidence to support the analysis for "Living an Adventurous Life" (I relish the adventures of these rugged and courageous figures) but provides only weakly linked textual evidence for "In Search of Eels" (He doesn't say much to my running travelogue).

Both narrators still want to experience some form of adventure. In the story "In search of Eds," the daughter wants her father to remember all the adventures they had together like tasting smoked eel. Nancy maus tries to focus on having adventures even though she is physically unable to by reading stories.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

The student in this response offers the reasonable idea that both narrators still want to experience some form of adventure. However, the student offers only general text references rather than specific textual evidence to support the analysis.

In the story "In search of Eels" the daughter has come to realize that she will not be able to go on any more amazing adventures with her father because he is too old and weak. In the story, "Living an Adventurous Life" Nancy has come to realize that she will not ever be able to go on anymore adventures because of her back. So both the daughter and Nancy have come to find other ways of having adventures.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student provides a reasonable idea that the narrators are similar because both realize that they will no longer be able to go on adventures and both will have to find other ways of having adventures. Although the student fully explains this analysis, no textual evidence is offered.

**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
July 2006

RG-41

One similarity is that they both have an optimistic outlook on life. Ritchie, never giving up on her dad feels that he can walk despite his weaknesses. When he does, she encourages him to continue. "See you made it! ... Forward march!" words of encouragement used by her father when she was little. Mairs keeps an optimistic outlook by never giving up on having adventures. Even though they may be small she says, "... I am always having the adventures that are mine to have."

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

This student presents the reasonable idea that both narrators have an optimistic outlook on life. The student explains that Ritchie's optimism is shown by not giving up on her dad and encouraging him to continue while Mairs shows optimism by not giving up on having adventures. Direct textual evidence supports the analysis (See, you made it! Forward, march; I am always having the adventures that are mine to have).

One similarity between the narrators in "In Search of Eels" and "Living an Adventurous Life" is they both love an adventure. "In Search of Eels," the narrator has many adventures in her life. "I fly out to join my parents in Japan. My father and I climb Mount Fuji, high above the Pacific." This is an example of her love of adventure. "Living an Adventurous Life," the narrator, loves a different type of adventure: reading "with Peter Matthiessen I have trekked across the Himalayas." This shows both of the narrators love for adventure.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student responds with the clear and specific idea that one similarity between the narrators is that they both love an adventure. This idea is explained (the narrator has many adventures in her life; loves a different type of adventure: reading) and supported with direct textual evidence (I fly out to join my parents in Japan; with Peter Matthiessen I have trekked across the Himalayas).

Both narrators have great determination. The narrator in "In Search of Eels" shows her determination to get her dad out on a walk by her actions, "suddenly I go into action... full speed for the elevator... off we go." When her dad wouldn't get up to move she took matters into her own hands because she knew her dad would feel better if he got out, the trouble was getting him to realize that. In "Living an Adventurous Life" Nancy shows her determination when she says "the minutiae of my life have had to assume dramatic proportions. If I could not delight in them I could drown in rage and self-pity." This shows her determination to not let her multiple sclerosis ruin her life, she knew she needed to go on with her life, so she did.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

This student offers the reasonable idea that both narrators have great determination. The idea is explained (to get her dad out on a walk; to not let her multiple sclerosis ruin her life) and supported by direct textual evidence (Suddenly I go into action; the minutiae of my life have had to assume dramatic proportions).

ONE SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE NARRATORS IN "IN SEARCH OF FEELS" AND "LIVING AN ADVENTUROUS LIFE" IS, BOTH OF THEM HAVE TO DEAL WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES. RITCHIE HAS TO STRUGGLE THROUGH HER FATHER'S AGE "TODAY IN THE NURSING HOME... I BEG HIM, PLEASE, DADDY, JUST A LITTLE WALK... HE CAN'T GET OUT OF HIS CHAIR." MAIRS STRUGGLES THROUGH EVERYDAY THINGS LIKE "BUTTONING MY SHIRT, CHANGING A LIGHT BULB, WALKING DOWN STAIRS" AND HAVING TO WORRY ABOUT "NOT BEING ABLE TO DO IT THIS TIME."

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student combines reasonable analysis and direct textual evidence to illustrate that both narrators have to deal with physical disabilities. The student explains and supports how Ritchie struggles through her father's age (Today in the nursing home, I beg him, just a little walk) while Nancy struggles with everyday things (buttoning my shirt, changing a light bulb).

**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
July 2006

RG-45

Both the authors of "In Search of Eels" and "Living an Adventurous Life" have adventures of unconventional kinds. Both women seek to push a disease beyond its limits. "First take a deep breath... All right? I'll be right behind you, my hand is in the small of your back. Now forward march!" (par 4) "But rather multiple sclerosis, which meant that, although they were not over, the nature of my adventure would have to change." (par 1) Elisavietta uses "Forward, march!" to spur her Dad to action, to make him remember the adventures they once had, "Come, Daddy, forward, march..." (par 37) And Nancy leaves the confines of her disease to have allusive affairs with Peter Matthiessen and John McPhee "With Peter... I trekked across the Himalayas... I moved with John... to Eagle, Alaska... I trudged... across Tinker Creek... David Bain has accompanied me along 110 miles of Philippine Coast..." (par 3)

Both women have amazing adventures while breaking a normalizing model of an 'adventure'

Both women learn that adventures are not how far you have gone in miles, but how far you went in spirit.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

In this exemplary response the student draws the thoughtful conclusion that the narrators are similar in that they have unconventional adventures by pushing beyond the limits of disease. Further explanation is woven together with strongly linked textual evidence to illustrate and support the analysis.

Both find ways to adapt to a change in their lives while still keeping their old memories close. For Ritchie, she has switched places with her father. She is now the one encouraging him to walk with the familiar "Forward March!" Instead of the other way around. By getting her father out of the nursing home, Ritchie is able to get him "to talk again for the first time in months."

Mairs has reached the point in her life where she must make a decision: "drown in rage and self-pity" or "delight in the minutia of her life." Unwilling to "forgo the adventurous life," she chooses to "change the terms by which she lives."

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

This exemplary response focuses on how both narrators must adapt to change but keep their memories close. Insightful explanation (For Ritchie, she has switched places with her father; Mairs has reached the point in her life where she must make a decision) is woven with strongly linked textual evidence to clarify and support the analysis.

Both narrators have a conventional definition of adventure but then realize that it is the small adventures that really count. In "In Search of Eds," the narrator remembers climbing Mount Fuji with her father but then discovers that the most cherished adventure is when she gets her father to rise from the wheelchair and walk to the bench where they have a picnic. She thinks that this "return to normalcy" is "some sort of miracle" and "cherishes every instant." The adventures Nancy Mairs reads about are big-completed by "rugged and courageous figures." But with multiple sclerosis, she soon finds adventure in everyday tasks. She "refines adventure, making it smaller and smaller" so that "cooking a chicken" or "meeting a friend for lunch" are meaningful adventures that are hers to have.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

This student demonstrates depth of understanding with an insightful analysis of how both narrators begin with conventional ideas of adventures but come to understand that it is the small adventures that really count. The student skillfully uses direct textual evidence to clarify and support that the narrators began with conventional ideas of adventure and both narrators came to value small adventures.

a similarity between the narrators is that despite hardships they have a positive outlook on life. Nancy Mairs who has been diagnosed with MS redefines adventure. Her life, though often confined to her armchair, is spent reading and living her grand adventures in her mind like trekking through the Himalayas with Matthiessen. She is unwilling to forgo her adventurous life. She "must change the terms by which she lives." And so I do. Ritchie's struggle with hardship is with her father's declining health and old age. She remembers hiking through Cypress and beside a river in Lebanon with her father. Realizing that her father will no longer go on these journeys, she like Mairs, has to redefine her adventures by taking her father out of the nursing home, encouraging him to walk and sharing a lunch of eel like she did when she was five.

Score Point: 3 – Exemplary

In this response the student presents a thorough analysis of how both authors have a positive outlook on life despite having hardships. Thoughtful analysis is interwoven with strongly liked textual evidence to clarify and support the hardship faced by each narrator and the positive outlook both narrators demonstrate.