



Grade 10 Scoring Guide for Reading and Written Composition

Spring 2004

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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.

Sunny Days and Sunny Nights

by M. E. Kerr

1 “Females prefer chunky peanut butter over smooth, forty-three percent to thirty-nine percent,” Alan announces at dinner, “while men show an equal liking for both.”

My notes about what I am
reading

2 My father likes this conversation. I think even my mother does, since she is telling Alan enthusiastically that she likes smooth. Moments before she confided that she preferred red wine, after Alan said that women are more likely than men to order wine in a restaurant, and a majority prefer white.

3 Alan is filled with this sort of information.

4 He wants to become an advertising man. He is enrolled in journalism school for that purpose. He's my height, when I'm wearing heels, has brown hair and brown eyes, lives not far away in Salisbury, North Carolina. We go out mostly to hit movies, and he explains their appeal afterward, over coffee at a campus hangout. He prides himself on knowing what sells, and why, and what motivates people. Sometimes when we kiss, I imagine he knows exactly what percentage of females close their eyes, and if more males keep theirs open.

5 I long for Sunny.

6 Whenever Sunny came to dinner, my father winced at his surfers' talk and asked him pointedly if he had a “real” name. Harold, Sunny would tell him, and my father would say, that's not such a bad name, you can make Harry out of that, and once he came right out and told Sunny that a man shouldn't have a boy's name.

7 When Sunny finally joined the Navy my father said, well, they'll make a man out of him.

8 He's a man, I said, believe me. Look at him and tell me he's not a man. Because Sunny towers over my father, has a Rambo build, and a walk, smile, and way about him that oozes confidence. Hair the color of the sun, deep blue eyes. Always tanned, always. Even my mother murmured, oh, he's a man, Sunny is.

9 But my father shook his head and said, I don't mean *that*. I mean the boy has a boy's ambition, you only have to listen to all that talk about the big waves, the surf, the beach—either he's a boy or a fish, but he's not someone with his eye on the future. He's not someone thinking about a profession!

10 One of the hard things about going to college in your hometown is that your family meets your dates right away. If I had the good luck to live in a dorm, my father couldn't cross-examine all of them while I finish dressing and get myself downstairs. Even when I'm ready ahead of time, he manages to squeeze out as much information about them as he can, once he's shaken hands with one, and while we're standing there looking for our exit line.

11 He likes Alan right away.

12 After dinner is over, while Alan and I go for a walk, Alan says, "I really like your family. Did they like me, do you think?"

13 "I know they did."

14 But my mother never once threw her head back and laughed, the way she used to when Sunny was at the table, never said, oh *you!* to Alan, like someone trying hard not to love his teasing—no one ever teased her but Sunny.

15 He'd tell her she looked like Princess Di (maybe . . . a little) and he'd often exclaim, you've made my day, darlin'! when he'd taste her special fried chicken. My father calls her Kate or Mama, and he can't eat anything fried because of the cholesterol, but they've been rocking together on our front porch through twenty years of marriage, and he *does* have a profession: He's a judge.

16 Oh, is he a judge!

17 Sunny, he said once when Sunny alluded to a future with me, every Friday noon Marybeth's mother comes down to my office and we go out to lunch. It's a ritual with us: I get to show her off to my colleagues, and we stroll over to the hotel, enjoy an old-fashioned, have the special-of-the-day, and set aside that time for us. . . . I hope someday my daughter will be going down to her own husband's place of business to do the exact same thing.

18 Later Sunny said, He wasn't kidding, was he?

19 H.m? I said. Kid? I said.

20 It was a week to the day that Sunny asked me to marry him. We were just graduated from high school. I was already planning my courses at the university when Sunny got wind of a job in Santa Monica, running a shop called Sun & Surf. Sunny'd moved from California when his folks broke up. His mom brought him back to Greenville, where she waited table in his grandfather's diner. . . . I never knew what Sunny's father did for a living, but my father, who spent a lot of time trying to worm it out of Sunny, said it sounded as though he was a "common laborer." Can't he be just a laborer? I said. Does he have to be a common one?

- 21 Marybeth, said my father, I'm just looking out for you. I like the boy. He's a nice boy. But we're talking here about the whole picture. . . . Does Sunny ever mention college?
- 22 I want to go to college, I told Sunny.
- 23 You can go out on the coast somewhere.
- 24 How? Daddy won't pay for it if we get married.
- 25 We'll figure out something.
- 26 It's too vague, Sunny, and too soon.
- 27 What's vague about it?
- 28 Don't *you* want to go to college, Sunny? Don't *you* want a profession?
- 29 Sunny said he couldn't believe I felt the way my father did, in the letter he left with my mother for me. He said the Navy was his best bet, and at least he'd be on water. He didn't say anything about waiting for him, or writing—nothing about the future. I'd said some other things that last night together, after he'd made fun of my father's talk about my parents' Friday-noon ritual. They don't even touch, he'd said: I've never once seen them touch, or heard them use affectionate names, or laugh together. So she shows up at his office once a week—big deal! . . . Honey, we've got a love that'd like to bust through the roof! You don't want to just settle for something like they did! They settled!
- 30 They love each other. I argued back, it just doesn't show. . . . Sunny said that was like plastic over wood, and love should splinter, crack, and burn!
- 31 You know how it is when someone criticizes your family, even when you might have thought and said the same things. You strike out when you hear it from another mouth, say things you don't mean, or you do, and wouldn't have said under any other circumstances.
- 32 I said, at least my father could always take care of my mother! At least he'd made something of himself, and she could be proud of him! That's good enough for me, I said. I knew from the hurt look in Sunny's eyes he was hearing that he wasn't.
- 33 "Seventy-four percent of American adults are interested in professional football," Alan says as we walk along under the stars. "Eighty-seven percent of men and sixty-three percent of women."
- 34 I can hear Sunny's voice saying blah blah blah blah blah blah blah!

35 “Alan,” I say, “what kind of office does an advertising
man have?”

36 “Mine’s going to be in New York City, and there’ll be a
thick rug on the floor, and a view of the whole Manhattan
skyline from the windows. Do you like New York,
Marybeth?”

37 “Anyplace but here!” I answer. “I’d like to get out of the
South! I’d like to live near an ocean.” I was picturing Sunny
coming in on a big wave out in California. “I’d like to
always be tanned.”

38 Alan shakes his head. “That’s out of style now. The
ozone layer and all. White skin is in. No one wants a tan
anymore.”

39 When we get to the curb, Alan puts his hand under my
arm and remarks, “You smell good. What perfume is that?”

40 “I don’t remember what I put on.” I was thinking of
nights with Sunny we’d walk down this street with our
arms wrapped around each other, and Sunny’d say, let’s
name our kids. Say we have four, two girls and two boys.
You get to name a boy and a girl.

41 Alan lets go of my arm when we get across the street.

42 “I like the fact you’re majoring in economics,” he says.
“You could go into investment banking. New York is where
you want to go too.”

43 “Sure, New York,” I say. “That’s for me.”

44 Next weekend I have a date with John. Premed.
Chunky. Beautiful smile. On the porch he tells my father,
“I’ll take good care of her. Don’t worry.”

45 “What are you going to specialize in?” My father gets
one last question in as we are heading down the steps.

46 “Pediatrics, sir,” and John grins and grabs my hand as
we walk to his white Pontiac.

47 My mother is sitting in the wicker rocker on the porch,
waving at us as we take off.

48 “Nice people,” John says.

49 We drive to the SAE¹ house with the top down, the
moon just rising. “Your family reminds me of mine,” he
says. “Your mom so warm and welcoming, and your dad all
concerned about me. . . . My father’s that way about my kid
sister when boys come to take her out. I don’t have a lot of

¹ SAE (Sigma Alpha Epsilon)—a popular fraternity on campus

time to date, so I like dating someone whose family I can meet. You can tell a lot about a girl by her folks."

My notes about what I am
reading

50 "They never touch," I tell him. "I mean, not openly."

51 "Like mine. You watch mine and you wonder how two kids got born."

52 We look at each other and laugh.

53 I like him. His wit, his good manners, his dancing, even his "shop talk" about his premed courses. He is a good listener, too, questioning me about what I'm studying, my ideas he is the perfect date.

54 "Did you have a good time, sweetheart?" my mother asks.

55 "So-so." I tell the truth.

56 "In that case I hate to tell you what's on the hall table."

57 It's an overnight letter from Western Union. Short and sweet.

58 ARRIVING TOMORROW NIGHT. HAVE
PROFESSION AND HIGH HOPES. LOVE, HAROLD.

59 "He's coming back, isn't he?" Mom says.

60 I show it to her.

61 "You like him, Mom, so why did you hate to tell me about this?"

62 "I like him a lot, but I don't think your father's ever going to resign himself to Sunny, even if he does call himself Harold."

63 "He has a profession, he says!" I am dancing around the room, hugging the letter. "He has high hopes!"

64 "I think he's the same old Sunny, honey, and I think it's just going to be more heartbreak. Oh, I *do* like him. Truly I do. But you started seeing Alan and John. You took a step away from Sunny."

65 "Just give him a chance, Mom."

66 "Give who a chance?" my father's voice.

67 He is coming into the living room in his robe and pajamas.

68 "Harold!" I exclaim. "Just give Harold a chance!"

69 "We used to chant 'Give peace a chance,' when I was in college," my father says, "and I'd say Sunny having a chance is like peace having a chance. Peace being what it is, and Sunny being what he is, no chance will do much to

change things. Won't last. . . . Now, John is a young man I really warm to. Did you have a good time with John?"

My notes about what I am
reading

70 "He was the perfect date," I answer.

71 "You said it was a so-so time," says my mother.

72 "Maybe I'm not into perfection."

73 When I meet the little plane that flies from Charlotte to Greenville, I can see Sunny getting off first, lugging his duffel bag, dressed in his Navy uniform, hurrying through the rain, tan as anything, tall, and grinning even before he can spot me in the small crowd.

74 He has a box of candy—"Not for you, my love," he says, "it's for your mama." Then he kisses me, hugs me, hangs on hard and whispers, "Let's name our kids. Say we've got six, all boys, first one's Harold junior. We could call him Harry."

75 There is no way I can get him to talk about his profession on the way home in my father's Buick. He says he is going to tell me at the same time he tells my folks, that all we are going to talk about on the way there is how soon I can transfer to the university near the base. He has three more years in the Navy and an application for reduced tuition for Navy wives, providing I still love him the way he loves me, do I? . . . Yes? Okay!

76 He says, "Park the car somewhere fast before we go straight home, because we've got to get the fire burning lower or we'll scorch your loved ones." Here's a place.

77 My father growls, "One *hour* getting back here from the airport, was the traffic *that* bad on a weeknight? We thought you'd had an accident. . . ." And my mother purrs, "Guess what's cooking?"

78 "Fried chicken!" Harold cries, sounding like the same old Sunny. "Darlin', you have made my day! Love you and want some huggin' from my one and only!"

79 "Oh, *you*!" my mother says.

80 It does not take my father long to start in; he starts in at the same time he picks up his fork.

81 "What's this about a profession, Sunny? Harold?"

82 "Yes, sir, I am a professional man now."

83 "You're becoming a professional sailor, is that it?"

84 “No, sir. I’m leaving the Navy eventually, but thanks to
the Navy, I now have a profession that suits me.”

My notes about what I am
reading

85 “Which is?”

86 “I’m an underwater welder.”

87 “Let’s eat before we get into all this,” says my mother,
fast.

88 “You’re a *what*?”

89 “An underwater welder.”

90 My father begins to sputter about Alan, who is going
into advertising, and John, the aspiring baby doctor, those
are professions, but what kind of . . . what kind of . . .

91 And my mother is passing the gravy, passing the
cranberry relish, the biscuits, keeping her hands flying
between the table and Sunny.

92 “Where will you, where will . . .” my father again, and if
he ever finishes the sentence, I don’t know. For I am seeing
Sunny see me. I am seeing him be true to me and to
himself. Perhaps my father wants to ask where will you do
this, where will your office be, for my father is one to think
in terms of a man’s workplace.

93 But I am drifting in my thoughts to future Fridays,
traditional and loving, donning a wet suit for a rendezvous
in the deep blue sea. Keeping my date with that warm fish
I married.

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from

Newcomers in a Troubled Land

by Naomi Shihab Nye

1 Our four-year-old is printing his name on a piece of yellow construction paper. I bend to see which name it is today. For awhile he wanted to be *called* Paper. Today he's gone back to the real one. Each blocky letter a house, a mountain, a caboose . . . then he prints my name underneath his. He draws squiggly lines from the letters in my name to the same letters in his own. "Naomi, look, we're inside one another, did you know that? Your name is here, inside mine!"

My notes about what I am
reading

2 Every letter of *Naomi* is contained in his name *Madison*—we pause together, mouths open. I did not know that. Although we have been mouthing one another's names for years, and already as mother and son we contain one another in so many ways it would be hard to name them all.

3 For a long time he sits staring, smiling at the paper, turning it around on the table. "Do I have any friends," he asks, "who have *their* mother's names inside their names?" We try a few—none does. And the soft afternoon light falling into the kitchen where we sit says, *this is a gift*.

4 When I was small, the name *Naomi*, which means *pleasant*, seemed hard to live up to. And *Shihab*, *shooting star* or *meteor* in Arabic, harder yet. I never met another of either in those days. My mother, Miriam, whose name meant *bitter*, said I didn't know how lucky I was.

5 Hiking the tree-lined streets of our St. Louis borough en route to school, I felt common names spring up inside my mouth, waving their leafy syllables. I'd tongue them for blocks, trying them on. Susie. Karen. Debbie. Who would I be if I'd had a different name? I turned right on a street called Louise. Did all Karens have some region of being in which they were related? I called my brother *Alan* for a week without letting my parents hear. He was really Adlai, for Adlai Stevenson, a name that also means *justice* in Arabic if pronounced with enough flourish.

6 Neither of us had middle names.

7 I admired our parents for that. They hadn't tried to pad us or glue us together with any little wad of name stuck in the middle.

8 Not until I was sixteen, slouching sleepily in the back seat of my best friend's sister's car, did I fall in love with my

own name. It had something to do with neon on a shopping center sign, that steady color holding firm as the nervous December traffic swarmed past. Holding my eyes to the radiant green bars of light as the engine idled at a corner, I felt the soft glow of my own name stretch warmly awake inside me. It balanced on my tongue. It seemed pleasurable, at long last, to feel recognizable to oneself. Was this a secret everyone knew?

9 Names of old countries and towns had always seemed exquisitely arbitrary, odd. The tags in the backs of garments, the plump bodies of words. We had moved from the city of one saint to the city of another, San Antonio, whose oldest inner-city streets had names like *Eager* and *Riddle*. We had left the river of many syllables, with a name long enough to be used as a timing device, Mississippi, for a river so small you could call it Creek or Stream and not be too far off. We ate *kousa*, *tabooleh*, *baba ghannouj*—Arabic food—on a street called Arroya Vista.

10 My husband first appeared to me in a now-vanished downtown San Antonio eatery with a pleasantly understated name, Quinney's Just Good Food. Businessmen in white shirts and ties swarmed around us, woven together by steaming plates of fried fish and mashed potatoes. I knew, from the first moment of our chance encounter, that he was "the one"—it felt like a concussion to know this.

11 Walking up South Presa Street later with my friend Sue, who'd introduced us, I asked dizzily, "What was his last name?" She said, "Nye, like eye," and the rhymes began popping into my head. They matched our steps. Like *hi*, like *why*, like *bye*—suddenly like every word that seemed to matter. She waved at her corner and I stood there a long time, staring as the crossing signal changed back and forth from a red raised hand to a little man walking. And I knew that every street I crossed from that moment on would be a different street.

12 Because I am merely a tenant of this name Nye—it is not the house I always occupied—it inspires a traveler's warm affection in me. I appreciate its brevity. Reading about the thirteenth-century Swedes who fled internal uprisings in their own country to resettle in Denmark in settlements prefixed by *Nye*—meaning new, or newcomer—deserves a border-crosser's nod.

13 Hundreds of families listed in the *Nye Family of America Association* volumes gather regularly at Sandwich, Massachusetts, to shake hands and share each other's lives. I would like to join them, which surprises me. They started their tradition of gathering in 1903. R. Glen Nye writes, "How can we reach you to tell you how important it is for

you to know your origins. . . . Those who read this are the oldsters of tomorrow . . . a hundred years hence, we will be the very ones someone will yearn to know about. Who will they turn to then, if we do not help them now?"

My notes about what I am
reading

14 Because my own father came to New York on the boat from his old country of Palestine in 1950, I am curious about these Nyes who came on the boat just following the *Mayflower*, who stayed and stayed and stayed, who built the Nye Homestead on Cape Cod, now a museum pictured on postcards and stationery notes. They have kept such good track of one another. Thick volumes list them, family by family, birthdates, children, occupations.

15 On a driving trip east, my husband and I paused one blustery day to walk around the cemetery at Sandwich. It felt eerie to sidestep so many imposing granite markers engraved with our own name. Oh Benjamin, oh Katherine and Reuben, you who had no burglar alarms, what did you see that we will never see? And the rest of you Nyes, wandering out across America even as far as Alaska where cars and trucks and jeeps all have their license plates set into little metal frames proclaiming NYE in honor of some enterprising car dealer who claimed the Land of the Midnight Sun as his territory, where did you get your energy? What told you to go?

16 Once my husband and I invited every Nye in the San Antonio telephone book to dinner. Such reckless festivity would have been more difficult had our name been Sánchez or Smith; as it stood, the eleven entries for Nye seemed too provocative to pass up. Eleven groups of people sharing a name within one city—and we didn't know any of them.

17 Handwritten invitation—"If you're named Nye, you're invited." Would they *get it*? I was brazen enough to style it a "potluck"—a gathering where the parties themselves would be a potluck—and asked all to RSVP. A week later each family had responded positively, with glinting curiosity, except one humorless fireman, whom I telephoned at the last minute. He was too busy for such frivolous pursuit.

18 Later I would remember how the picnic table in our backyard spilled a rich offering of pies and green beans and potato salads, how the talk seemed infinite in its variety, how the laughter—"What a wacky idea, Babe!"—some Nye slapping me on the back with sudden gusto—rolled and rolled.

Excerpted from "Newcomers in a Troubled Land" by Naomi Shihab Nye, from *Never in a Hurry*, copyright © 1996 by the University of South Carolina Press.

SHORT ANSWER ITEMS

Rubrics and Sample Responses

Objective 2 – Literary Selection

- 29 What is the major conflict that Marybeth experiences in “Sunny Days and Sunny Nights”? 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

29 The major conflict Marybeth experiences, are have to do with her dad not liking her boyfriends or not agreeing to any of them. For example: "He's not someone thinking about a profession."

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student attempts to answer the question but presents an idea that is incorrect (her dad not liking her boyfriends or not agreeing to any of them). Although the student attempts to offer support, an unreasonable idea cannot be supported by text.

RG-2

29 In Sunny Days and Sunny Nights Marybeth is in love with Sunny who likes the beach. But he joins the navy and moves away so Marybeth dates other guys like John and Alan who her father likes because they have a profession. Then one day Sunny comes to visit because now he has a profession as an underwater welder and Marybeth ~~get~~ gets married to Sunny who is also called Harold.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

In this response the student presents a plot summary of the story but does not identify Marybeth's major conflict.

RG-3

29 In the story Marybeth preferred Sunny over the professional types of guys. "...donning a wet suit for a rendezvous in the deep bluesia"(93). She converted her lifestyle over to his because she knows that's what he loves to do "professionally".

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student attempts to answer the question but presents a resolution to the conflict rather than the conflict itself (Marybeth preferred Sunny over professional types, she converted her lifestyle). The quotation the student cites is relevant to the resolution but not to the conflict.

RG-4

29 It was when Sunny left to the Navy and he never said anything about writing to her or anything. And they had gotten into the argument the night before.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

In this response the student identifies when a conflict occurs (it was when Sunny left for the Navy), not what Marybeth's conflict is. Therefore, the response does not address the question asked.

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

29 Marybeth experiences conflict between knowing the positive aspects of marrying a man such as Alan or John but wanting to follow her heart. Her mother also confirms when she says in paragraph 62, "I like him a lot, but I don't think your father's ever going to resign himself to Sunny, even if he does call himself Harold," that following your heart isn't always the easiest path.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

The student presents a clear conflict that Marybeth faced (Knowing the positive aspects of marrying Alan or John but wanting to follow her heart). The quotation offered, however, does not support this internal conflict. Therefore, the link between the student's idea and the textual evidence is weak.

RG-6

29 Marybeth experiences a conflict between her heart and what her dad wants. She likes Sunny for who he is and her dad can see that Sunny Big as he is, is just a boy who is not at all professional or thinking of his future. She has to choose a professional guy she doesn't love or Sunny who's head is off at the ocean.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student identifies a reasonable conflict (between her heart and what her Dad wants). The student then expands upon this idea with additional information but does not provide relevant textual support.

RG-7

- 29 They love each other, I argued back, it just doesn't show. ... Sunny said that was like plastic over wood, and love should splinter, crack, and burn. He is trying to express his love to her just in a very different and own little way.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

This student attempts to answer the question by using two direct quotations as textual evidence that could support a reasonable conflict. However, the last sentence of the response is a general restatement of these two quotations rather than a clear statement of conflict.

RG-8

- 29 Marybeth's major conflict is that she wants to be with Sunny, but she also wants to make her dad happy. She can't have both, since her dad wants Sunny to have a job and Sunny doesn't want a desk job. In paragraph 17, you can see that what her dad wants for Marybeth is not what Sunny can give her.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student presents a reasonable conflict (she wants to be with Sunny but she also wants to make her Dad happy), but the textual reference is too general to be considered textual evidence.

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

TAKS Grade 10
Spring 2004

RG-9

29 The "Rambo build... hair the color of the sun, deep blue eyes... always tanned..." man of her dreams in her father's eyes is "a boy." Sunny is Marybeth's one desire, but her father doesn't approve of him because he's part of a "common laborer" family. So, Marybeth needs Sunny to prove to her father that he has "high hopes and a profession" in order for him to win her father's approval.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

The student combines direct quotes with a reasonable statement of conflict (Sunny is Marybeth's one desire, but her father doesn't approve of him) to create a clear and specific response.

RG-10

29 The major conflict that Marybeth experiences is her father's refusal to accept Sunny as the man that she loves. Despite the true love between Sunny and Marybeth, it is doubtful that her father is "ever going to resign himself to Sunny, even if he does call himself Harold."

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

In this response the student presents a major conflict Marybeth faces (her father's refusal to accept Sunny as the man that she loves). The student then provides a direct quotation to support this conflict.

RG-11

- 29 A major conflict that Marybeth experiences is her loyalty to Sunny and the loyalty she holds for her family. When Marybeth says "He's a man, I said believe me. Look at him and tell me he's not a man." She is defending Sunny. But when she said "They love each other, I argued back, it just doesn't show." she was defending her family against Sunny's criticism.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

This student offers a clear understanding of the conflict between Marybeth's loyalty to Sunny and her loyalty to her family. The student supports this conflict with two quotations from the story in which Marybeth at one point defends Sunny (he's a man) and at a later point defends her family (they love each other).

RG-12

- 29 The major conflict Marybeth experiences is choosing the right man. She loves Sunny but John or Alan might support her better. You can see that Marybeth is at ease when she finds out that Sunny has a profession to support her and she doesn't have to decide between love and support in paragraph 63 when she says "He has a profession, he says, "I am dancing around the room hugging the letter, "He has high hopes!"

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

The student combines synopsis and a direct quotation of relevant text to support Marybeth's internal conflict, which is centered around choosing the right man. In addition, the student provides the resolution to this conflict (Sunny's profession means not having to decide between love and support).

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 Grade 10
Spring 2004

RG-13

29 In "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights", the narrator, Marybeth, experiences much trouble between what her "judge" of a father ^{wants} and the passionate "fire" that exists between herself and her boyfriend, Sunny. While "Sunny lowers over [her] father, [and] has a Rankin build..." Marybeth's father insists he is not a "real man" because Sunny "has a boy's ambition". In the end, however, Marybeth chooses "a wet suit, ... the deep blue oceans, [and] her warm fish"

Score Point: 3 - Exemplary

In this particularly thoughtful analysis, the student describes Marybeth's conflict as one that exists between her father, her boyfriend Sunny, and herself (what her judge of a father wants and the passionate fire that exists between herself and her boyfriend Sunny). The student effectively interweaves analysis with quotations from the text, providing a strong sense of completeness.

RG-14

29 The major conflict that Marybeth experiences in "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights" is her father's unwillingness to accept Sunny for who he is, and perhaps, deep down, her own inability to accept Sunny as a free spirit and love him no matter what anyone else thinks. This is seen when Marybeth says to Sunny, "At least my father could always take care of my mother! At least he'd made something of himself, and she could be proud of him!" This quote shows how everything her father has been telling her may finally be affecting Marybeth, and that she needs to learn just to love Sunny for who and what he is.

Score Point: 3 - Exemplary

The student effectively demonstrates a depth of understanding of Marybeth's conflict, which goes beyond her father's opposition to Sunny to question her own indecision (her own inability to accept Sunny as a free spirit). The student provides support for this conflict by using a direct quotation and then presents additional analysis (she needs to learn just to love Sunny for who and what he is), further enhancing the overall quality of the response.

RG-15

- 29 Marybeth's main conflict is between her father's standards and her own heart's desire. Her father thinks she ought to be with a ~~man~~ "man" with a "real" profession rather than Sunny, a peace loving surfer "boy." Her heart is torn between her father's rejection of Sunny "Does Sunny ever mention college?", and a love that would "splinter, crack and burn!" Ironically the father's statement about the Navy making a man out of Sunny appears to come true "Arriving tomorrow night have profession and high hopes. Love's ^{old} ~~hold~~."

Score Point: 3 - Exemplary

The student clearly defines the major conflict in Marybeth's mind (her father's standards and her own heart's desire). This internal conflict is reflected in her father's attitude toward Sunny (Does Sunny ever mention college?) and Sunny's descriptions of their love (splinter, crack and burn). The student notes the irony of Sunny's transformation in the Navy (making a man out of him) and uses specific text evidence (ARRIVING TOMORROW NIGHT HAVE PROFESSION AND HIGH HOPES) to show how the conflict is resolved.

RG-16

- 29 Marybeth's ambiguity rises to the level of conflict because she is smart enough to see the wisdom of her father "...the boy has a boy's ambition... he's not someone with his eye on the future." However, she is also emotionally bound to Sunny "I long for Sunny." Even though she seems to agree with Sunny that they have "... a love that'd like to bust through the roof!" she still admonishes him when he criticizes her family "at least my father could always take care of my mother!" Still she opts for "... future Fridays... with that warm fish I married."

Score Point: 3

In this response the student offers a particularly insightful analysis of Marybeth's dilemma, the choice between her emotional bond with Sunny and her recognition of her Father's concerns. The student's effective use of quotations strongly supports this analysis and shows how the conflict is resolved at the end.

Objective 3 – Expository Selection

- 30 How does the author's attitude toward her name change over the course of "Newcomers in a Troubled Land"? Support your answer 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 Grade 10
Spring 2004

RG-17

30 At the beginning the author is young and has no true understanding of her name. As she grows older her attitude begins to change as she becomes more comfortable with recognizing her name and why it was chosen.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student attempts to describe Naomi's change in attitude toward her name by contrasting how she feels when she is young (has no true understanding) with how she feels when she is older (becomes more comfortable with recognizing her name). This analysis is too vague to show a clear change. In addition, the student presents a somewhat inaccurate idea (why it was chosen), which adds to the lack of clarity in this response.

RG-18

30 Her attitude towards her name changes over the course of the story after she learns the history of her ancestors and her name.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

In this response the student attempts to answer the question but addresses when the change occurred (after she learns the history of her ancestors and her name) rather than how her attitude changes over the course of the selection.

- 30 Obviously, her attitude towards her name inspired her. For example, knowing all of the Nye's history inspired her, also she says "I appreciate its brevity." So to this, her husband and her invite every Nye in the San Antonio telephone book for dinner.

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

The student describes how Naomi feels about her married name (knowing all of the Nye's history inspired her) and presents textual evidence to support this idea. However, this does not address the question asked.

- 30 She feels that her husband's last name was not what she wanted it to be, "Because I am merely a tenant of this name Nye - it is not the home I always occupied - it inspires a traveler's warm affection in me." She then begins to realize, it doesn't matter. "I appreciate its brevity."

Score Point: 0 – Insufficient

In this response the student draws a conclusion that is incorrect (she feels that her husband's last name is not what she wanted it to be). Although the student attempts to support this conclusion, it cannot be supported by text because it is unreasonable.

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 Grade 10
Spring 2004

RG-21

- 30 In the beginning of the story, the author mentions being a child and feeling very intimidated by her name. Later, she grows to love her name. After she gets married, the author gains a new name accompanied by a fascination with that name. The author's attitude toward her name changes from intimidation to adoration and finally fascination.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

The student presents an insightful interpretation of how the author's attitude changes toward her name from childhood to adulthood. However, the response cannot receive a higher score because the student provides no textual evidence for support.

RG-22

- 30 The author's attitude changes because in the beginning she does not like her name. She wishes to be called other names, including "Paper" for a little while. However, she describes an event of when she was 16 and with one of her friends to a car. They passed a shopping center with a neon-lighted sign that fascinated her. She suddenly realized that the "radiant light" and "soft glow" of her name was awakened inside her, and realized her name was special.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response the student states that the author, as a child, does not like her name (wishes to be called other names) and then combines synopsis and brief quotations of relevant text to illustrate her change in attitude (when she was 16, a neon light that fascinated her, she suddenly realized...her name was special). However, the student inaccurately attributes the desire to be called "Paper" to Naomi instead of her son, Madison. This inaccuracy prevents the response from being considered sufficient.

RG-23

- 30 The author wasn't sure of her name at first. "Seemed hard to live up to." But as she got older and knew other people's names she realized her name truly wasn't that bad. "at long last, to feel recognizable to oneself."

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

In this response, the initial idea (the author wasn't sure of her name) is only weakly connected to the text support (seemed hard to live up to). The idea concerning Naomi's change in attitude (her name truly wasn't that bad) is somewhat general and is not connected to the text the student offers for support (at long last to be recognizable to oneself).

RG-24

- 30 When she was small, Naomi never liked her name. She would think of different names she could have. She would think of common names, "I felt common names spring up inside my mouth." Finally when she was sixteen, she decided she liked her name and then she met her husband. She fell in love with his name and it became hers. She loved her name and she wanted everyone to know that. So, she would throw parties for everyone with her last name.

Score Point: 1 – Partially Sufficient

The student states how Naomi's feelings changed about her name throughout her life. (Naomi never liked her name, when she was sixteen she decided she liked her name, then she met her husband...fell in love with his name). The student offers relevant text for Naomi's initial feelings towards her name (I felt common names spring up inside my mouth). However, there is no evidence offered for her change of attitude at age 16 and only a somewhat general reference to text to support her attitude after she married.

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 Grade 10
Spring 2004

RG-25

30 The author's attitude toward her name changes as the story progresses. For example in paragraph 4 she states "Naomi, which means pleasant seemed hard to live up to." Then in paragraph 16 she states "Not until I was sixteen... did I fall in love with my own name." The author's feelings about her name change from a negative attitude to a positive one throughout the story.

Score Point: 2 – Sufficient

This student creates a clear, concise response by offering direct quotes of relevant text (Naomi...which seemed hard to live up to. Not until I was sixteen...did I fall in love with my own name) to support a reasonable interpretation of how the author's attitude changes from negative to positive.

RG-26

30 In the beginning of the story the author's attitude wasn't all that good. "when I was small, the name Nami, which means pleasant seemed hard to live up to. Then towards the middle of the story she becomes happy with her name." Holding my eyes to the radiant green bars of light as the engine idled at a corner I felt the soft glow of my own name stretch warmly awake inside me."

Score Point: 2

In this response, the student describes Naomi's attitude towards her name at the beginning of the selection (the author's attitude wasn't all that good) and towards the middle (she becomes happy with her name). The student provides relevant direct quotations to support this analysis.

RG-27

30 Naomi's attitude toward her own name changes. when she is little, she thinks since Naomi means 'pleasant' in Arabic it will be difficult to live up to. "Not until I was 16... did I fall in love with my own name. It had something to do with neon on a shopping center sign holding firm as the nervous December traffic swarmed past." she then realized that her name was ~~an~~ radiant and a strong characteristic of herself.

Score Point: 2

This student concludes that the author's attitude changes from thinking that her name is difficult to live up to to realizing that it was radiant and strong. The student supports this interpretation with a paraphrase (she thinks since Naomi means "pleasant" in Arabic) and a direct quote (Not until I was 16...) of relevant text.

RG-28

30 In paragraph 4, the author shows that she didn't like her name since it was hard to live up to, her first name meaning "pleasant" and the last one meaning "shooting star" or "meteor." Then in paragraph 8, she states that her name now feels pleasurable. She now has a new last name as well whose past she is very interested in and very much ~~and~~ wants to be a part of. In paragraph 12, she says the name "inspires a traveler's warm affection mine."

Score Point: 2

The student combines synopsis with relevant quotations and paraphrased text to illustrate how the author's attitude toward her name changes from not liking it to finding it pleasurable to acquiring a new last name that she appreciates. The result is a response that is clear and specific.

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 Grade 10
Spring 2004

RG-29

30 At first her names seem burdensome. She says, "Naomi, which means pleasant, seemed hard to live up to... shihab, shooting star or meteor in Arabic, harder yet." At 16, though, she is finally able to "feel recognizable" to herself after she experiences a revelation at how "pleasurable" her name is. This new found respect for her own name continues to evolve as she adopts her husband's name. Nye, which "inspires a traveler's warm affection" in her. This respect becomes a borderline obsession when she invites every Nye in the San Antonio telephone book to dinner."

Score Point: 3

In this well-executed response, the student traces how Naomi's attitude toward her name evolves over time. The name Naomi is at first burdensome, then pleasurable. Her new-found respect for her first name is replaced by a borderline obsession with her new married name, Nye. The student interweaves direct quotations of relevant text with insightful analysis to create a particularly thoughtful response.

RG-30

Just as her son initially wanted to be called "Paper" instead of Madison, Naomi, at first, was not very fond of her name and wished for something more
30 ordinary like "Debbie." Madison discovers the magic "secret" of his name at the age of 4 ("Naomi, look your name is here, inside mine!") Not until the author was 16, when she saw a neon sign that shone firmly in the nervous rush of a winters night, did she recognize herself in the beauty of her name that mimicked the radiance of the green bars of light.

Score Point: 3

In this particularly insightful response, the student compares the experience of Naomi's son Madison, who wanted to be called "Paper," to her childhood wish for a more ordinary name and equates Madison's discovery of the secret of his name at age four to Naomi's recognition of herself at age 16. The student supports these ideas both with quotations (Naomi, look...Your name is here, inside mine!) and with paraphrased text (she saw a neon sign that shone firmly, did she recognize herself in the beauty of her name that mimicked the radiance of the green bars of light).

RG-31

- 30 *As a child the narrator pondered thoughts like "Who would I be if I'd had a different name?" She mainly focused on who she could be instead of who she was. At 16 she discovered that her name truly contributed to who she was. "It seemed pleasurable, at long last, to feel recognizable to oneself." As an adult, she boldly embraces and admires her new name. "Because I am merely a tenant of this name Nye... it inspires a traveler's warm affection in me."*

Score Point: 3

The student shows an in-depth understanding of the impact and meaning of names for Naomi from childhood (who would I be if I'd had a different name, she...focused on who she could be instead of who she was) through adolescence (her name contributed to who she was). The student extends this analysis to show Naomi, as an adult, boldly embrace her new last name. This thoughtful analysis is strongly supported by quotations from the text.

RG-32

- 30 *At first Naomi dislikes her name thinking it's too alien and "hard to live up to." But when she reaches the age of sixteen she has a kind of epiphany. She sees that her name helps ~~to~~ define and anchor her in the ever shifting world just as the neon sign's steady color holds firm in the narrow December traffic. Later, when her son Madison reveals that her name lies within his she once again realizes its importance and thinks "this^{is} a gift."*

Score Point: 3

In this response the student describes Naomi's initial feelings toward her name as alien and hard to live up to but explains the epiphany she has at 16, which changes the way she sees her name and herself in the world. The student strongly supports this interpretation with a combination of paraphrased text and direct quotations. The student's last sentence expands upon the impact of these events by connecting them to Madison's discovery of how his name is connected to Naomi's.

Objective 3 – Literary/Expository Selection

- 31 How is the concept of names important in both “Newcomers in a Troubled Land” and “Sunny Days and Sunny Nights”? 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 Grade 10
Spring 2004

RG-33

31 In "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights", Marybeth's father wanted to know what Sunny's real name was. When he told her father that his name was Harold he said, "That a man shouldn't have a boy's name." In "Newcomers in a Troubled Land", it seems like Naomi and her son Madison want to change their names.

Score Point: 0

In this response the student refers to the conversation between Sunny and Marybeth's father about Sunny's real name, but it is unclear how this reference addresses the question. The analysis concerning the second selection (Naomi and her son Madison want to change their names) is too vague and is inaccurate.

31 They both wanted a name they would always keep for ever and always be happy with it. They both wanted an name thatt meant something to them in their hearts and Minds.

Score Point: 0

The student attempts to draw two conclusions of how the concept of names is important in both selections (they both wanted a name they would always keep forever, they both wanted a name that meant something). However, these conclusions are too general and vague to determine whether they apply to both selections.

- 31 Both families are dealing with family conflicts, like the Sunny Days and Sunny Nights has to do with this girl trying to convince her dad and mom to like Sunny and to accept him. And in the other Story Newcomers in a Troubled Land talks about this family moving from this place and this lady the mother of Madison is amused by knowing the new towns street names.

Score Point: 0

The student provides a somewhat awkward plot summary of each selection but does not address the question of how names are important.

- 31 Names are important in both passages because in *Sunny Days* and *Sunny Nights* Sunny sent a letter to Marybeth that said, "Arriving tomorrow night have profession and high hopes love Harold he didn't use his real name and in the second passage all the names meant something like Miriam meant bitter and Naomi meant Pleasant

Score Point: 0

In this response, the student includes random information from both selections that is related to names but does not address the question (how the concept of names is important).

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 Grade 10
Spring 2004

RG-37

31 The concept of names are important in both selections because names represent and describe characters in the stories. In the first story Sunny's character has lots of confidence and a sense of humor. Alan and John are two common names for the common people they represented. In the second story the mother and son's names are "inside each other," showing that they are part of each other in many ways.

Score Point: 1

The student draws a reasonable conclusion about why names are important (names represent and describe characters in the stories). However, the student offers only general references to relevant text.

31. In both "Newcomers In a Troubled Land" and "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights", the concept of names is important. In "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights", Marybeth's father says that Sunny is a "boy's name," and that "Harold" wasn't "such a bad name." In "Newcomers in a Troubled Land" the author insist on saying the arabic meaning of names. For instance, she talks of her mother "Miriam, whos name means bitter..." She went on to say she was lucky showing that she believes names make the person.

Score Point: 1

In this response the student restates the question without offering an analysis of the first selection. Appropriate text support is given for the first selection (Marybeth's father says Sunny is a boy's name. Harold wasn't such a bad name). The student also offers relevant text for the second selection (Miriam, whose name meant bitter) and provides a reasonable interpretation (she believes names make the person).

31 The concept of names is important in both selections because they tell a part of how you are. In "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights," "Harold, Sunny would tell him... told Sunny that a man shouldn't have a boys name." Also in "Newcomers in a Troubled Land," "The name Naomi, which means pleasant, seemed hard to live up to." Sunny come of as a child's name, so for a person to have that it makes them seem childish or immature, and that reflects on your personality. Naomi didn't like her name because it was the complete opposite her personality.

Score Point: 1

The student supports the idea that names are important because they tell a part of who you are with analysis and textual evidence from both selections. However, the student supports the analysis for the first selection with somewhat vague textual evidence (Sunny would tell him...told Sunny that) and draws an inaccurate conclusion for the second selection (Naomi didn't like her name because it was the complete opposite of her personality).

- 31 In "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights," names are important because the father doesn't approve of Sunny's name and says that "a man shouldn't have a boy's name." Names are important in "Newcomers in a Troubled Land" because it tells you about a person, and tells you who they are. Where they come from, and who they belong to. They thought that anyone who shared the same name of Nye with them was important because they all had a shared background.

Score Point: 1

The student responds with a reasonable idea about the importance of names in "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights" and provides accurate textual support (a man shouldn't have a boy's name). The student offers a reasonable analysis for "Newcomers in a Troubled Land" (it tells you about a person and tells you who they are, where they come from) but the evidence offered (anyone who shared the same name with them was important) is only a general text reference.

**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 Grade 10
Spring 2004

RG-41

- 31 In "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights," the concept of names is used to show Sunny's seriousness about the way he feels toward Marybeth. "... with our arms wrapped around each other, Sunny'd say, let's name our kids." In "Newcomers in a Troubled Land," the concept of names determines what kind of person one is. "Who would I be if I'd had a different name"?

Score Point: 2

The student offers a reasonable interpretation for the concept of names in "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights" (to show Sunny's seriousness about the way he feels toward Marybeth) and supports it with text (Sunny'd say, let's name our kids). The student concludes that in "Newcomers in a Troubled Land" names determine what kind of person one is and supports that idea with a quotation (Who would I be if I'd had a different name?).

31 In both selections names carry more weight than usual because they are of deeper significance and they simply are not seen as just names. In Sunny Days and Sunny Nights this was brought to light when Marybeth brought "Sunny... to dinner... [and her father] asked him pointedly if he had a "real name". In Newcomers in a Troubled Land this was again shown when Naomi met "the one" and made connections between his last name and words "like hi, like why, like bye — suddenly like every word that seemed to matter".

Score Point: 2

In this clear response the student offers an analysis for both selections stating that names are not just names but are of deeper significance. The student supports this idea by offering a combination of paraphrase and direct quotes (when Marybeth brought 'Sunny...to dinner... [and her father] asked him pointedly if he had a "real" name; when Naomi met "the one" and made connections between his last name and words "like hi, like why, like bye").

- 31 In both selections, names explain some of the characters' personalities. Sonny has "a walk, smile, and way about him that oozes confidence," and brings smother into Marybeth's life with a love that "busts through the roof." In the second selection the author shows the reader how her son Madison is intrigued by a deeper concept about names as they both discover that N.A.O.M.I. is "contained" in both names. This symbolizes how they "contain one another in so many ways," even in their personality traits.

Score Point: 2

The student states the accurate conclusion that names in both selections describe the characters' personalities. The text evidence, which directly supports this idea, combines clear and specific synopsis with quotations (walk, smile, and way about him that oozes confidence; N.A.O.M.I. is contained in both names, symbolizing how they contain one another in so many ways).

31 IN "SUNNY DAYS AND SUNNY NIGHTS," SUNNY'S NAME WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO MARYBETH'S FATHER. "ONCE HE CAME RIGHT OUT AND TOLD SUNNY THAT A MAN SHOULDN'T HAVE A BOY'S NAME." HIS NAME ADDED TO THE FATHER'S DISAPPROVAL OF SUNNY AND HIS LACK OF PLANS FOR THE FUTURE. IN "NEWCOMERS IN A TROUBLED LAND," NAOMI'S FIRST NAME WAS A BIG PART OF HER AND DEFINED HER. "I FELT THE SOFT GLOW OF MY OWN NAME STRETCH WARMLY AWAKE INSIDE ME. IT SEEMED PLEASURABLE, AT LONG LAST, TO FEEL RECOGNIZABLE TO ONESELF."

Score Point: 2

In this response the student provides the analysis that Marybeth's father did not approve of Sunny because of Sunny's name (once he came right out and said a man shouldn't have a boy's name). The response also states that Naomi's name defined her and supports this idea with text evidence (I felt the soft glow of my own name stretch warmly awake inside me).

**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 Grade 10
Spring 2004

RG-45

31 In "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights," names have great meaning. Harold, Marybeth's love, at first goes by "Sunny" which is a boy's, not a man's, name. This symbolizes how Sunny has a boy's ambition... [who's not someone with his eye on the future.] When Sunny starts going by Harold, it represents his transition to maturity and is marked by him getting a profession "An underwater welder." In "Newcomers" Nasmi at first feels she cannot live up to the meaning of her name, "pleasant" and "meteor." But at 16 she experiences a type of metamorphosis when she feels her name like a cocooned butterfly, "... stretch warmly awake inside [her]. She feels recognizable to herself.

Score Point: 3

In this insightful response the student provides the conclusion that names have great meaning in both selections. The student supports this conclusion with analysis that Sunny becomes more mature when he calls himself Harold and Naomi experiences a metamorphosis at age 16. The student supports the analysis with particularly relevant textual evidence (not someone with his eye on the future, getting a profession, she cannot live up to the meaning, feels recognizable to herself).

31 The concept of names in both selections is important because it involves a theme of self-understanding. The names of the woman's dates in the first story, John and Alan, have a mood of seriousness and tradition. While her true love, Sunny, has a name that speaks for itself. He has "hair the color of the sun, deep blue eyes. Always tanned..." His name has the feeling of radiance, warmth, and care. In the other selection, the author is very intrigued by names, all types, "waving their leafy syllables." However, no other name fit her as well as her own "... the soft glow of my own name stretch[ed] warmly awake inside me." She was Naomi Shihab, the "pleasant shooting star," not "Susie" or "Karen" or some other "common" pseudonym.

Score Point: 3

In this response the student offers the insightful interpretation that names are linked to the theme of self-understanding. Through a combination of analysis and strongly connected textual evidence, the student shows how Marybeth views John and Alan as opposed to Sunny. Their names are representative of the disparate ways she sees them. In the second selection, the student shows Naomi's understanding not only of names in general but of her own name. The student uses a series of short quotations from the text to reveal Naomi's growing appreciation of her own name, as opposed to the common names she wished she had (Susie or Karen) when she was small.

31 The whole name thing seems pretty silly. It's like judging a book by its cover. Sunny thinks by calling himself "Harold" and calling underwater welding a "profession" it will change who he really is or how Marybeth's father sees him. But Marybeth's mom knows different. "I think he's the same old Sunny, honey, and I think it's just going to be more heartbreak." Naomi is pretty naive to think just because her name means "pleasant" that it defines her. Still, when she finally comes around and embraces her name, "it seemed pleasurable to recognize herself." Names are given way too much importance in these stories.

Score Point: 3

In this unusual response, the student argues that the concept of names is not, in reality, central to who the characters are. The student combines paraphrased text with direct quotations to support the idea that Sunny cannot transform himself simply by changing his name to Harold. The student views Naomi as naïve to believe that her name defines her and supports this idea with strongly connected textual evidence. The last sentence summarizes the student's premise that, in both selections, the importance of names is exaggerated, giving the response a sense of completeness.

- 31 Both main characters in the stories must make choices, and the concept of names is at the center of these choices. Marybeth must make a decision to go against her father's judgments of Sunny ("a man with a boy's name") and live her life with the "warm fish I married." Naomi, on the other hand chooses to accept her name. At sixteen Naomi's name finally felt recognizable to her. Her name, which means pleasant in Arabic, until that time had "seemed hard to live up to." When she marries, she gets a new last name which inspires a "traveler's warm affection inside [her]."

Score Point: 3

In this effective response integrated with textual support, the writer presents the overriding idea that choice is the focus in both selections. Marybeth's choice is described as a decision (against her father's judgments) to select Sunny and live with "the warm fish I married." Naomi's choice is to accept the name she was given even though its meaning (pleasant) had seemed (hard to live up to), which leads to a "traveler's warm affection" for the name she gains through marriage.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Rubrics and Sample Responses

Write an essay about the impact another person can have on your life.

The information in the box below will help you remember what you should think about when you write your composition.

REMEMBER—YOU SHOULD

- ☐ write about the assigned topic
- ☐ make your writing thoughtful and interesting
- ☐ make sure that each sentence you write contributes to your composition as a whole
- ☐ make sure that your ideas are clear and easy for the reader to follow
- ☐ write about your ideas in depth so that the reader is able to develop a good understanding of what you are saying
- ☐ proofread your writing to correct errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure

The names of individuals mentioned in the compositions have been changed to protect the confidentiality of the students whose responses appear in this guide.

SCORE POINT 1

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS AN INEFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- ☐ Individual paragraphs and/or the composition as a whole are not focused. The writer may shift abruptly from idea to idea, making it difficult for the reader to understand how the ideas included in the composition are related.
- ☐ The composition as a whole has little, or no, sense of completeness. The introduction and conclusion, if present, may be perfunctory.
- ☐ A substantial amount of writing may be extraneous because it does not contribute to the development or quality of the composition. In some cases, the composition overall may be only weakly connected to the prompt.

Organization

- ☐ The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and/or paragraph to paragraph is not logical. Sometimes weak progression results from an absence of transitions or from the use of transitions that do not make sense. At other times, the progression of thought is simply not evident, even if appropriate transitions are included.
- ☐ An organizational strategy is not evident. The writer may present ideas in a random or haphazard way, making the composition difficult to follow.
- ☐ Wordiness and/or repetition may stall the progression of ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ☐ The writer presents one or more ideas but provides little or no development of those ideas.
- ☐ The writer presents one or more ideas and attempts to develop them. However, this development is so general or vague that it prevents the reader from understanding the writer's ideas.
- ☐ The writer presents only a plot summary of a published piece of writing, a movie, or a television show.
- ☐ The writer omits information, which creates significant gaps between ideas. These gaps prevent the reader from clearly understanding those ideas.

Voice

- ☐ The writer does not engage the reader, therefore failing to establish a connection.
- ☐ There may be little or no sense of the writer's individual voice. The composition does not sound authentic or original. The writer is unable to express his/her individuality or unique perspective.

Conventions

- ☐ There is little or no evidence in the composition that the writer can correctly apply the conventions of the English language. Severe and/or frequent errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure may cause the writing to be unclear or difficult to read. These errors weaken the composition by causing an overall lack of fluency.
- ☐ The writer may misuse or omit words and phrases and may frequently write awkward sentences. These weaknesses interfere with the effective communication of ideas.

Whether you know it or not, people impact other people's lives. People can help people. People can hurt people. But either way it's an impact.

A person can help you in time of need. A donation of money is a great impact, or advice when you don't know what to do. I was eating at lunch and a friend wasn't eating so I impacted his day by giving him some money to eat.

People can speak into your life. If you were going to college and needed advice, a friend could help you get situated. Parents impact children's lives by providing and helping them have a future.

An impact isn't always good. Other students can impact you with pain, either emotional or physical. People can hurt you and destroy you.

People impact other people everyday. What impact have you been on your friends and family?

Score Point: 1

In a brief introduction the writer states that people can have helpful or hurtful impacts on the lives of others. There is an attempt to develop this theme, but the progression of thought from sentence to sentence is weak. In the first body paragraph, the writer introduces two ideas (donation of money, advice) and attempts to develop the first idea with an anecdote about giving money to a friend, although this anecdote is too sketchy to be effective. The writer returns to the idea of advice in the next paragraph but does not develop it beyond a general statement about getting situated in college. Jumping to an unconnected idea (parents impact children's lives) further weakens the progression of thought. The writer does not develop the hurtful impacts, which leaves the reader with no idea of how people can be destroyed. The development of the theme is so general and incomplete that it also limits the sense of the writer's authentic voice.

I am going to tell you how impacts from other people can affect your life.

There is many ways that other people can do this. Just like in the story Sunny days and Sunny Nights. Marybeth's father always wanted to know what kind of profession her boyfriends had. That had a major impact on Sonney. As a result Sonney joined the Navy and got a profession as a under-sea welder.

People have had a big impact in my life, especially football players. See in 2002 I quit football after 2-days because I had a Asthma attack during conditioning the grass created a allergic reaction in my system. But that is not why I quit, I quit because I had brought a net to one of the coaches that said stay out of the grass. Well he said you can still go down there and run in it, so I quit. The football players haven't stopped making fun of me yet.

That are some examples of what people can have a affect on your life

Score Point: 1

In this ineffective response, the composition lacks a focus beyond a restatement of the prompt in the perfunctory introduction and conclusion. The writer gives two distinct examples of the impact one person can have on another (one from "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights" and a personal anecdote) but does not provide any explanation of how these examples are related. There is some sentence-to-sentence progression within the paragraphs, but neither paragraph is developed sufficiently to be considered even somewhat effective. In addition, fundamental errors in conventions contribute to an overall lack of fluency in this response.

Many people change due to the impact others have on them. It might be because of a bad experience they had in the past, or a person they knew that also changed their life. In "Newcomers in a troubled land", we see Naomi - a young mother who is fascinated by the meanings of names - who was also changed by a man she met. That man ended up marrying Naomi, and her life was changed forever. As we see, you never know when a person will come into your life and make a great impact in it, they might even be closer than what you think.

To illustrate, Naomi was changed when she met husband in a now vanished downtown San Antonio restaurant. For example, on paragraph 10, Naomi tells herself, "I knew, from the first moment of our chance encounter, that he was the one" - it felt like a concussion to know this. Naomi means that ever since the first moment she saw him, she knew that he was the one and that the impact was so great, it felt like a concussion. Obviously, Naomi's husband made a big impact on Naomi which caused her to make a big change on her.

For instance, the role of impact also took place in Sunny Days and Sunny Nights. For example, Marybeth - a young girl who loves a guy named Sunny - even though her dad doesn't agree with her feelings towards him - also has someone who has a big impact on her life. Sunny, "aka Harold", plays a big part on Marybeth's life. He is her boyfriend even though her father is not happy with their relationship. After a week Marybeth graduated from high school, Sunny ask Marybeth to marry him. She turned him away and went on to college. Sunny went to the Marines and became an underwater welder. Marybeth tried to forget Sunny by dating other guys, but since he had such a big impact on her, she couldn't. After a few years, they reunited and married. Sunny had such a big impact on her that she didn't care what her father said anymore.

Marybeth tells her self, "For I am seeing Sunny see me. I am seeing him be true to me and to himself." When she states this, she realizes she is old enough to love anyone and see anyone she wants to. As we see, Sunny played such a big impact in Marybeth's life, she didn't care what her father told her anymore. Sometimes when someone changes and plays a big impact on you, you don't even care or mind what others say.

In conclusion, many people change due to the others have on them. For example, in both stories, Marybeth and Naorri are changed by a person close to them. That person had an impact on Marybeth by making her not listen and care to what her father says. Naorri was changed by the person who had an impact on her by marrying him. You don't know when, where, or how that person who will meet that person who will have such a big impact on your life, but when you do, you will feel it deep inside.

Score Point: 1

This composition is ineffective because it is, for the most part, a plot summary of the reading selections "Newcomers in a Troubled Land" and "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights," with almost no original development of ideas. This reliance on plot summary gives the reader very little sense of the writer's authentic voice. In addition, repetition in the second body paragraph (someone who has a big impact on her life, plays a big part on Marybeth's life, he had such a big impact on her, played such a big impact in Marybeth's life) stalls the progression of thought and adds to the ineffectiveness of the presentation of ideas. In the conclusion the writer's attempt at analyzing how people change is, for the most part, a restatement of ideas already discussed in the two body paragraphs.

The impacts another person can have on my life include; my future, trouble, me right now as a person. Someone could tell me about what they do for a living or how they got where they are right now. What they say about themselves would or could make me see things more clearly or make me want a brighter future. Also, someone could mention that maybe they got in trouble or now or why they did. That would definitely make me stay clear of anything I know or think would get me in trouble. Finally, someone could give their opinions about me and I know that would make me think about some of the things I say or do. If someone said I'm mean, that would make me want to change things about me, or make me think twice about some of the things I do or say that make them think I'm mean. In conclusion, you can see that people do have impacts on my life: my future, trouble,

and me right now as a person.
They might just have the same
ones on you!

Score Point: 1

In the introduction, the writer presents areas of his/her life that might be impacted by another person (my future, trouble, me right now as a person). However, the writer never offers an overall thesis to connect these three areas in a meaningful way. Although there is some sentence-to-sentence progression, the composition as a whole has little sense of completeness. The development remains vague because the writer only briefly explains each idea, contributing to the composition's ineffectiveness. There is some sense of the writer's authentic voice.

SCORE POINT 2

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS A SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- ☐ Individual paragraphs and/or the composition as a whole are somewhat focused. The writer may shift quickly from idea to idea, but the reader has no difficulty understanding how the ideas included in the composition are related.
- ☐ The composition as a whole has some sense of completeness. The writer includes an introduction and conclusion, but they may be superficial.
- ☐ Some of the writing may be extraneous because it does not contribute to the development or quality of the composition as a whole.

Organization

- ☐ The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and/or paragraph to paragraph may not always be smooth or completely logical. Sometimes the writer needs to strengthen the progression by including more meaningful transitions; at other times the writer simply needs to establish a clearer link between ideas.
- ☐ The organizational strategy or strategies the writer chooses do not enable the writer to present ideas effectively.
- ☐ Some wordiness and/or repetition may be evident, but these weaknesses do not completely stall the progression of ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ☐ The writer attempts to develop the composition by listing ideas or briefly explaining them. In both of these cases, the development remains superficial, limiting the reader's understanding and appreciation of the writer's ideas.
- ☐ The writer presents one or more ideas and attempts to develop them. However, there is little evidence of depth of thinking because this development may be somewhat general, inconsistent, or contrived.
- ☐ The writer may omit small pieces of information that create minor gaps between ideas. However, these gaps do not prevent the reader from understanding those ideas.

Voice

- ☐ There may be moments when the writer engages the reader but fails to sustain the connection.
- ☐ Individual paragraphs or sections of the composition may sound authentic or original, but the writer has difficulty expressing his/her individuality or unique perspective.

Conventions

- ☐ Errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure throughout the composition may indicate a limited control of conventions. Although these errors do not cause the writing to be unclear, they weaken the overall fluency of the composition.
- ☐ The writer may include some simple or inaccurate words and phrases and may write some awkward sentences. These weaknesses limit the overall effectiveness of the communication of ideas.

As a teenager, a person is easily influenced by those closest to them. Sometimes these have a good effect. But sometimes they show you what not to do.

Another person's achievements can inspire me to reach my goals. When my brother, ELI receives high grades on a report card my grades pale in comparison. My jealousy resulted from our parent's praise pushes me to apply more effort. I long to outshine my brother in my parent's eyes and work hard.

Just like my brother's actions effect me, likewise do my friends. When a friend does something wrong they are not alone. Recently my friend, JACKIE was caught doing something she generally wouldn't have considered.

Through the guidance of her best friend, SAMANTHA, JACKIE went against her own morals. Because of the words of SAMANTHA, JACKIE attempted to shop lift, and ignored her conscience.

People impact other people's lives and actions, whether it be

positively or negatively. But in the end each person has to make their own decisions about their own life.

Score Point: 2

In the introduction, the writer presents the thesis statement that teenagers are easily influenced by those closest to them in either positive or negative ways. In the first body paragraph, the writer provides a positive impact, with logical and smooth progression of thought from sentence to sentence (my grades pale in comparison, parent's praise pushes me to apply more effort, I long to outshine my brother). In the second body paragraph, the negative example of a girl persuaded to shoplift because of the influence of a friend is developed more generally (doing something she generally wouldn't have considered, went against her own morals). This paragraph is weaker than the first body paragraph because the writer never addresses how this shoplifting experience has affected her.

There have been many people who have influenced my life, but I know that just one other person being added to your life can change everything.

I was an only child for the first three years, and eight months of my life. My family consisted of my mother, my father, and me. Things ran smoothly, as far as I was concerned, and then my mother got pregnant. When she had the baby, I felt honored to be "the big sister". My baby brother began to consume all of my mom's free time, as well as mine. I used to feel like my parents had forgotten about me, and I'd blame it on my brother. Sometimes, when my mom seemed busy, I'd feel as if it were "my turn" to be the mommy. One time, I wouldn't even go to the bathroom because I felt that the baby could not be left alone for such an amount of time. I really felt that my life consisted of taking care of the baby. I didn't realize how much another kid around the house would distract the attention from me, but I got used to it. I thought the family would be the same after another baby, but I was certainly misled. Another person can have a huge impact on your life.

Score Point: 2

In this coherent composition the writer reflects on the effect her brother's birth had on her life. The writer attempts to explain the ambivalence of her feelings (I felt honored to be the "big sister," I used to feel like my parents had forgotten about me). These ideas are only briefly developed, limiting the reader's understanding of them. The writer's focus on her emotions does reflect an individual perspective and adds to the engaging quality of the response. The conventions are generally good.

People can not live their life without having someone put an impact on their life. These impacts can be very small or some are dramatic and life changing. Many role models put an impact on peoples lives. Some could be from strangers in an everyday situation.

Most teenagers these days have at least one role model. They can range from a famous person to being a family member. A role model is someone you look up to and inspire to be like. Their actions can change your life. Britney Spears is a pretty big singer and there are people who strive to be like her. They dress, act, sing, and do anything else to try and be like her. Her songs have a very big impact on people.

Strangers can have a impact on someone's life. Say you know of someone who did a really big thing in their life, for instance, Anne Frank. Anne Frank was a Jewish teenager who died at age fifteen during the Holocaust. Anyone who learns of this story is changed. They try to be strong and know that almost nothing can be as worse as she had it. Anne was very smart, happy, and really a inspiring person. Anne Frank

hers had an impact on people of all ages.

In the story "Sunny Days and Sunny Nights", Marybeth's father had a very big impact on her life. Her father wanted Marybeth to marry someone with a sturdy profession. Marybeth wanted this too, but the man she loved just was not giving it to her. She moved on to please her father. She did not want to disappoint her father. Sunny knew that he had to shape up if he wanted to marry Marybeth. He knew she would follow her father. Her father put a very strong impact in her life, by telling her what was right.

The impact someone has on your life is a very special thing. People like Role Models, or even Strangers can change a life for the better or the worse.

Score Point: 2

In this formulaic composition the writer presents three disconnected ideas (role models, strangers, and the literary selection) between a perfunctory introduction and conclusion. The writer uses the example of a specific person to develop each idea but fails to show how Britney Spears, Anne Frank, and Marybeth's father are logically connected, weakening the progression of thought from paragraph to paragraph. In addition, although the writer attempts to develop each paragraph, this development is somewhat general and superficial. There is little sense of the writer's individuality.

A lot of people like to think the ways they feel and the ideas that they have are completely original, and outside (worldly) influences have not affected their ways of thinking.

For some people, this is true, but the rest of us are just fooling ourselves.

Everything we say and do and think and feel are influenced by others. A major part of these ideas are conveyed through celebrities.

They send messages through the songs they sing, the ways they act, and the clothes they wear. Some portray a feeling that being "different" is cool, that you should live on your own terms and not to submit to boring rules.

Some like to say they hate the world and everyone in it. They say life sucks!

Some bring a message of peace and love and the glory of life.

Some just bring their feelings about life to their art.

These ideas appeal to most of the ways we think, and we incorporate things that these people say and do into our lives, both good influences and bad ones.

Some of these ideas can change our whole outlook on life, and with so many voices, it's

easy to get caught up in the wrong kind of thoughts.

It's good to believe in someone and what they're saying, but we need to be sure that we are choosing the right people to listen to.

Score Point: 2

In this philosophical composition the writer attempts to develop the theme that our seemingly original ideas are really derived from the messages conveyed through celebrities. This interesting and engaging premise remains superficially developed throughout because the writer lists ideas with only brief explanations. As a result, the progression of thought from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph is not smooth, and the reader is forced to jump from one idea to the next without a full understanding of the writer's ideas.

SCORE POINT 3

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS A GENERALLY EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- ☐ Individual paragraphs and the composition as a whole are, for the most part, focused. The writer generally shows the clear relationship between ideas, making few sudden shifts from one idea to the next.
- ☐ The composition as a whole has a sense of completeness. The introduction and conclusion add some depth to the composition.
- ☐ Most of the writing contributes to the development or quality of the composition as a whole.

Organization

- ☐ The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph is generally smooth and controlled. For the most part, transitions are meaningful, and the links between ideas are logical.
- ☐ The organizational strategy or strategies the writer chooses are generally effective.
- ☐ Wordiness and/or repetition, if present, are minor problems that do not stall the progression of ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ☐ The writer attempts to develop all the ideas included in the composition. Although some ideas may be developed more thoroughly and specifically than others, the development overall reflects some depth of thought, enabling the reader to generally understand and appreciate the writer's ideas.
- ☐ The writer's presentation of some ideas may be thoughtful. There may be little evidence that the writer has been willing to take compositional risks when developing the topic.

Voice

- ☐ The writer engages the reader and sustains that connection throughout most of the composition.
- ☐ For the most part, the composition sounds authentic and original. The writer is generally able to express his/her individuality or unique perspective.

Conventions

- ☐ The writer generally demonstrates a good command of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure. Although the writer may make minor errors, they create few disruptions in the fluency of the composition.
- ☐ The words, phrases, and sentence structures the writer uses are generally appropriate and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the communication of ideas.

Score Point 3 Guide Papers

WG-9a

A person's life can be greatly impacted by others and their actions quite possibly more than their own. My grandfather WAYNE, has impacted my life as much, if not more than, as my father has.

My father has taught me many things that I have found very useful in life; such as, right and wrong, work ethic, honesty, manners, and others. My grandfather, however, has taught me life. Papaw is 72 years old. He has a nice house, great home, wonderful wife, and he is able to enjoy many things that others cannot. He hunts year round; whether it be deer, squirrel, dove, elk, bear, or moose. He drives a nice truck and has access to things such as a new computer, fourwheeler, and a camper. These things did not come easy, however. He had to work extremely hard to get them.

The most important things that my Papaw has taught me are hardwork and determination. Despite the age of 72, Papaw has a full-time job, he's a welder. This determination can be seen by his physical appearance as well. Papaw goes to Idaho every year climbing mountains, tracking cougars, and hunting. Whenever I try to picture my life 20 years down the road, I see Papaw. "You're going to have to work very hard for this, but you can do it, think of Papaw," I say to myself. My

has affected me in all aspects of life. When I'm on the football field, tired and ready to give up, I hear my arandpa yelling from the stands and I think, "Would Papaw give up? No he wouldn't." My Papaw has that kind of power. His respectability is far greater than any man I will ever know.

Had my Papaw not been the man he is, my life would be greatly altered. His life has impacted me, as well as others, more than words can say.

Score Point: 3

In this reflective composition the writer discusses the impact of Papaw, the grandfather, and the important things learned from him (life, hard work and determination). The development overall reflects some depth of thought, enabling the reader to generally understand and appreciate the writer's ideas. The minor repetition in the body paragraph regarding Papaw's age (Papaw is 72 years old, despite the age of 72) does not detract from the overall smooth progression of thought. The authentic voice (Would Papaw give up? No, he wouldn't) and good command of conventions contributes to the overall effectiveness of this response.

Through out our lives from infancy to adulthood we encounter many people, some of which change our life for ever. These include parents, friends, brothers & sisters, Grandparents, or even total strangers.

The people that have the most impact on our life during the time we are infants are our parents. They ultimately determine what kind of people we will be when we head out into the world to start school, to make friends, etc.

With out us even realizing it they shape and mold us into basically, depending on their involvement with your childhood, little models of themselves. They determine if we will be polite and well mannered, or the rudest most misvalised people around, whether or not we will be dedicated in school or anything else, even things as major as spouse abuse. This all just depends on what kind of upbringing you have.

As we move on in life into our teenage years and beyond we start to have many other influential people in our life, mainly friends. Your friends can determine the way you dress, the way you talk, what kind of music you listen to and so many other things. They can be so subtle as whether you wear you hat backwards or forwards, to as major as what kind of hobbies you have.

Another big influence in your teenage years are

siblings. For example my brother influenced me in so many things such as the music I listen to, to things I like to watch on T.V.

One of the most influential people that has had undoubtedly one of the biggest impacts on my life has been elders, and not just my grandparents but even total strangers that I just happen to start talking to. For example I will never forget what this one elderly man said to me in a conversation I had with him. He said "I live my life day to day, and if the lord chooses to bless that day for me then it makes that day that much better for me". What that man said to me that day will stay with me forever and from now on when someone, or thing makes me mad I'll remember what he said and realize that everyday is a brand new world and to not let things like that hold me back.

So as you can see anyone in your family or that meet through the course of your life can have a great impact on your life, and at the same time you could be having an impact on someone else.

Score Point: 3

The writer uses a combination of strategies, philosophical and anecdotal, to discuss the controlling idea that from infancy to adulthood we encounter many people who change our lives, including parents, friends, siblings and elders. Although the writer attempts to develop all these examples, some are more thoroughly explored than others. The paragraph on elders has the most depth, the paragraph on siblings the least. The writer's sequential movement through time strengthens the connection between ideas and the progression of thought from paragraph to paragraph. There is some sustained voice and a good command of conventions.

Almost out of nowhere, clapping starts. It slowly rises louder and faster, like the galloping of horses as the man steps up to the podium. They are clapping for this man because he is being recognized for the most outstanding achievement of his life: he is graduating from college. If you had told this man 10 years ago that he would be on this stage, receiving this certificate, he wouldn't believe you. And he probably wouldn't have, had it not been for one man. A man that had such a profound impact on his life, it turned it around completely.

Although someone else's impact may not have been as deep and far-reaching as this man, we have all been affected by someone at some point. Almost everything we do is a result of a person's influence on us in some way, sometimes this influence, though, can affect us in a way that completely changes us and our view on something. Take for instance, the man mentioned earlier. He was headed for disaster. His grades were at an all-time low. He had stopped

paying attention or even thinking at all about, often not coming at all. But all this changes when a man steps in and offers to help.

This man is a teacher who just can't seem to give up on this student. Over the course of time, with the man's help, the student starts to get himself, and his focus on schoolwork, back together. He realizes that he will have no future without the education that, prior to now, he had been shirking. And he owes it all to the teacher who just wouldn't give up on him.

So as you can see, a person's guidance, influence, or ideas can make an impact on all of our lives, both in positive and negative ways, and that we should all pay attention and be open to others that may be trying to help us.

Score Point: 3

The writer of this unusual response uses a descriptive organizational strategy to explore how a person's guidance can make an impact on others' lives. The unique introduction (Almost out of nowhere, clapping starts) adds depth to the composition. The use of a meaningful transition (Although someone else's impact may not have been as deep and far-reaching as this man) links the paragraphs, and the writer's flashback to the experience that allowed the man to become a success story (a teacher's interest in him) further strengthens the relationship between ideas. The sentence-to-sentence progression within paragraphs enhances the depth of development.

No one starts out evil, but the world we live in can be a cruel place. It can impact people in a negative way and change the way they see themselves and others around them.

Other people have a great influence on our lives - the way we act, the way we think, the way we feel. Everything we say or do can affect the way another feels. Peer pressure, different philosophies, love, hate, religion - these all involve other people and can have influence on our lives. One other person - whether you know them or not - can have a great impact on our lives.

Take the example of the story Frankenstein by Mary Shelley. The being created by Dr. Victor Frankenstein in this story at first starts out as an ordinary human - in fact, even more charitable than most humans. But as the story progresses, more and more people treat this being like a monster because of his appearance. As a result of being rejected and treated like a beast by everyone he grows resentful and begins to act like one. In the beginning, it had been a nice person, but because of the acts of other people, it turned into a monster.

This radical transformation doesn't just happen in books. Think of the students at Columbine. It is doubtful that the shooters involved had ever thought about attacking other students when they were young, but their treatment by their peers and family life caused them to slowly lose sight of the future and begin to resent, even hate, their cruel peers. Thanks to other people in their lives, they lost all hope and decided that revenge upon their tormentors would be the best path. If they had grown in a different environment, perhaps they would have been happier with themselves.

Maybe they could even have imagined themselves as doctors or writers.

All in all, we need to remember that things happen for a reason. If people just realize the impact they can have on others, maybe we won't have to deal with so many tragic events.

Score Point: 3

In this unique and engaging composition, the writer describes how a radical transformation can occur due to the impact of others, creating a parallel between the story *Frankenstein* and the students at Columbine. The progression of thought from sentence to sentence is generally smooth and controlled, and the meaningful transition (This radical transformation doesn't just happen in books) adds a sense of cohesiveness to the composition as a whole. The introduction (No one starts out evil, but the world we live in can be a cruel place) and conclusion (we need to remember that things happen for a reason) not only add depth but also contribute to the authentic tone of this composition.

SCORE POINT 4

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- ☐ Individual paragraphs and the composition as a whole are focused. This sustained focus enables the reader to understand and appreciate how the ideas included in the composition are related.
- ☐ The composition as a whole has a sense of completeness. The introduction and conclusion are meaningful because they add depth to the composition.
- ☐ Most, if not all, of the writing contributes to the development or quality of the composition as a whole.

Organization

- ☐ The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph is smooth and controlled. The writer's use of meaningful transitions and the logical movement from idea to idea strengthen this progression.
- ☐ The organizational strategy or strategies the writer chooses enhance the writer's ability to present ideas clearly and effectively.

Development of Ideas

- ☐ The writer's thorough and specific development of each idea creates depth of thought in the composition, enabling the reader to truly understand and appreciate the writer's ideas.
- ☐ The writer's presentation of ideas is thoughtful or insightful. The writer may approach the topic from an unusual perspective, use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing, or make interesting connections between ideas. In all these cases, the writer's willingness to take compositional risks enhances the quality of the content.

Voice

- ☐ The writer engages the reader and sustains this connection throughout the composition.
- ☐ The composition sounds authentic and original. The writer is able to express his/her individuality or unique perspective.

Conventions

- ☐ The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the composition. The writer demonstrates a consistent command of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure. When the writer attempts to communicate complex ideas through sophisticated forms of expression, he/she may make minor errors as a result of these compositional risks. These types of errors do not detract from the overall fluency of the composition.
- ☐ The words, phrases, and sentence structures the writer uses enhance the overall effectiveness of the communication of ideas.

Teen love is like a rollercoaster. It is amazing how one person can corrupt all your thoughts. These high school romances start off like a fantasy! 24 hours a day your brain is tuned into the boyfriend channel. Your life is perfect until those four, dreaded words, "We need to talk." Suddenly your life plummets, taking a turn for the worst! All of this drama because of that one boy.

Monday you receive the note, "Will you be my girlfriend?" Your heart explodes with joy, and the adventure begins. He works his way into your head, and by Friday you're his. You can't eat, sleep, think or do anything without a vision of his face in your mind or last night's conversation lingering in your thoughts. Even your potato chip resembles his cute little face. In history, the bell rings, bringing you back from your trance. You look down to see that you have taken no history notes, but you have accomplished to write his name thirty-four different ways! Your friends begin to grow tired of the story of how he shed that one tear during Pearl Harbor. You begin to catch yourself starting every sentence with, "LUKE is so cute when..." Your notebooks and book cover have "Mrs. LUKE STEVENS" written all over them. Your life is a dream. A dream where he is the star!

One night the phone rings with him on the other end.

"Hey little, Whatcha up to?" Then those words, those few blood curdling words, "We need to talk." He tells you how ^{JAMES} told him that ^{KIM} the cheerleading captain said he was cute. He just didn't know if you two can work things out. You slam the phone and turn bright red with anger. Tears slowly began to collect in the corners of your eyes. How could he!? You take the giant black sharpie and cross his name off everything. Next you begin to wish he had been at Pearl Harbor! You write your diary and tell it to disregard entries 12-20. At school there is only silence and evil glares between you. You tell all your friends what a jerk he is and ^{they help} spread a rumor about ^{KIM}.

It is amazing how one person, one boy, can change a person so drastically with a little note and a phone call. That one boy gave you 2 magnificent weeks and then sucked all the happiness from your life. Well that's high school love for you. Boys, you can't live without them and they can't live without you!

Score Point: 4

In this insightful composition the writer explores how one person, a boy, has the power to drastically change another person's life. The writer uses an anecdotal experience to effectively describe the ups and downs of a high school romance (teen love is like a roller coaster). In contrasting the positive aspects of the boyfriend at the beginning of the composition (he shed that one tear during Pearl Harbor) with the change of feelings for the boy at the end (you begin to wish he had been at Pearl Harbor), the writer demonstrates a progression of thought and emotion that is controlled and connected. The sustained voice is authentic and original (you take the giant black Sharpie and cross his name off everything), enhancing the overall impact of this composition.

If you ask a famous athlete - anyone from Tiger Woods on the golf course to Randy Moss on the football field - how to achieve success, you are likely to get a similar answer. These players will thank someone, a coach, a teacher, a parent, for starting them on the road that led them to celebrity.

If you ask a teenager - anyone from the student council president to the head cheerleader - who they wish to be like in their adult lives, you are likely to hear an echo - a parent, a teacher, a coach.

Although Tiger Woods may have aspired to be as great a golfer as Jack Nicklaus, the person who provided the support for that aspiration was his father. The student president may long to be George W. Bush, but the person who encourages them to reach for that goal is close to them today - the debate coach or the assistant principal.

Adults may worry that teenagers are only Britney Spears or Eminem wanna-be's, but in truth, they are affected more by the people close to them, the adults who have an opportunity to impact them every day. If there is someone in their lives who congratulates them on every good grade, reinforces their perceptions of right and wrong, and pushes them toward succeeding, then that is the person they will

recognize as having the greatest impact on their lives.

Even the smallest bit of parenting, or coaching, has a greater effect on a kid's life than a dozen raps or a dozen presidential speeches. And, isn't that impact your goal as a parent or teacher? Isn't that why you obey the laws, and explain that obedience to your kids, setting a good example for them to follow? You do the right thing as a matter of conviction, and each time you do, your convictions rub off on a younger person.

Tiger Woods, Randy Moss or George Bush, even Bri' A'any Spears, may capture a teenager's attention in the moment, but when that teenager is an adult, they will not see them as the constant positive reinforcers in their lives. When they are asked (on the evening news or by their own children) who made them successful, they will recall a parent, or a coach, or a teacher who was there for the long haul. The person who touched them everyday is the person who will receive their thanks at the end of the road to success.

Score Point: 4

This philosophical response focuses on how teenagers are affected more by the people close to them than by the remote impact of celebrities. The sustained focus and the development of each idea from a variety of perspectives create depth of thought. The writer is able to express his individuality throughout the composition, and the thoughtful conclusion adds to the sense of completeness by echoing the original premise (they will recall a coach, a parent, or a teacher who was there for the long haul) in this highly effective response.

It was Friday night. The sky was lit in a bright haze of yellow. I remember it was raining. It was kind of chilly, the type that makes your teeth chatter. "Hut Hut," DANNY the all-state quarter back called out. I grabbed the ball and took it up the middle—the last play of the year. This was it. These last three yards decided our 13-0 season, and my last chance of glory as a Senior of _____ High. One yard, two yards, I stumble, as a last attempt to dive, sliding through the muddy earth just inches over the line. "Touchdown!" I hear ringing all around. Before I can stand up I am tossed on the shoulder of my teammates as they celebrate the victory. Hundreds of fans rush the field. I hear over the intercom, "your new state champs in the 3A division, _____ High School!" I realize what has happened and a wave of victory covers my mind. We see the other team walking with their heads down in silence toward the parking lot. I think to myself, that's right—leave, for we are the victors and this is our field. But then sympathy is on me, and I push the thought out of my mind. After a while there are only a couple of seniors on the field inhaling that last smell of West-Texas football. A scout approaches me with a card inviting me to see the University of Miami. I leave the field and go to party with a couple of friends. As we take a right turn onto Pickering lane, a pair of bright lights just whips through the red light and everything goes black. I wake up in a white

room. My mother is there and explains to me what has happened. So here I am two years later, still in _____ but in a wheelchair at my friend's grave telling him how much fun it was that night of the state games. The tombstone states: Farewell to DANNY DAVIS, our friend, son, and state champion. I think about it now and then and I go into a rage and curse drunk drivers. The guy who hit us was highly intoxicated, and suffered a few scratches and got one year's probation. For his decision to get drunk and then rush across town he costed a great man his life, and my future, and he wasn't even punished. My best friend's life is over, and my life is exiled into the chair. Think before you react. Your neglect of thought can destroy another's ability to think. So do not drink and drive...

Score Point: 4

Using a combination of strategies—part narrative, part reflective, part descriptive—the writer develops a remembrance of when a wave of victory turned into a loss of life and future. Every sentence adds to the progression of thought, creating a smooth and controlled response enhanced by the effective use of language (sliding through the muddy earth, inhaling that last smell of West Texas football). A strong, sustained voice adds depth and authenticity. The overall strength of the conventions and unusual emotional perspective contribute to the effectiveness of this composition as a whole.

Ever since I was seven, I've wanted to be an architect. My mom realized that my fascination with blocks and building things, my curiosity as to how things stand and my insane creativity would all be used in architecture. She realized this.

I was in second grade, back in the day when math consisted of addition and subtraction. And if you could deal with fractions, you were amazing. What can I say? I was amazing. So due to my being creative in all things structural, and good at math, Mom says 'ya know, JEN, you would be an amazing architect.' 'Oh! I like boats! I can be an arkitekt and build boats and raise animals on it, it'll be great.' 'Haha, you could do that. See, architects build things, anything, houses, bridges, there are even SHO E architects. You're just so creative and good at this stuff, I thought you might like it.' 'Yippee! I'm gonna build things, beautiful things. I'll build you a house, Momma, right behind mine, promise!' Ah the promise... She still brings that up, eight years later.

She had nothing but completely good intentions, but that made me think I was absolutely, most definitely going to be an architect. And that's what I've thought. Forget that my math grades are Bs. I'm creative! Totally set aside the fact that math is what keeps those super structures standing, I'm special! I'm halfway there... and that'd be okay if I was eleven, time to get down to it and really work on math... but I'm a sophomore and algebra teachers couldn't care less if you know contrasting shapes and are more interested in the way it all structurally fits than how it algebraically works.

Since second grade, math has become more than addition and subtraction. There are variables, exponents, logarithms... a wee bit more complicated than $2+8$, which is ten, by the way, 'cause I learned something in second grade.

Point is, for eight years I've been thoroughly convinced that I would be an architect, and never gave a moment's attention to other things, and now, as a sophomore, I'm thinking, 'maybe this is bad...'. Then I think, 'but you know... it's gone tech now.

I could be like Gehry and just get ideas, make them out of clay. I'll be the creative genius, and somebody else can worry about the math!! So, I think we have a solution here... hope the universities see it that way, that I'm a creative kid, not a mathematical genius, and that's all I need to be fantastic.

I'm having a huge life crisis at fifteen, because math requires that I give it some effort, that I work at it, because the world expects me to know what I, me, JENNIFER SMITH, want to do at twelve and work for it the rest of my life, and because my mother and I had a conversation eight years ago on the living room floor playing with blocks. Okay, so it's not a crisis... She gave me something to work towards, she believed in me, still does, and thinks I can do anything... besides be a math teacher... unless it's second grade.

Whether or not Mom's telling me that I should be an architect was terrific or terrible I'm still not sure, but I am sure that it's influenced me and will continue to. And who knows, maybe she'll get that awesome house I promised.

Score Point: 4

In this focused response the writer reflects on a childhood realization that the opportunity to become an architect was a possibility based on the writer's creativity, interests in math and building things, and a mother's encouragement. The quality of the content is enhanced by the writer's willingness to take a compositional risk: to recreate the conversation she had with her mother and show its long-term impact—both positive and negative—on her life. Authentic voice is apparent throughout, from the intentional misspelling of the word architect (I like boats. I can be an arkitect and build boats) to her honest self-judgments (Forget that my math grades are B's. I'm creative!) The smooth and controlled progression of thought contributes to this engaging composition.