

**Examples of the  
Standards for  
Students' Writing**

**English Language  
Arts 30–1**

**From the January 2012 Diploma Examination**

*Alberta*  Government

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

### Background

For all diploma examination scoring sessions, Assessment Sector staff use a process of standards confirmation to establish and illustrate expectations for students' work in relation to the scoring criteria and to ensure scoring consistency within and between marking sessions. Because there are several diploma examination administrations and scoring sessions each school year, the standards must remain consistent for each scoring session in the school year and, similarly, from year to year.

Standards for student achievement start with both the demands of the Program of Studies for senior high school English Language Arts and the interpretation of those demands through learning resources and classroom instruction. These agreed-upon standards are also exemplified in the kinds of tasks and the degree of independence expected of students. All these complex applications of standards precede the design, development, and scoring of each diploma examination.

The Standards Confirmation Committee is composed of experienced teachers from representative regions of the province. These teachers work with the Assessment Sector staff responsible for the development, scoring, and results-reporting for each diploma examination. Teacher-members participate over a two-year period and are required to serve as group leaders or markers during at least one of the subsequent marking sessions.

There are two essential parts to applying standards at the point of examination scoring: the expectations embedded in the scoring criteria and the examples of students' work that illustrate the scoring criteria within each scoring category. The scoring categories and scoring criteria are available to teachers and students via the English Language Arts 30–1 Information Bulletin. During each of the January and June marking sessions, example papers selected by members of the Standards Confirmation Committee are used to train markers. Subsequent to each marking session, the example papers that received scores of Satisfactory (S), Proficient (Pf), and Excellent (E) are posted on the Alberta Education website at [education.alberta.ca](http://education.alberta.ca) in the documents entitled Examples of the Standards for Students' Writing.

During the standards confirmation process,

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

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

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

### The Assignment

Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the impact of an individual's ambition on self and others.

In your planning and writing, consider the following instructions.

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

Fold and tear along perforation.

## Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

### Initial Planning

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

Literary Text and  
Text Creator

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

Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text  
**Suggested time: 10 to 15 minutes**

Briefly explore your reasons for selecting the literary text as support for your response. Markers will consider the information you provide here when considering the effectiveness of your supporting evidence.

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

# Examples of Students' Writing with Teachers' Commentaries

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

Literary Text and  
Text Creator

Othello

William Shakespeare

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

**Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text**

**Suggested time: 10 to 15 minutes**

Briefly explore your reasons for selecting the literary text as support for your response. Markers will consider the information you provide here when considering the effectiveness of your supporting evidence.

Iago had a very dangerous ambition that would be easy to talk about, and be a very good way to get my point across

Iago's ambition was the entire plot of this masterful play, and it directly relates to the assignment in that it affected his choices and

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

*Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text*

the people around him. It also  
is good evidence of how your  
ambitions can affect you adversely.

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

*Planning*

Faceriga  
Iago  
Caen  
of the 110  
desdemona

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

The desires of people can often become so powerful, that the roles they play are life changing. They can lead to anger, jealousy, lust, and even death. These are all emotions that are very powerful, and lead to making very big decisions. In the play, *Othello*, by William Shakespeare, this ambition is so overbearing in many of the characters, and it leads to many ill-willed decisions. The tragedy is centred around the impacts of their ambitions, which leads to much needless suffering and pain. In *Othello*, Iago's hunger for power, Roderigo and Othello's jealousy, and all of their deep hatreds led to the unfortunate ending of the play, and help us understand humanity a little better.

Iago is the sneaky, conniving, and deceitful character that is the backbone of this Shakespeare tragedy. Everything is going well until he decides to stir up trouble, and he does it better than no other. With Michael Cassio getting the job Iago felt he deserved, he sets out to make friends with Othello so that later he can begin his backstabbing. His ambition in this case was clearly his hunger for power. While he resented Othello, he wanted to be his right-hand man so he could trick Othello into hating Cassio. This ambition was very impactful on everyone in the play, as it led to the death of multiple characters, many of whom were innocent. In order to better his position, he was willing to use all of the people who placed their trust in him, and he selfishly sacrificed everyone in his way to his goal. In particular, when Roderigo ambushed Cassio, Iago killed Roderigo who was trusting him and doing his dirty work.

While Iago's ambitions were the most destructive of the play, there were others from the text that caused the situation to escalate immensely. Othello and Roderigo were both very jealous people, and they were fooled easily by Iago's plots. Roderigo was deeply in love with Desdemona, and despite failure and failure, he kept on trying to buy

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Example Scored Satisfactory (S)

her affection. This made it easy for Iago to convince him, as he knew with Cassio and Othello out of the way, they would both win and he would have no competition for Desdemona. Othello had an even larger jealousy than this, as Iago was successful in making him believe that Cassio was having an affair with Desdemona. This led to the rage of Othello, which was one of the largest catalysts of the tragedy.

While Cassio did very little to anyone the entire play, Iago managed to convince all of the key characters to hate him. Iago and Roderigo themselves both harbored a very large amount of hate towards Othello, and used his short fuse to their advantage. When Iago frames Cassio and Desdemona's affair by putting Desdemona's heirloom handkerchief in the hands of Cassio, Othello instantly goes a rage assuming that Cassio must be guilty. Othello is driven to the point of insanity by Iago, and at one point even has a seizure from his anger and disbelief. Iago just keeps on adding fuel to the fire, and eventually Othello feels that it must all be true. This, of course, leads to the tragic ending where Othello is tricked into killing his very faithful and loving wife, and upon learning of her innocence, he throws himself upon his sword.

Whether it was Iago trying to obtain more power, Roderigo trying to win the woman he believes should be his, or Othello lashing out against the crime he thinks has been committed, the theme of ambition is always present in the play, *Othello*. The text is very meaningful, as it teaches us much about humanity and how we will make our decisions when our desires start to take control. People may do things that they know are morally wrong in order to meet these desires. This play in particular also shows the negative side of ambition, and where it can go wrong, compared to when it is commonly shown as always being beneficial. While following through on our decisions can often be

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**Example Scored Satisfactory (S)**

**a good thing, it can also lead to us making unfortunate choices. While the results likely will not be as catastrophic as they end up in *Othello*, we can betray our morals, and do things we know are not right for our ambition.**

**English Language Arts 30–1, January 2012  
Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—Satisfactory**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Thought and Understanding (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Ideas are relevant and straightforward, demonstrating a generalized comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic.</li> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Literary interpretations are general but plausible.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>The student begins with the <b>relevant and straightforward</b> idea that “The desires of people can often become so powerful, that the roles they play are life changing” (3). In doing so, a context is established for a discussion of Shakespeare’s Othello and how “this ambition is so overbearing in many of the characters, and it leads to many ill-willed decisions. The tragedy is centred around the impacts of their ambitions, which leads to much needless suffering and pain” (3). These assertions demonstrate a <b>generalized comprehension of the literary text and topic</b>.</p> <p>The student then provides a <b>generalized</b> analysis of three characters in order to examine the ways in which “Iago’s hunger for power, Roderigo and Othello’s jealousy, and all of their deep hatreds led to the unfortunate ending of the play, and help us understand humanity a little better” (3). The discussion establishes that “Iago is the sneaky, conniving, and deceitful character that is the backbone of this Shakespeare tragedy” (3), and that his campaign of revenge is motivated by Othello promoting Michael Cassio in “the job Iago felt he deserved” (3). The student then asserts that “Othello and Roderigo were both very jealous people, and they were fooled easily by Iago’s plots” (3) and that “This, of course, leads to the tragic ending where Othello is tricked into killing his very faithful and loving wife, and upon learning of her innocence, he throws himself upon his sword” (4).</p> <p>Ultimately, the response arrives at the <b>general but plausible literary interpretation</b> that “Whether it was Iago trying to obtain more power, Roderigo trying to win the woman he believes should be his, or Othello lashing out against the crime he thinks has been committed, the theme of ambition is always present in the play, Othello” (4).</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—Satisfactory**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Supporting Evidence (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Support is general, adequate, and appropriately chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in an acceptable way but occasionally may lack persuasiveness.</li> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> A reasonable connection to the student’s ideas is suitably maintained.</li> </ul>	<p>The student’s thesis is <b>reinforced</b> through an <b>appropriately chosen</b> examination of the characters of Iago, Roderigo, and Othello.</p> <p>The student includes <b>adequate support</b> for Iago: “While he resented Othello, he wanted to be his right-hand man so he could trick Othello into hating Cassio” (3). Additional <b>general support</b> includes “Iago’s ambitions were the most destructive of the play” (3) and “Iago frames Cassio and Desdemona’s affair” (4) through his misrepresentation of Desdemona’s handkerchief.</p> <p>Roderigo is depicted as a man “deeply in love with Desdemona, and despite failure and failure, he kept on trying to buy her affection. This made it easy for Iago to convince him” (3, 4) to follow Iago’s plan. Furthermore, the student observes the parallel between characters in stating that “Iago and Roderigo themselves both harbored a very large amount of hate towards Othello, and used his short fuse to their advantage” (4). In doing so, the student provides additional <b>general, adequate support</b>.</p> <p><b>S</b> Occasionally, supporting evidence <b>may lack persuasiveness</b>, as in “While Cassio did very little to anyone the entire play, Iago managed to convince all of the key characters to hate him” (4). Major and significant characters such as Desdemona and Emilia never feel any dislike whatsoever towards Cassio at any time in the play.</p> <p>Throughout the essay, the student’s attempt to handle the topic by using three characters demonstrates that a <b>reasonable connection to the student’s ideas is suitably maintained</b> with the supporting evidence.</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—Satisfactory**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Form and Structure (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> A straightforward arrangement of ideas and details provides direction for the discussion that is developed appropriately.</li> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> The unifying effect or controlling idea is presented and maintained generally; however, coherence may falter.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>On the Initial Planning page, the student writes that “Iago’s ambition was the entire plot of this masterful play” (1) and in the Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text further clarifies that “It also is good evidence of how your ambitions can affect you adversely” (2). These notions, coupled with the student’s controlling idea about how ambition can be so overbearing that it “leads to much needless suffering and pain” (3) provide the basis for a <b>discussion that is developed appropriately</b>.</p> <p>In using a five paragraph essay, the student presents <b>ideas and details in a straightforward arrangement</b>. The first body paragraph discusses the significance of Iago to the text and topic, establishing some of his motivation and the manipulations he employs. The second body paragraph explores the ways in which Othello and Roderigo, both victims of Iago’s plotting, “caused the situation to escalate immensely” (3). The third body paragraph examines the role Cassio plays as an object of scorn for both Othello and Roderigo as a result of Iago’s campaign, and the catastrophic deaths of Desdemona and Othello at the end of the play.</p> <p>Ultimately, <b>the unifying effect is maintained generally</b>, as is evidenced by the student’s statements in the concluding paragraph that the play “teaches us much about humanity and how we will make our decisions when our desires start to take control” (4) and that ambition can “lead to us making unfortunate choices” (5). <b>Coherence falters</b> at times due to a lack of analysis of the characters’ motivations and to generalized statements such as “This play in particular also shows the negative side of ambition, and where it can go wrong, compared to when it is commonly shown as always being beneficial” (4).</p>

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Critical / Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—Satisfactory**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Choice (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Diction is adequate.</li> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Syntactic structures are straightforward, but attempts at complex structures may be awkward.</li> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a conventional composition with an appropriate voice.</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>S</b></p>	<p>Throughout this response the <b>diction is adequate</b>, as is evident in: “Everything is going well until he decides to stir up trouble” (3), “Iago killed Roderigo who was trusting him and doing his dirty work” (3), “Othello had an even larger jealousy than this” (4), and “Iago just keeps on adding fuel to the fire” (4).</p> <p>The student’s response is typified by <b>straightforward syntactic structures</b>: “Othello is driven to the point of insanity by Iago, and at one point even has a seizure from his anger and disbelief” (4) and “People may do things that they know are morally wrong in order to meet these desires” (4). <b>Attempts at complex structures may be awkward</b>, such as “These are all emotions that are very powerful, and lead to making very big decisions” (3) and “Everything is going well until he decides to stir up trouble, and he does it better than no other” (3).</p> <p>Overall, <b>stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a conventional composition with an appropriate voice</b>. For example: “In order to better his position, he was willing to use all of the people who placed their trust in him, and he selfishly sacrificed everyone in his way to his goal” (3) and “This led to the rage of Othello, which was one of the largest catalysts of the tragedy” (4) and “While the results likely will not be as catastrophic as they end up in Othello, we can betray our morals, and do things we know are not right for our ambition” (5).</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—Satisfactory**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Correctness (S)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•□ This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</li> <li>•□ There may be occasional lapses in control and minor errors; however, the communication remains clear.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>Considering the essay’s relative brevity, coupled with its adequate diction and use of straightforward syntactic structures, markers must <b>consider the proportion of error in terms of the complexity and length of the response</b> when assessing Matters of Correctness.</p> <p>While the student <b>demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics, there are occasional lapses in control and minor errors</b>. Some examples include: “This ambition was very impactful on everyone in the play, as it lead to the dead of multiple characters, many of whom were innocent” (3) and “When Iago frames Cassio and Desdemona’s affair by putting Desdemona’s heirloom handkerchief in the hands of Cassio, Othello instantly goes a rage assuming that Cassio must be guilty” (4).</p> <p>Despite these <b>occasional lapses, the communication remains clear</b>.</p>

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Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment

Initial Planning

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

Literary Text and  
Text Creator

Death of a Salesman - Arthur Miller

Discuss the idea(s) developed by the text creator in your chosen text about the impact of an individual's ambition on self and others?

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

*Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text*  
Suggested time: 10 to 15 minutes

Briefly explore your reasons for selecting the literary text as support for your response. Markers will consider the information you provide here when considering the effectiveness of your supporting evidence.

- Willy's ambitions - wrong extreme, unrealistic
- Effects himself & others around him (Biff, Linda, himself)



Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

## Death of a Salesman

Thesis: ~~Willy's ambitions lead him to ruin his relationships with himself and with his family.~~  
[or]

~~Having the wrong ambitions in life could lead to being ~~of~~ one's self ~~of~~ others around him.~~  
[or]

(One's ambitions could ~~lead~~ <sup>with</sup> ~~to~~ extremes & obsession, ~~could~~ <sup>could</sup> means losing oneself & others around them.)

Intro: • American Dream  
• Thesis  
• Supporting details

body 1: • Biff  
• Pressures Biff to make his dreams come true for him  
& follow in his steps

body 2: • Linda  
• setting, climax  
• symbolism,

body 3: • Himself  
• plot, characterization

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Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

**Ambitions Too Extreme**

In the 1950s, the mythical American Dream was something everyone yearned for. Having a steady business, one's own house, and a family was what everyone's ambition was. Everyone worked towards it and whoever reached it was respected by all. Not everyone reached it though. Some people did not try, others tried and could not reach it, and yet others took it to extremes. One's ambitions taken to extremes and obsession could lead to emotionally hurting oneself and others around him. Willy Loman, the protagonist of the drama *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller, was one who took the American Dream to extremes. He ended up hurting himself; his eldest son, Biff; and his wife, Linda.

Willy Loman was a salesman who had to drive every week to New England to sell products for the company he worked for. He believed that he was a successful salesman and was "well-liked" by everyone in the towns he travelled to. He came home every week and told his family that he had made more money than he essentially did and that everyone bought from him and liked him. He built a lie for himself and his family to live on as he did not want to believe that he failed to follow his ambition in the correct way. He became obsessed with American Dream to the point that he lost himself in it and lost all sense of reality. At the beginning of the play, while he was talking to his wife Linda, he said, "Why does everyone contradict me around here?" This is verbal irony as Willy was the one who contradicted himself yet and yet again. He lied to himself and his family about being the great businessman he wasn't, but deep down he knew the truth and even admit it at one point. In a memory of his past, he comes home and tells his sons that he sold much that week and that everyone smiled at him and liked him in the towns he travelled to. A few minutes later, he tells his wife that the

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Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

people don't like him because he talks a lot. Here, he is contradicting himself as he has lost himself in the obsession of his ambition. He knew that he was not selling the products anymore, but he was selling himself, though he did not want to face this as he still had hope that he will somehow become like the mythical great businessman that died successful and well-liked at the age of eighty-four. When he sees Ben, his dead brother, he talks to him and continually asks him how he became so successful. Ben became so rich merely of luck, and tells Willy that he walked into the jungle of Africa and he came out rich. The questioning of Ben in this way tells us that Willy knew he was not successful, but he was not about to give up the American Dream. He knew that he had gotten nowhere in life and that he would not leave anything for his sons after he died, except the American Dream that he expected them to take on for him. This is when Willy becomes obsessed with seeds. The seeds represent the success or failure of Willy. After his sons desert him in Frank's Chop House, he rushes to buy seeds and says that he has nothing planted in the ground. This means that he has not planted anything for his family and nothing has come out of his wrong ambitions. Eventually, after talking to Ben, he is convinced that the only way for him to leave anything for his family is to die and gain the insurance money. This is the symbolic diamond that Ben constantly talks about: the money from the insurance after his death.

Biff Loman at thirty-four years old was the eldest of Willy Loman's two sons. He was the one who Willy put all his trust into. He wanted Biff to follow in his footsteps and reach the American Dream that he could not reach himself. During Biff's youth, his father was the only source of confidence for him. Willy's ambitions led him to raise his son in the wrong way. He praised his son and encouraged him even when he had done something wrong and made a mistake that should have been fixed. He continually taught his son that nothing was more

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Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

important than being "well-liked" and knowing how to sell. Willy's constant pressures on Biff lead Biff to become confused about himself as he grew and to become angry with his father. He knew where his own ambitions were, out in the west where he worked on a farm, but he did not believe it would cause him to be successful, and that was what his father wanted. He did not understand why he should follow his father's wrong ambitions about becoming successful when he had his own ambitions that could bring him success on his own. His father continuously upset him by telling him that he was of no use because he had not been successful at a job yet at the age of thirty-four years old. Even so, Willy still had hope for Biff. "Biff's a lazy bum," he tells his wife, Linda. A couple minutes later he says, "No, Biff, he's not lazy." Willy's ambitions that he had set for Biff, to make lots of money and become well-liked by following the American Dream, caused him to lose Biff as Biff decided to break out of his father's caged dream and follow his own ambitions. At the climax of the play, Biff fought with his father and told him, "I'm a dime a dozen and so are you." He also brought out the rubber hose that his father used to attempt to commit suicide a few times. This shows us that Biff was the one who was most hurt from Willy's actions and he was the only one who faced him with this and decided to leave on his own. The impact of Willy's ambitions on Biff led Willy to lose his relationship with his son.

Linda Loman, Willy's loving wife, was another character who went through a lot of emotional turmoil by sticking by Willy through his extreme ups and downs as he obsessed over the American Dream and being a successful seller. She knew the truth about him, yet she did not face him with this as she did not want to hurt him. Willy's extreme ambition to reach the American Dream caused Linda to live a lie with Willy that led him to his death. She constantly told him that he was liked by everyone and that he was a great man, though she believed that

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Example Scored Proficient (Pf)

he was headed in the wrong direction. She knew that if he were to leave his ambitions, he would die, and she did not want that. This caused a lot of pressure for her, but she did not let this show to her husband. She told her sons that Willy did all he did for them and that they were disappointing him by not helping him and doing as he wants. She tells them that they are killing him. She foreshadows Willy's death when she tells her sons of the rubber hose that she tried to get rid of once and again, but always failed and returned it to its place behind the furnace before Willy came home. Willy's extreme obsession with his ambitions lead Linda to do anything she can to keep him from committing suicide, even if it meant emotionally hurting herself and her sons.

Willy Loman held onto the American Dream too strongly and took it to extremes only to find that the only way to gain it at the end was to die. He lost a lot in the process and ruined relationships within his family. Willy teaches us that taking our ambitions too far and becoming obsessed with them doesn't necessarily mean they are the right ambitions for us and following them to extreme levels could mean ruining ourselves, our relationships, and our lives.

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Thought and Understanding (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Ideas are thoughtful and considered, demonstrating a competent comprehension of the literary text(s) and the topic.</li> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Literary interpretations are revealing and sensible.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>Opening with the <b>thoughtful and considered idea</b> that “One’s ambitions taken to extremes and obsession could lead to emotionally hurting oneself and others around him” (3), the student is able to <b>demonstrate a competent comprehension of the literary text and the topic</b> by applying this idea to Death of a Salesman. Focusing on “the mythical American Dream” (3), the student seeks to discuss the <b>considered idea</b> that “Not everyone reached it though” (3) by explaining how Willy “ended up hurting himself; his eldest son, Biff; and his wife, Linda”. (3)</p> <p>In explaining the negative impact of ambition on self, the student offers the <b>thoughtful</b> understanding that Willy “believed” (3) he was a successful salesman who “lied to himself” (3) but “deep down he knew the truth and even admit it at one point” (3), resulting in the <b>revealing literary interpretation</b> that Willy “became obsessed with American Dream to the point that he lost himself in it and lost all sense of reality” (3). In addition, the student explains Willy “knew that he was not selling the products anymore, but he was selling himself, though he did not want to face this as he still had hope”(4) of attaining his ambition. Acknowledging Willy’s self-perceived monetary failure, the student offers the <b>considered ideas</b> that Willy had nothing to leave his sons “except the American Dream that he expected them to take on for him” (4) and “nothing has come out of his wrong ambitions”(4).</p> <p>To address the negative impact Willy’s “obsession” (4) with his personal ambition had on others, the student examines Biff and Linda. The student offers the <b>sensible literary interpretation</b> that Willy wanted Biff to “follow in his footsteps and reach the American Dream” (4) because Willy himself was incapable of achieving that desired ambition. Furthering this interpretation, the student acknowledges that although Biff “knew where his own ambitions were” (5), he was incapable of pursuing them because they were not consistent with Willy’s beliefs. The understanding that Biff is the one “most hurt” (5) by Willy’s ambition but also is the “only one who faced him” (5) completes the analysis of Biff on a <b>revealing note</b>. Explaining that Linda “knew the truth about” (5) Willy but “did not want to hurt him” (5) leads to the <b>revealing and sensible interpretation</b> that “Willy’s extreme obsession with his ambitions lead Linda to do anything she can to keep him from committing suicide” (6), including hurting herself and her sons, because her ambition is to keep Willy alive.</p> <p>The student concludes with the <b>considered idea</b> that “taking our ambitions too far and becoming obsessed with them doesn’t necessarily mean they are the right ambitions” (6) and could lead to tragic ruin.</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Supporting Evidence (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Support is specific and well chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in a persuasive way.</li> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> A sound connection to the student’s ideas is capably maintained.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>Throughout this essay, the choice of <b>specific support</b> from the play <b>reinforces the student’s ideas in a persuasive way</b>. To address the idea of Willy’s lack of success as a salesman in “New England” (3) and his resultant need to perpetuate the lie he constructed “for himself and his family to live on” (3), the student notes how in a memory Willy “comes home and tells his sons that he sold much that week and that everyone smiled at him and liked him in the towns he travelled to” (3).</p> <p>In considering how the playwright employs literary techniques, such as irony and symbolism, <b>a sound connection to the student’s ideas is capably maintained</b> through numerous references to the text. The student’s paraphrase of Willy’s question “Why does everyone contradict me around here?” (3) is <b>well chosen to reinforce the student’s idea in a persuasive way</b>: “This is verbal irony as Willy was the one who contradicted himself yet and yet again”(3). The student also demonstrates this strength with <b>specific supporting evidence</b> when discussing both Willy’s legacy: “the symbolic diamond that Ben constantly talks about: the money from the insurance after his death” (4), and in explaining Biff’s rejection of his father’s beliefs: “Biff decided to break out of his father’s caged dream and follow his own ambitions” (5).</p> <p>In the analysis of Linda, <b>specific supporting evidence</b> focuses on explaining her awareness of Willy’s situation that “caused Linda to live a lie” (5) because she was fearful “that if he were to leave his ambitions, he would die” (6). Details about “the rubber hose” (6) and “its place behind the furnace” (6) <b>capably maintain a sound connection to the student’s ideas</b> about how Linda endures “emotional turmoil by sticking by Willy through his extreme ups and downs as he obsessed over the American Dream” (5), and thus fundamentally is willing to risk everything in a vain attempt to save Willy from himself.</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Form and Structure (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•□ A purposeful arrangement of ideas and details contributes to a controlled discussion that is developed capably.</li> <li>•□ The unifying effect or controlling idea is coherently sustained and presented.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>The student offers a <b>purposeful arrangement of ideas and details</b>, through a deductive approach, involving Willy “hurting himself; his eldest son, Biff; and his wife, Linda” (3). In this character-driven essay, the decision to examine the characters in this order, despite the original intention on the Planning page (2), allows the student to <b>capably develop a controlled discussion</b> focused on the inherent dangers of “the mythical American Dream” (3) and how “Not everyone” (3) is destined to nor capable of reaching it. In discussing Willy, the student provides essential characterization to advance the discussion of Willy’s particular obsession with the “American Dream” (3). Including Ben, who “became so rich merely of luck” (4), as a contrast to Willy expands the analysis of his “success or failure” (4).</p> <p>While the first body paragraph establishes the student’s central argument about taking the American Dream “to extremes” (3), there is an implicit transition to the paragraph on Biff that results in a <b>coherently sustained unifying effect</b>. In discussing Biff, the student examines the emotional impact as a consequence of “Willy’s constant pressures” (5) that “lead Biff to become confused about himself as he grew” (5), and later caused Biff “to become angry with his father” (5). The student completes this analysis with the abrupt yet logical statement: “The impact of Willy’s ambitions on Biff led Willy to lose his relationship with his son” (5).</p> <p>Progressing to the discussion of Linda, “Willy’s loving wife” (5), the essay’s structure deviates slightly but the <b>unifying effect remains coherently presented</b>. The student draws on details about Linda that have been presented in the previous two paragraphs to enter a discussion about the effects of Willy’s “extreme ambition to reach the American Dream” (5) on Linda. Focusing on Linda’s choice “to live a lie with Willy” (5) rather than face the increasing possibility of losing him to “suicide” (6) demonstrates a <b>purposeful arrangement of ideas and details</b>.</p> <p>By considering Willy’s mistakes with his obsessive ambition as a cathartic lesson for humanity to avoid, for risk of “ruining ourselves, our relationships, and our lives” (6), the student demonstrates the overall <b>purposeful arrangement of a controlled and capably developed discussion</b>.</p>



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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Choice (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Diction is specific.</li> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Syntactic structures are generally effective.</li> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a considered composition with a capable voice.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>The student frequently chooses <b>specific diction</b> as is evident in phrases like “yearned for” (3), and “he had made more money than he essentially did” (3), and “mythical great businessman” (4), and “Willy becomes obsessed with seeds” (4), and “his father was the only source of confidence for him” (4) to effectively communicate ideas.</p> <p><b>Syntactical structures are generally effective</b>, as demonstrated in: “Everyone worked towards it and whoever reached it was respected by all” (3), and “Here, he is contradicting himself as he has lost himself in the obsession of his ambition” (4), and “He knew where his own ambitions were, out in the west where he worked on a farm, but he did not believe it would cause him to be successful, and that was what his father wanted” (5). Parallelism, as seen in “he lost himself in it and lost all sense of reality” (3), also contributes to the <b>capable voice</b>.</p> <p>Despite occasional unevenness in usage, that includes interjecting informal language as seen in “went through a lot of emotional turmoil by sticking by Willy” (5) and “this caused a lot of pressure for her, but she did not let this show to her husband” (6), the overall effect is of <b>stylistic choices that contribute to the creation of a considered composition with a capable voice</b>. For example: “He built a lie for himself and his family to live on as he did not want to believe that he failed to follow his ambition in the correct way” (3) and “The questioning of Ben in this way tells us that Willy knew he was not successful, but he was not about to give up the American Dream” (4).</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—PROFICIENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Correctness (Pf)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> This writing demonstrates competence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</li> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Minor errors in complex language structures are understandable considering the circumstances.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>In terms of total effect, the student <b>demonstrates competence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics</b>, as is evident in: “Some people did not try, others tired and could not reach it, and yet others took it to extremes” (3), and “At the beginning of the play, while he was talking to his wife Linda, he said, ‘Why does everyone contradict me around here?’”(3), and “Eventually, after talking to Ben, he is convinced that the only way for him to leave anything for his family is to die and gain the insurance money” (4), and “He continually taught his son that nothing was more important than being ‘well-liked’ and knowing how to sell”(4, 5), and “She constantly told him that he was liked by everyone and that he was a great man, though she believed that he was headed in the wrong direction”(5, 6).</p> <p>As indicated in the gray box, markers are reminded to consider the proportion of error in terms of complexity and length of the response. Given the thoughtfulness of the student’s ideas juxtaposed with the revealing and sensible literary interpretations, and in the context of first draft writing in exam conditions, <b>minor errors</b> in usage, punctuation, verb tense, or sentence construction in terms of missing words, <b>are understandable</b>.</p>

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Example Scored Excellent (E)

Literary Text and  
Text Creator

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by  
Ken Kesey

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

**Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text**  
**Suggested time: 10 to 15 minutes**

Briefly explore your reasons for selecting the literary text as support for your response. Markers will consider the information you provide here when considering the effectiveness of your supporting evidence.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest is a book  
that explores the idea of how one individual  
can impact many others. McMurphy's strong sense of  
ambition affects every last patient in the hospital.  
He shows a desire to overthrow Nurse Ratched's  
medicrony.

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Example Scored Excellent (E)

*Personal Reflection on Choice of Literary Text*

The novel is perfect for this essay

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Example Scored Excellent (E)

### **Striving Towards Ambitions**

The ambitions and goals that an individual develops through life, are the very factors that play an important role in shaping their identity and character. In fact, these same factors have the potential to influence the minds and behaviors of many other individuals. In Ken Kesey's novel, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, the character of R.P. McMurphy is depicted as being a rowdy and carefree man who eventually becomes a symbol of resilience and determination in the mental hospital that the novel takes place in. This novel demonstrates how an individual can start off with an insignificant and meaningless purpose, but then become so altered by the environment that they are placed in that they establish ambitions and aspirations that radically impact both themselves and others around them.

McMurphy's initial view of the mental hospital that he is admitted into, is to see it as a new opportunity to take control and become the "bull goose loony" or "top dog" of the place. This desire of his is seen almost immediately when he enters the ward of the hospital and exhibits an arrogant and egotistical presence. Chief Bromden describes McMurphy to be different from all the other patients and his assumption proves to be true as the novel continues. Although McMurphy jokes around and tries to make the patients laugh, he is unsuccessful and notices that "there's something strange about a place where men won't let loose and laugh". When McMurphy begins to ask the other patients to point him to the leader of their group, it becomes clear that McMurphy has a strong ambition to be in control of what ever environment he is placed in. During one of the meetings with Nurse Ratched and the other patients, McMurphy observes the manipulative ways of the nurse and how she seems to instigate the other

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Example Scored Excellent (E)

patients into turning against one another. When the meeting comes to a close, McMurphy points this observation out to the other patients. He describes them all as a "pecking party", and mentions how the nurse uses carefully calculated moves to turn everyone against each other and then uses her authority to make every last individual in the ward feel like less of a man. McMurphy decides that "the nurse ain't some kinda monster" but that rather, she is a "ball-cutter" who emasculates the men in the ward in order to keep a strong hold on all the patients. With this new found knowledge, McMurphy makes a bet that he can make the nurse loose her cool composure in one week. By making this bet, the readers are shown yet another ambition of McMurphy's: the desire to create chaos. McMurphy begins by asking for simple things, such as toothpaste in the washroom and lowering the music in the dayroom; however, by asking for these, McMurphy slowly begins to fracture the hard self-control that the nurse possesses. Eventually, he is able to get the tub room open as a game room with the help of Dr. Spivey. These small victories that are accomplished by McMurphy, create a sense of hope and optimism in the other patients. The patients begin to ask for things themselves, something they would not have dared to do before McMurphy arrived at the ward. Unfortunately, when McMurphy requests that the schedule be changed so that the patients could watch the World Series on the television, no other patient has the courage to stand up to the nurse and support McMurphy. To help the other patients realize their cowardice, McMurphy bets the other patients that he can lift the control panel in the tub room. Knowing that it is impossible, McMurphy still attempts this feat. When he fails, he tells the other patients that "at least [he] tried". These simple words evoke a sense of shame within all the patients and they realize that, without trying, they will never know if they can make a difference. In the next meeting, the patients decide to take a stand against the nurse, and they vote to watch the World Series. At seeing the number of hands, the nurse is stunned and

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Example Scored Excellent (E)

thus makes the excuse that the Chronics have not voted and that it is a tie. Even when the Chief votes, she does not count his vote. This part of the novel, shows how the nurse is beginning to fear the overthrow of her power and she begins to see McMurphy as an actual threat to her authority. Also, it shows how McMurphy is slowly restoring confidence into the patients. When the time comes for the World Series, and the nurse does not put it on, McMurphy has all the patients sit down in front of a blank television screen and pretend to be watching the game. This act finally sets off the nurse, and all of the patients in the ward witness the calmness and poise of the nurse disappear for the first time. McMurphy's ambition to create disarray, in a place of perfect order, is finally complete. He creates the turmoil that he had set out to create, and he finds pleasure in this. However, his desire to create havoc soon vanishes, and he begins to develop another, more significant ambition.

McMurphy quickly goes from being a disorderly individual, to a man who matures and develops an ambition to create an actual and meaningful change in the ward. When the patients go for a swim, and McMurphy learns that he is committed in the hospital and cannot leave until the nurse says that he can, he becomes despaired and withdraws from the rest of the patients in an attempt to lessen the time that he will be required to stay in there. However, when Cheswick commits suicide, McMurphy is given a wake up call. He learns that, even though the rest of the patients are voluntary, they cannot leave the hospital because they have become so emasculated and dependant, that they do not have the courage to leave. It is at this point that McMurphy's ambitions change. He realizes that, in order to help the others in the ward, he will have to risk lengthening his stay at the hospital. Even with this threat hanging in the air, McMurphy does not hesitate to help the patients realize their true potential. McMurphy first sets out to prove to the other patients that Nurse Ratched is just another human, and that she too can be broken. By

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continuously breaking the nurse's window to her station, McMurphy is symbolically breaking the nurse's authority and control. This act helps to strengthen the men into thinking that they are strong enough to stand up to the power of the nurse. McMurphy also decides to help Chief Bromden realize his true potential. In his own eyes, the Chief views himself as small and irrelevant. In truth, the Chief is a tall and wide man, stronger than almost any man that McMurphy has ever encountered. The Chief believes in a "Combine", a group of people who control all others. He believes that the Combine puts people that are "defective", like himself, into places like the hospital so that they can become "fixed". Also, the Chief believes in a fog that covers all of the patients. This fog is a retreat for the Chief, although he is the only one that can see it. With the arrival of McMurphy, the fog seems to slowly disappear and the Chief can see more clearly. McMurphy promises the Chief that he will help him to feel "big" again, so that he can one day lift the heavy control panel in the tub room. When McMurphy is finally given an accompanied leave from the hospital, to take the patients fishing, he views this as an opportunity to re-emasculate the men of the ward. On the trip, McMurphy shows the men how they can use their mental disabilities against others, like the man at the gas pump. When the men stand up to the man at the gas pump, they feel as if they are not cowards like they were in the hospital. Nonetheless, the patients seem to be unable to stand up the men at the dock that are hollering at Candy. Out at sea, McMurphy does not help the men when they yell for his assistance at catching the fish, so when the patients single-handedly catch large fish out at sea, they feel like true men. Back at the hospital, McMurphy continues to help the patients regain their courage and hope. During one night, McMurphy sneaks two girls into the ward by bribing the watchman. That night, all of the patients drink and enjoy themselves without the threat of the nurse to loom over them. To help Billy Bibbit feel more like a man, McMurphy puts him into a room with

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Example Scored Excellent (E)

Candy so that she can take his virginity. Although having intentions to leave that night, McMurphy ends up sleeping too late and wakes up the next morning to complete and utter chaos. The Nurse, having seen Billy in bed with a woman, threatens to tell his mother about it. Billy, who is still babied by his mother, cannot take the thought of her finding out. Fearing the disappointment of facing his mother, Billy takes his life. At this point, McMurphy has the chance to escape the hospital, but he does not take it because he feels anger towards the nurse for causing the death of one of his friends. McMurphy, disregarding the possible consequences of his actions, attacks the nurse. Ripping open her shirt, all of the men are able to clearly see just how human the nurse really is. They see clearly for the first time, that the nurse is just another human being, and that she cannot truly control them.

McMurphy is absent for weeks when he is sent up to another ward to be punished for his actions, but the impact of his presence is not forgotten. Having their confidence restored, and feeling less feeble, many of the patients leave the ward and venture out into the real world. The patients who do stay, have seen the truth behind the nurse and so they no longer view her as an actual threat. Nurse Ratched becomes powerless against the other patients, and her authority is never regained. The Chief notices how there is "no more fog anyplace" and that everything is so much more vivid and real. When McMurphy returns to the ward, he is in a vegetable state after having lobotomy preformed on his brain. Chief Bromden cannot stand to see McMurphy in this condition and he realizes that McMurphy would not want to remain as "an example of what can happen if you buck the system". To put McMurphy out of his misery, the Chief takes McMurphy's life. With the help of McMurphy, the Chief feels as if he is "big" again, and so he has the power needed to lift the control panel and make his escape into the world.

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**Example Scored Excellent (E)**

**McMurphy stands as an example of how an individual's ambitions and goals can impact those around them to make changes to themselves. Although someone can start out being naive, and wish for things that are insignificant, if they are placed into a new environment, their ambitions can change and therefore impact others around them. When an individual strives to make a change in a place, they create lasting impressions on other people as well.**

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Thought and Understanding (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideas are insightful and carefully considered, demonstrating a comprehension of subtle distinctions in the literary text(s) and the topic.</li> <li>• Literary interpretations are perceptive and illuminating.</li> </ul>	<p>On the Initial Planning page, the student identifies that “McMurphy’s strong sense of ambition affects every last patient in the hospital. He shows a desire to overthrow Nurse Ratched’s matriarchy” (1). This premise forms the basis for the opening statement that, for individuals, ambitions “are the very factors that play an important role in shaping their identity and character” (3). The student shapes the topic and establishes the <b>insightful and carefully considered idea</b> that “these same factors have the potential to influence the minds and behaviors of many other individuals” (3). This over-arching idea is connected to a <b>perceptive and illuminating</b> analysis of R.P. McMurphy “who eventually becomes a symbol of resilience and determination” (3) and “stands as an example of how an individual’s ambitions and goals can impact those around them to make changes to themselves” (8).</p> <p>The student initially establishes a <b>carefully considered link</b> between the essay’s thesis and McMurphy by identifying his desire “to take control” (3) and his inherently “strong ambition to be in control of whatever environment he is placed in” (3). This ambition is further fuelled as he observes “the manipulative ways of the nurse” (3) and his conclusion that she “uses carefully calculated moves to turn everyone against each other” (4). The student’s <b>perceptive interpretation</b> of McMurphy is enhanced by recognizing how he “begins to develop another, more significant ambition” (5) as he moves from desiring control and needing to “create chaos” (4) to helping “the patients realize their true potential” (5).</p> <p>The student’s discussion of McMurphy’s evolving ambition gains nuance and depth through the parallel and ongoing discussion of Chief Bromden. As a result of McMurphy’s decision to help the Chief “realize his true potential” (6), the Chief “feels as if he is ‘big’ again, and so he has the power needed to lift the control panel and make his escape into the world” (7). This growth is effectively contrasted with the student’s observation that the patients who choose to remain in the hospital also “have seen the truth behind the nurse” (7), leaving her “powerless against the other patients, and her authority is never regained” (7). The student’s demonstrated ability to consider the evolving and shifting dynamic between characters, and McMurphy’s role in effecting needed change, demonstrates an awareness of <b>subtle distinctions in the literary text and topic</b>.</p>

**E**

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Supporting Evidence (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support is precise, and astutely chosen to reinforce the student’s ideas in a convincing way.</li> <li>• A valid connection to the student’s ideas is efficiently maintained.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">E</p>	<p>Utilizing a combination of effective paraphrasing of events with <b>astutely chosen precise details</b>, the student embeds <b>supporting evidence</b> into the analysis to <b>reinforce the ideas in a convincing way</b>. For example: “Although McMurphy jokes around and tries to make the patients laugh, he is unsuccessful and notices that ‘there’s something strange about a place where men won’t let loose and laugh’” (3), and “McMurphy decides that ‘the nurse ain’t some kinda monster’ but that rather, she is a ‘ball-cutter’ who emasculates the men in to ward in order to keep a strong hold on all the patients” (4), and “Out at sea, McMurphy does not help the men when they yell for his assistance at catching the fish, so when the patients single-handedly catch large fish out at sea, they feel like true men” (6).</p> <p>Throughout the essay, the student weaves together thought and understanding with supporting evidence to create a <b>valid connection that is efficiently maintained</b> and integrated. For example: “Unfortunately, when McMurphy requests that the schedule be changed so that patients could watch the World Series on the television, no other patient has the courage to stand up to the nurse and support McMurphy. To help the other patients realize their cowardice, McMurphy bets the other patients that he can lift the control panel in the tub room. Knowing that it is impossible, McMurphy still attempts this feat” (4) and “By continuously breaking the nurse’s window to her station, McMurphy is symbolically breaking the nurse’s authority and control” (5, 6).</p> <p>This essay features <b>astutely chosen</b> details that in less able hands often degenerates into plot summary, but in this case, the student forges direct and meaningful connections between <b>precise support</b> and the thematic ideas being explored. For example, after explaining McMurphy’s bet with the men, the student <b>efficiently maintains a valid connection</b> to the central ideas by suggesting that “By making this bet, the readers are shown yet another ambition of McMurphy’s: the desire to create chaos” (4), and when McMurphy says “‘at least I tried’” (4) after failing to lift the control panel, the student observes: “These simple words evoke a sense of shame within all the patients” (4).</p> <p>Moreover, the student’s discussion of details relating to multiple characters, such as how “Chief Bromden cannot stand to see McMurphy in this condition and he realizes that McMurphy would not want to remain as ‘an example of what can happen if you buck the system’” (7), <b>reinforce the student’s ideas in a convincing way</b>.</p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Form and Structure (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A judicious arrangement of ideas and details contributes to a fluent discussion that is developed skillfully.</li> <li>• The unifying effect or controlling idea is effectively sustained and integrated.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">E</p>	<p>The student effectively establishes a <b>fluent and skillfully developed discussion</b> with the central focus on R.P. McMurphy who demonstrates how “an individual can start off with an insignificant and meaningless purpose, but then become so altered by the environment that they are placed in that they establish ambitions and aspirations that radically impact both themselves and others around them” (3). Utilizing a simple chronological ordering of events, the student <b>judiciously arranges ideas and details</b> in order to <b>sustain and integrate</b> the thesis through an analysis of the evolution of McMurphy’s character. McMurphy begins as someone who first “exhibits an arrogant and egotistical presence” (3) upon arrival at the hospital who undergoes a significant change “from being a disorderly individual, to a man who matures and develops an ambition to create an actual and meaningful change in the ward” (5).</p> <p>In addition to illustrating McMurphy’s character change, the student also <b>sustains and integrates</b> a parallel discussion of Chief Bromden, who initially describes “McMurphy to be different from all the other patients” (3). Bromden’s belief “in a fog that covers all of the patients” (6) is dissipated because of McMurphy’s ambition. As a result of McMurphy “disregarding the possible consequences” (7) and attacking the nurse, “The Chief notices how there is ‘no more fog anyplace’ and that everything is so much more vivid and real” (7). The student’s ability to <b>integrate</b> parallel discussions of McMurphy and Bromden, culminating in the realization that “When an individual strives to make a change in a place, they create lasting impressions on other people as well” (8), results in a <b>unifying effect that is effectively sustained and integrated</b>.</p>

**English Language Arts 30–1, January 2012  
Critical/Analytical Response to Literary Texts Assignment**

**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Choice (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diction is precise.</li> <li>• Syntactic structures are effective and sometimes polished.</li> <li>• Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a skillful composition with a convincing voice.</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>E</b></p>	<p>Although the overall tone may be described as somewhat matter-of-fact, the student utilizes <b>precise diction</b> throughout the essay. McMurphy is variously characterized as “a symbol of resilience and determination” (3), exhibiting “an arrogant and egotistical presence” (3) who accomplishes “small victories” (4) in his “ambition to create disarray, in a place of perfect order” (5). By contrast, the student describes Nurse Ratched as having “manipulative ways” (3) and “carefully calculated moves” (4) while she “emasculates the men in the ward” (4) without losing her “cool composure” (4).</p> <p><b>Syntactic structures are effective and sometimes polished.</b> The student is confident in the use of inversion and participial construction: “To help the other patients realize their cowardice, McMurphy bets the other patients that he can lift the control panel in the tub room. Knowing that it is impossible, McMurphy still attempts this feat” (4) and “At seeing the number of hands, the nurse is stunned and thus makes the excuse that the Chronics have not voted and that it is a tie. Even when the Chief votes, she does not count his vote” (4, 5).</p> <p>In addition to the <b>polished</b> choices in <b>syntactic structures</b>, the student <b>skillfully</b> maintains fluency through paraphrase and analysis: “With this new found knowledge, McMurphy makes a bet that he can make the nurse loose her cool composure in one week. By making this bet, the readers are shown yet another ambition of McMurphy’s: the desire to create chaos. McMurphy begins by asking for simple things, such as toothpaste in the washroom and lowering the music in the dayroom; however, by asking for these, McMurphy slowly begins to fracture the hard self-control that the nurse possesses” (4). By employing such variety, the student is able to guide the reader through the analysis, resulting in the <b>creation of a skillful composition with a convincing voice.</b></p>

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**EXAMPLE PAPER—EXCELLENT**

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE
<p><b>Matters of Correctness (E)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This writing demonstrates confidence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</li> <li>• The relative absence of error is impressive considering the complexity of the response and the circumstances.</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>E</b></p>	<p>The student <b>demonstrates confidence in control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar and mechanics</b>. For example: “During one of the meetings with Nurse Ratched and the other patients, McMurphy observes the manipulative ways of the nurse and how she seems to instigate the other patients into turning against one another” (3, 4), and “When the time comes for the World Series, and the nurse does not put it on, McMurphy has all the patients sit down in front of a blank television screen and pretend to be watching the game” (5), and “At this point, McMurphy has the chance to escape the hospital, but he does not take it because he feels anger towards the nurse for causing the death of one of his friends” (7).</p> <p>Minor errors, such as “loose” (4), “becomes despaired” (5) and “re-emasculate” (6) do not detract from the quality of the essay nor the ability to read it with ease. Hence, <b>the relative absence of error is impressive considering the complexity of the response and the circumstances</b>.</p>