

## **Helping students begin to improve their writing.**

One of the best means to help students with their writing is for them to spend time analyzing good student essays from past exams. When students take the time to examine closely what their peers have written in the past, they can begin to recognize what it takes to compose a good rough draft. As teachers, we need to consistently remind students that the AP teachers and college professors who score the exam in the summer are fully aware that the essay in front of them is just that—a rough draft.

This packet contains student examples ranging in scores from a 5 to several 9s. While we certainly cannot expect our students to all write 9s, we need them to see what excellent writing actually looks like. Each sample is presented in a two column format. The left hand column is the essay written by the student; the right hand column contains a few comments that identify student successes and student weaknesses. Teachers can also encourage the students to note additional examples of good writing.

The poetry and prose questions also contain the prompt and the entire selection to facilitate comparing the student answer to both the question and the selection. The two open-ended questions just have the prompt.

Following the student samples are samples of good writing taken from *Steering the Craft: A Twenty-first Century Guide to Sailing the Sea of Story* by Ursula Le Guin. Each of these short selections give students the opportunity to examine in depth the outstanding writing of various authors. The different selections showcase different styles of writing and how each approach makes the writing more interesting. The brief introduction that Le Guin gives to each selection assists the students in completing a brief analysis of each selection. Hopefully, these will also help the students determine methods and approaches that will help them make their own writing more appealing.

**1993 Poem: "The Centaur" (May Swenson)**

Prompt: Read the following poem carefully. Then write an essay in which you discuss how such elements as language, imagery, structure, and point of view convey meaning in the poem.

*The Centaur* by May Swenson

<p>The summer that I was ten-- Can it be there was only one summer that I was ten?</p> <p>It must have been a long one then-- each day I'd go out to choose a fresh horse from my stable</p> <p>which was a willow grove down by the old canal. I'd go on my two bare feet.</p> <p>But when, with my brother's jack-knife, I had cut me a long limber horse with a good thick knob for a head,</p> <p>and peeled him slick and clean except a few leaves for the tail, and cinched my brother's belt</p> <p>trot along in the lovely dust that talcumed over his hoofs, hiding my toes, and turning</p> <p>his feet to swift half-moons. The willow knob with the strap jouncing between my thighs</p> <p>was the pommel and yet the poll of my nickering pony's head. My head and my neck were mine,</p> <p>yet they were shaped like a horse. My hair flopped to the side like the mane of a horse in the wind.</p> <p>My forelock swung in my eyes, my neck arched and I snorted. I shied and skittered and reared, stopped and raised my knees,</p>	<p>pawed at the ground and quivered. My teeth bared as we wheeled.</p> <p>and swished through the dust again. I was the horse and the rider, and the leather I slapped to his rump</p> <p>spanked my own behind. Doubled, my two hoofs beat a gallop along the bank,</p> <p>the wind twanged in my mane, my mouth squared to the bit. And yet I sat on my steed</p> <p>quiet, negligent riding, my toes standing the stirrups, my thighs hugging his ribs.</p> <p>At a walk we drew up to the porch. I tethered him to a paling. Dismounting, I smoothed my skirt</p> <p>and entered the dusky hall. My feet on the clean linoleum left ghostly toes in the hall.</p> <p>Where have you been? Said my mother. Been riding, I said from the sink, and filled me a glass of water.</p> <p>What's that in your pocket? she said. Just my knife. It weighted my pocket and stretched my dress awry.</p> <p>Go tie back your hair, said my mother, and Why is your mouth all green? Rob Roy, he pulled some clover as we crossed the field, I told her.</p>
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## Score 8

<p>Within May Swenson's "The Centaur," there is a social message conveyed through the games of a young girl. <b>The language and imagery employed</b> by the poet is intricately woven with an element of mystery and surprise to develop a strong statement about the power of women and their expectations in society.</p> <p>Indeed, a feeling of mystery and surprise is prevalent in this work. <b>First</b>, the poet's use of three-line stanzas plays a large role in this quality of the work. Lines 6 and 7 demonstrate this well: "A fresh horse from my stable / which was a willow grove." Here, Swenson leads the reader to believe that the child is really choosing a horse to ride, only to become aware that she is carving a play horse because the stable is really a grove from which to obtain lumber to make this toy. The poet uses this "surprise" technique later in the poem when she relays, "<b>Dismounting, I smoothed my skirt</b>" (L 51). Certainly, up until that point many readers' expected that the child was a boy. This becomes very important to this piece.</p> <p>Swenson is trying to break through conventional traditions. By surprising the reader, she expresses the attitudes of society. Moreover, she disagrees with these attitudes and would like to change them. One can observe the girl's comments to her mother: "Where have you been? said my mother / Been riding" (L 55–56). Swenson is not defensive nor does she make a "big deal" out of the child's activities. <b>Indeed, playing with knives</b> and pretending to be a "rough-rider" is completely normal to the girl, and should be for society.</p> <p>However, a much stronger statement exists in the work in addition to the seeming message "It's O.K. to be a Tom-Boy." <b>The metaphor comparing</b> the girl with a horse and making her one with the horse is extremely significant. Swenson maintain, "I was the horse and the rider" (L 38). <b>A horse is a very</b> strong and powerful animal respected throughout literature for its strength and capacity to work. By making this comparison with the girl, the poet assigns these same attributes to women, hence, making a powerful statement</p>	<p>The writer is choosing to focus on the use of the techniques of language and imagery in the poem. Notice the original slant regarding the element of surprise. The sentence indicates the direction the essay will take, though it does not clarify what the "strong statement" is.</p> <p>Though the writer does not use the word "structure" (one of the techniques in the essay prompt), the discussion here relates to structure. There is a tentative attempt to discuss three-line stanzas; too bad the writer did not tie this in more explicitly with the idea of an unconventional approach.</p> <p>This is the second time that the writer has selected an effective quote to show how, at key points throughout the poem, Swenson surprises the reader. This discussion is still tied to structure.</p> <p>This is the first clarification of the "statement" that the writer believes Swenson is making about "the power of women and their expectations in society" (first paragraph). The previous sentences in this paragraph lead effectively to this key statement of theme by showing the contrasting viewpoints held by the girl and her mother, who represents "society" to this writer.</p> <p>Here, the writer begins to tie imagery to meaning by selecting the central metaphor of the poem, that of a horse=a rider=a young girl.</p> <p>The writer uses the allusion to a centaur, but broadens it to include the strong image of horses throughout literature, thus effectively supporting the essay's theme that Swenson has written a poem about the power and strength of women.</p>
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<p>about the females' abilities and expectations.</p> <p>In addition to the power conveyed through this horse metaphor, is Swenson's <b>wish for freedom</b>. She describes herself as, "the wind twanged in my mane" (L 43). These flowing images of the wind indicate freedom—the desire to fly away. However, following this is, "My mouth squared to the bit" (L. 44). The idea of the bit indicates confinement of this powerful female spirit. One imagines the horse who would love to run wild, but is kept by his master to ride and work as he is directed. This feeling is carried out further by the poet at the end of this poem.</p> <p><b>In the end</b>, the mother wants her daughter to "tie her hair back"—to conform to society's expectations of what a little girl should act like. Clearly, the girl's nature is not like this and "The Centaur" shows this repeatedly. <b>There is some</b> hope offered, however, in the use of the word clover: "Rob Roy, he pulled some clover / as we crossed the field" (L 63–64). The clover seems to indicate luck as in a four-leafed clover. It seems that with some luck and perseverance like Swenson's, women will cross that field into an acceptance of their true powerful nature and role in the world.</p>	<p>Here is yet another aspect to the analysis of meaning in the poem, the desire for freedom. The writer proceeds to elaborate on this idea by effectively selecting contrasting images—the wind and the bit—to show the tension between restraint and freedom in the poem.</p> <p>This is an effective sentence. It emphasizes the chronological organization begun in the second paragraph, in which the writer tied meaning to structure. Also, it integrates a compelling line from the poem with the essay's own interpretation of meaning in "The Centaur."</p> <p>The writer reaches for this interpretation about clover, perhaps, but uses it nicely to lead into a strong conclusion.</p>
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## Score 6

<p><b>The poem "The Centaur"</b>, by May Swenson is a narrative poem told through the eyes of a woman looking back to her childhood. Swenson uses such elements as language, imagery, structure, and point of view to aid in conveying the message of the poem.</p> <p>The figurative and literal language of the poem shows and describes a ten year old girl playing. Swenson uses the Greek mythological creature, the Centaur, as a symbol of the girl pretending to ride the horse. A centaur is half-man half-horse creature. It's neck and head is human while the body is that of a horse. <b>In describing the girl riding her Stick pony</b>, Swenson makes it seem as though the girl herself is a Centaur. In words and phrases like: "my hair flopped to</p>	<p>The introductory paragraph is spare and dutiful. However, it does accomplish two things: it manages to make an insightful observation about point of view in the poem and it restates the topic as a way of signaling the organization of the essay.</p> <p>The writer did read the poem's title and here makes a clear statement about the relationship of the centaur to the girl. The rest of the paragraph almost lists (not an effective way to incorporate</p>
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the side like the mane of a horse”, “I shied and skittered and reared”, and “my two hoofs beat a gallop along the bank. All of these add to the allusion Swenson makes to the Centaur.

**Swenson also uses** similes like “my head and neck were mine, yet they were shaped like a horse.” and also metaphors like “I was the horse and the rider” to help create the relationship between the child at play and the Centaur.

Swenson also uses imagery to help describe the girl at play. Swenson uses images to appeal to all one’s senses. She appeals to the sense of touch with lines like “peeled him slick and clean”, “spanked my own behind”, “the wind twanged in my mane”, “my feet on clean linoleum”, and “I smoothed my skirt. The poem appeals to the sense of taste when the girl tries to eat the clover. It also appeals to sight and the sense of hearing through such phrases as “a willow grove”, “up the grass bank to the path”, “my nickering pony’s head”, and “I shied and skittered and reared”. The images enable the reader to see the young girl at play.

Swenson also uses the structure and point of view to help convey the meaning of the poem. The poem is set up in stanzas of three lines each except for the last stanza which has four.

**The rhythm flows** from one stanza to the next and creates a light-hearted feeling. Also, the point of view is that of an adult reliving the summer when she was ten. It seems almost childlike in nature and creates the feelings a ten year old might feel when playing.

Swenson uses all of these elements to convey her timeless theme of the importance of one’s youth. **She shows us** the magic of youth and the importance of one’s imagination as children.

evidence) quotations from the poem to support the connection.

The writer’s central theme—that the poem is about a young girl at play—is clear by now. While this observation is correct, it is a rather superficial approach to theme. The rest of the paragraph (again) lists sensory details in an almost mechanical way. The writer has done a fine job of selecting these details but falls short in tying them to meaning.

At last, the writer comes through with an effective observation about play, light-heartedness, and an adult’s reliving the “summer when she was ten.” It is clear that the writer has grasped the feeling that the poem’s structure evokes.

Though this is a rather awkward sentence, it does capture the writer’s central point.

Score 9

**In the myths** of the Greeks, through their green Grecian fields roamed a creature called Centaur. It was both man and horse simultaneously. A beast with the head and torso of a human and the body of a horse. Two creatures existed as one in this being—and so it is in May Swenson’s whimsical poem, the tale of a girl who pretends she is a horse and becomes a horse in her mind.

Within the rhythmic, pounding syllables of this piece, all the imagination of a child is captured. A girl often is transformed into a horse; she is both horse and rider; she returns to herself. Swenson achieves a suspension of disbelief in her reader—just as when reading the mythology of the Greeks, one finds oneself believing in these supernatural transformations. A centaur cannot exist, yet while reading this poem we forget that mundane fact and believe that one can—we can even recall our own childhoods, perhaps memories of galloping and neighing and romping as ponies in the backyard. **Swenson achieves this** ascent into the reality of the imaginary and back again through her language, imagery, structure, and point of view.

Perhaps most basic to an understanding of the poem is its language. The words are not complex—they are simple, and stated in a matter-of-fact tone, much like a ten-year-old tomboyish girl would speak. The words are primarily referring to horses and to physical descriptions and feelings--in this way we identify with the physical manifestation of the horse in this girl. **The poem begins** with an older voice—“Can it be there was only one / summer that I was ten?”—a doubting voice of an adult. It immediately lapses into the voice and language of one much younger. She uses a tough voice—a don’t-mess-with-me voice, one of a child growing up in the country, where there is dirt and land and space, and her own resources for her entertainment. “I had cut me

This first sentence—and in fact the entire first paragraph—captures in content and tone the romance of the fantastical allusion. This opening reveals how close the writer is to the heart of Swenson’s meaning.

This is a topic sentence! Notice how much information and texture has led to this statement of purpose. Compare this introduction to the one in Score 6 Essay. Look in the rest of the essay for more references to transformation and movement.

Although the writer is dealing with language in this paragraph, notice the implicit reference to point of view in this discussion of voice. Then, still discussing language, the writer provides a sensitive characterization of the tough country girl.

a long limber horse” she says, adopting the rough language of a cowboy, a pioneer. In addition, she relates herself to her brother repeatedly, using his jack-knife and belt for her horse, trappings which girls would not have.

**The words used** are physical words—tactile, sometimes sensual, even sexual in connotation. The horse is “fresh,” a “long limber horse.” Alliteration is used to achieve a sense of liquidity. Then suddenly, the words: “good thick knob,” three words which create a density, an actual thickness in the throat when spoken. Again the words are physical: “peeled him,” “straddle and canter,” “talcumed.” Many “d” and “k” words are used, contributing to the headiness of the experience for this girl. She feels powerful, transformed beyond the everyday in this experience. Words such as “nickering” and “skittered,” “quivered,” “reared,” are all very tactile words to say, reminiscent of the heaviness of the horses clomping, click-clacking footsteps, and the thickness and parched feeling in one’s throat after riding.

**Many words are verbs**— “arched, snorted, wheeled, twanged,” a continual running list of verbs, all in the past, all heavy words with a sense of slow gracefulness about them—they aren’t perky words but very earthy, dirty, physical words just like the centaurs who were lumbering yet graceful beasts, somehow not quite beautiful enough because of their strange combination of men and beast. Through these physical words Swenson achieves the sense of a complete transformation of the girl into the horse—where once the “willow knob with the strap / [jounced] between my thighs” (a sexual connotation, relating to the sense of physical empowerment the girl feels) she later feels “my thighs hugging his ribs.” **She is actually riding** a horse now, yet she also is the horse— “The leather slapped to his rump / spanked my own behind” and “my hair flopped to the side /

Notice how effective this paragraph is in showing how certain words in the poem affect meaning and tone. The writer points out the “tactile” power of words to convey “liquidity,” “power,” “headiness,” “thickness,” and “parched feeling in one’s throat.” Not only does this writer understand the language of the poem, but he or she also has a versatile vocabulary to describe it.

The writer points out the vitality provided by the verbs.

Notice the effective integration of a general observation with several relevant quotes.

like the mane of a horse in the wind.”

The very physical imagery along with the sexual hints, add to the sense of transformation—parts of the body are referred to again and again such as feet, head, neck, thighs. Riding a horse has always been seen as a sensual image—here, the addition of phallic symbols such as a knife, a stick, add to this. This is a girl undergoing a physical transformation—a sensual experience perhaps altering her and taking her away from her own world.

**The rhythm of the lines** is steady, like the gait of a horse—it is only in the end that rhyme occurs with the last two lines, a rhyming couplet. This is where the experience of this girl as a horse culminates—she tells her mother that her mouth is green because the horse stopped to eat some clover. Although she is now a small girl again, she still retains this sense of herself as animal, as one who identifies with the horse.

**Perhaps to this girl** she will always have the horse within her, always be both things—girl and horse, horse and rider simultaneously. For the wonderful, but serious, extent of this poem we are allowed to experience it with her thanks to Swenson’s use of language, imagery, structure and point of view.

Here the writer effectively deals with structure by tying the form of the poem to the movement, then stillness, of the “horse” and to the culmination of the child’s active fantasy.

the sentences here become awkward (the writer obviously has run out of time, with so much still to say); yet the writer manages at once to provide two more fresh thoughts evoked by the poem, to form them as a conclusion, and to echo the fervor so obvious in the poem.



1996

The College Board Advanced Placement  
Examination ENGLISH LITERATURE AND  
COMPOSITION

SECTION II Total

time—2 hours

Question 1 (Suggested time—40 minutes. This

question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

Read the following passage from Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel *The House of the Seven Gables*. Then write a careful analysis of how the narrator reveals the character of Judge Pyncheon. You may emphasize whichever devices (e.g., tone, selection of detail, syntax, point of view) you find most significant.

To apply this train of remark somewhat more closely to Judge Pyncheon! We might say (without, in the least, imputing crime to a personage of his eminent respectability) that there was enough of splendid rubbish in his life to cover up and paralyze a more active arid subtle conscience than the Judge was ever troubled with. The purity of his judicial character, while on the bench; the faithfulness of his public service in subsequent capacities; his devotedness to his party, and the rigid consistency with which he had adhered to its principles, or, at all events, kept pace with its organized movements; his remarkable zeal as president of a Bible society; his unimpeachable integrity as treasurer of a Widow's and Orphan's fund; his benefits to horticulture, by producing two much-esteemed varieties of the pear, and to agriculture, through the agency of the famous Pyncheon-bull; the cleanliness of his moral deportment, for a great many years past; the severity with which he had frowned upon, and finally cast off, an expensive and dissipated son, delaying forgiveness until within the final quarter of an hour of the young man's life; his prayers at morning and eventide, and graces at mealtime; his efforts in furtherance of the temperance-cause; his confining himself, since the last attack of the gout, to five diurnal glasses of old Sherry wine; the snowy whiteness of his linen, the polish of his boots, the handsomeness of his gold-headed cane, the square and roomy fashion of his coat, and the fineness of its material, and, in general, the studied propriety of his dress and equipment; the scrupulousness with which he paid public notice, in the street, by a bow, a lifting of the hat, a nod, or a motion of the hand, to all and sundry his acquaintances, rich or poor; the smile of broad benevolence wherewith he made it a point to gladden the whole world; — what room could possibly be found for darker traits, in a portrait made up of lineaments like these! This proper face was what he beheld in the looking-glass. This admirably arranged life was what he was conscious of,

in the progress of every day. Then, might not he claim to be its result and sum, and say to himself and the community—"Behold Judge Pyncheon, there"?

And, allowing that, many, many years ago, in his early and reckless youth, he had committed some one wrong act or that, even now, the inevitable force of circumstances should occasionally make him do one questionable deed, among a thousand praiseworthy, or, at least, blameless ones — would you characterize the Judge by that one necessary deed, and that half-forgotten act, and let it overshadow the fair aspect of a lifetime! What is there so ponderous in evil, that a thumb's bigness of it should outweigh the mass of things not evil, which were heaped into the other scale! This scale and balance system is a favorite one with people of Judge Pyncheon's brotherhood. A hard, cold man, thus unfortunately situated, seldom or never looking inward, and resolutely taking his idea of himself from what purports to be his image, as reflected in the mirror of public opinion, can scarcely arrive at true self-knowledge, except through loss of property and reputation. Sickness will not always help him to it; not always the death-hour!

(1851)

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

## Score 9

<p><b>In this selected passage</b> Hawthorne paints a portrait of a man whose primary concern is this image and the way in which the public perceives him. Judge Pyncheon, attempts to create an image of himself as a man of “judicial character” and “unimpeachable integrity.” Though he is an active member of the community, his main flaw lies in his impetus for his involvement in the community. Hawthorne makes it apparent that Pyncheon’s reasons for doing good deeds are rooted in vanity and self-absorption rather than genuine altruism.</p> <p>A large portion of the passage is a <b>listing of Judge Pyncheon’s involvements and accomplishments</b>. Hawthorne introduces this list by saying “that there was enough splendid rubbish in his life to cover up and paralyze a more active and subtle conscience from the Judge was ever troubled with.” (line 4–6) The oxymoronic phrase “splendid rubbish” immediately raises doubts about the quality and sincerity of the list about to follow. Similarly, the joking tone of the second half of the sentence seems to make the comment about Pyncheon’s lack of conscience more poignant.</p> <p><b>The list itself enforces</b> the doubts raised in the preface sentence. The list begins with admirable positions held such as his position as a judge or party...such as, the items became more ridiculous. The reader might be able to ignore the mocking tone implied in the prepondesne of pressing modifiers because of the aetural ment of the position. However, it is nearly impossible to appreciate the “snowy whiteness of his linen, the polish of his boots,” and “the handsomeness of his gold-headed cane” (line 25–27) or to miss the inherent sarcasm and mocking in those lines.</p> <p><b>The rest of the passage brims</b> with images of appearance and reflection. “This proper face was what he beheld in the looking-glass” (line 36–37). These images underscore the depiction of the Judge Pyncheon <b>as man whos</b> primary concern is the opinion of others. This view of Judge Pyncheon</p>	<p>Powerful opening that immediately addresses what type of character the Judge is. Note that there is no explicit reference to tone as the primary method by which the narrator reveals the Judge’s character. However, the student cleverly illustrates such in the subsequent paragraphs</p> <p>Very effective discussion of this list. Student recognizes the sarcasm of the tone; recognizes the “oxymoronic” phrase.</p> <p>Student continues to work through the passage, using a chronological approach to examine in greater detail the tone of the passage and to note the “mocking” tone. Misspelling “perpondesne” does not detract from meaning or analysis. Student’s facility with language is quite clear. Very effectively integrates text to support claims.</p> <p>Use of the word “brims” reveals the student’s ability to selectively use diction to make a point.</p> <p>Clearly, in the context of this passage, this is a minor mechanical error that does not mar the</p>
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<p>which the reader has been formulating and piecing together through out the passage is finally confirmed by lines 54–59. Hawthorne goes so far as to suggest that only loss of property could cause such a man to look at himself honestly and without deception and that not even “sickness” or “death-hair” could trigger this type of self-analysis.</p> <p><b>Judge Pyncheon is concerned with rules and logic.</b> If I do this, then I should receive this, is his merblily. The images of scales evokes images of both the judicial system and God’s judgements. These two allusions contrast Pyncheon’s character and highlight his lack of genuine feelings of kindness and self-sacrifice.</p>	<p>superiority of the response overall.</p> <p>Very effective ending that amplifies, not merely restates, the commentary in the introduction. Very nice handling of the scale-of-balance allusion.</p>
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### Score 7

<p><b>In the passage</b> from <u>The House of Seven Gables</u>, by Nathaniel Hawthorne, the true character of Judge Pyncheon is gradually revealed through the artistic use of specialized details and foreshadowing syntax. Hawthorne creates the Judge as a man of impeccable morality but as the passage continues, a definite element of sarcasm and a comment on the hypocrisy of the Judge is presented. Judge Pyncheon is a man of “<b>purity...faithfulness...devotedness...</b>[and] unimpeachable integrity.” Hawthorne stresses his “<b>eminent respectability</b>” as a prominent figure of society. The Judge participates in a Bible Society, charities, the progress of horticulture and is firmly rooted in a political party. These qualities initially enhance the judge’s image for the reader. However, an excess of good works and moral purity becomes a sarcastic comment on the “arranged” portrait of the respected personage.</p> <p>In lines 6–11, Hawthorne employs <b>fragmented sentences</b> as an afterthought to the character forming. For example, “The purity of his judicial character, while on the bench...,” “his public service, in subsequent capacities...”, even the</p>	<p>Good focused opening. Student will organize essay around the devices of specific details and syntax. Tone will also be addressed, though not explicitly indicated (note comment about “element of sarcasm”). Meaning of “foreshadowing syntax” is not exactly clear; however, student definitely understands task.</p> <p>Evidence of how the Judge appears initially. Good supporting details. Again, the evidence quoted from the text to support this reading is very appropriate.</p> <p>The characterization of lines 6–11 as fragmented sentences is not correct. Note that these lines are all part of one complex sentence characterized by a series of parallel clauses. Student reveals good insight in making connection between this</p>
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<p>remark concerning his strict adherence to the principles of his party is followed by, “at all events [he] kept pace with its...movements.” The syntax of the first part of the passage foreshadows the character to be revealed after line 41. By building up the character of Judge Pyncheon in excess, Hawthorne allows the reader to recognize the actual characteristics of the man for himself. Line 20 begins the shift in <b>tone</b> at the dismissal of the Judge’s “expensive and dissipated son.” Judging his son for the same flaws that he exhibits, Judge Pyncheon is a hypocrite. Hawthorne supports this idea through the “handsomeness of his gold headed cane” and the “fineness” of his possessions. Even his work with the temperance movement is cancelled out by “five diurnal glasses of old Sherry wine.” <b>So, Hawthorne reveals</b> the power-hungry and trumped up image of the judge by subtly contradicting the arranged life the judge is so “conscious of.” By foreshadowing the “one necessary deed” throughout the passage, the reader may distinguish between the “thumb’s bigness” of evil and the reality of the misleading character the Judge has presented so far.</p>	<p>elaborate section and how its excess illustrates the Judge’s hypocrisy.</p> <p>Example cited is okay. The tone has been shifting even earlier. Note that the student has not examined that unfolding of tone as closely as he or she might have, despite being able to recognize that ultimately the narrator’s tone toward the Judge is highly sarcastic.</p> <p>The first sentence of this conclusion suffices by revealing a recognition of a change in the Judge’s characterization. However, the second sentence is not effective in conveying the point. The student has not fully understood that the “one necessary deed” is the same as the evil the size of a “thumb’s bigness.” Logic falters with concluding statement.</p>
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1996: The British novelist Fay Weldon offers this observation about happy endings.

“The writers, I do believe, who get the best and most lasting response from their readers are the writers who offer a happy ending through moral development. By a happy ending, I do not mean mere fortunate events—a marriage or a last minute rescue from death—but some kind of spiritual reassessment or moral reconciliation, even with the self, even at death.” Choose a novel or play that has the kind of ending Weldon describes. In a well-written essay, identify the “spiritual reassessment or moral reconciliation” evident in the ending and explain its significance in the work as a whole

### Score 9

<p>In Fyoda Dostoevsky’s Crime and Punishment, the main character Rodion Romanovitch Raskolinkov undergoes a “spiritual reassessment” and “moral reconciliation.” His <b>moral</b> and spiritual reconciliation in Siberia serve to break his isolation from society, brings him together with Sonia, and renew him as a</p>	<p>An insightful introduction to the essay.</p>
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<p>person who can <b>function in society</b>.</p> <p><b>After Roskolinkov</b> murders the pawnbroker and her sister, he feels isolated from society. He constantly reminds himself of his deed and how he will never be able to fit in. His confession and labor in Siberia (the sentence for his crime) however, break his isolation. He feels as though he is a new person, and can function without feeling isolated. <b>His redemption</b> is vital to him as a character, because he cannot function without acceptance into society. As a student Roskolinkov enjoyed the debate and human contact, and it became vital to his existence. The dual nature of Roskolinkov is characterized by his cold intellect, and his warm compassionate side. His crime isolates him and subsequently hurts his compassionate nature. His redemption restores him as a character by restoring his warm nature into society's contact.</p> <p><b>While in Siberia</b>, Sonia brings Roskolinkov a cross, symbolizing his spiritual restoration. Sonia, his original confidant to whom he entrusted the knowledge of his crime, was happy to receive him to her because of his reconciliation. Before confessing his crime, Roskolinkov felt isolated from her as well as society. Because he had fallen in love with her it was especially painful to be isolated from her. When he confesses his crime to her, she immediately accepts him to her because she is reconciled. <b>The strength he draws</b> from her acceptance of him prompts him to confess to society, that they may also accept him. Once more his dual personality was the critical driving force behind his actions. His compassionate nature was suffering from the separation from Sonia. The moral and spiritual reconciliation that stem from her influence are vital in sustaining Roskolinkov, and are then of major importance in the novel.</p> <p>The third major influence on the novel by his reconciliation, was of Roskolinkov as a crime</p>	<p>A good character analysis based on a particular instance.</p> <p>The writer clearly knows the novel well and is comfortable offering in-depth analysis of scenes in the work.</p> <p>A good discussion of a literary technique (symbolism).</p> <p>A grammatically flawed sentence that does not impede the flow of the essay. In an essay such as this, in which the writer has a clear facility with language, minor syntactical deviations are not considered problematic.</p>
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<p>boss who could fit into society. Inspector Porfirz, who knew Roskolinkov was the murderer, pushed him into confessing because he felt that Roskolinkov could be rehabilitated, and would be a very valuable member of society. This influence stems primarily from the intellectual side of Roskolinkov's dual nature. As the Hegelion Super Hero in the novel, Roskolinkov was able to intellectually justify his crime to himself. His reconciliation had to not only include his compassionate nature, it had to extend to the intellectual level as well to correct this justification of the crime. With society's reception of Roskolinkov as one of them, he is accepted as an equal. As an equal, his intellectual assumptions of superiority (as an "extraordinary man") are shattered and he is completely renewed as a character. <b>This makes the "happy ending"</b> described by Weldon possible.</p> <p>Roskolinkov's redemption occurs when he confesses and serves his sentence. This moral and spiritual redemption has a weighty impact on the novel, because it changes the character of Roskolinkov, and renews him as an individual. <b>Roskolinkov's search for acceptance</b>, which is evident from the beginning of the novel up to his redemption, is finally satisfied. This allows the novel to conclude with the impression of a happy ending through moral development, which Fay Weldon says will "get the best and most lasting response from readers."</p>	<p>A specific explanation of how the essay relates to the essay prompt.</p> <p>A strong conclusion that relates well to the essay prompt.</p>
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**Score 6**

<p><b>In the novel</b> Moll Flanders by Daniel Defoe, Moll goes through a complete Christian experience in which she experiences a moral reconciliation that effects the remainder of her life. Moll's life is filled with traumatic events that cause her to resort to unrighteous actions. <b>She eventually realizes</b> the consequences and</p>	<p>A topic sentence that addresses the essay prompt adequately.</p> <p>An observation that needs to be backed with</p>
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<p>effects of her actions through a spiritual transformation.</p> <p>Throughout Moll's life, she struggles to achieve wealth and posterity. Even as a child, Moll refuses to do servant work and instead moves into a house of prominent, rich people. Every event or action that Moll makes is influenced by money. Moll marries many different men, all by deceit and corruption. She convinces them that she is wealthy only to fool them into supporting her. When Moll marries a rich man from Virginia she finally has everything she wants—money, prosperity, and respectability. <b>While in Virginia</b> she discovers that her husband is her brother and is forced to leave her perfect life. As Moll ages, it becomes increasingly more difficult to find a husband to support her. Due to her need to live affluently, Moll begins to steal from marketplaces and small children. Moll becomes very good at her trade but does not take responsibility for her actions. Moll claims that she is controlled by the devil who tempts her into her unlawful actions. To compensate for her actions, Moll claims necessity for she needs to live the life of a rich person. Finally Moll is caught and sentenced to the death penalty which she waits for in Newgate prison.</p> <p>While in prison, Moll begins to feel the first signs of remorse for her actions as she faces death. She is frequently visited by a priest who helps her see the error of her ways. Moll begins to realize that her actions held consequences, not only for herself, but for others as well. Moll decides to write a book to help others who may begin to stray into unlawful actions. <b>Moll no longer is</b> afraid of the death penalty, her only concern is the sins she has committed and the remorse she feels over them. She experiences a true Christian experience and travels from the acts of the devil to the hands of God where she prays for forgiveness.</p> <p><b>After prison</b>, Moll moves back to a plantation</p>	<p>specific references to the text.</p> <p>Summary; the writer needs to discuss the significance of what is mentioned in much greater detail.</p> <p>Again, this sentence offers some evidence of how Moll experienced a "spiritual reassessment," but it needs to be explored in much greater detail to be effective.</p> <p>A competent, though rather plodding sentence; note how the sentences in this essay do not</p>
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<p>in Virginia with a new husband whom she truly loves and cares about. Her narrow escape from prison is due only to her extreme repentance for her sins. While in Virginia, Moll only wants to live happily and to reconcile her differences with the son she abandoned many years ago. Moll is no longer concerned with becoming rich and prosperous because she experiences a true spiritual reassessment while in jail.</p> <p>In the course of this novel, Moll undergoes a Christian experience where she constructs new morals and better comprehends the meaning of spirituality. <b>Throughout</b> her life Moll's main concern is money, but as she faces the death penalty, she begins to feel remorse and also to understand the true meaning of life.</p>	<p>contain serious grammatical flaws and yet do not offer much variety or syntactical challenge.</p> <p>A conclusion that would be much stronger if we were informed what the "true meaning of life" is in greater detail.</p>
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1997: Novels and plays often include scenes of weddings, funerals, parties, and other social occasions. Such scenes may reveal the values of the characters and the society in which they live. Select a novel or play that includes such a scene and, in a focused essay, discuss the contribution the scene makes to the meaning of the work as a whole. You may choose a work from the list below or another novel or play of literary merit.

### Score 9

<p>Perhaps some of the most unforgettable descriptions and scenes in F. Scott Fitzgerald's <i>The Great Gatsby</i> occur at the great parties which Gatsby himself throws. By examining the parties, their invitees, host, happenings, and importance—the true significance of the work as a whole is revealed.</p> <p><b>It is at a party where Nick Carraway, Fitzgerald's narrator, first encounters Gatsby.</b> After watching from his home as others journeyed to the gallant affairs held by the mysterious Gatsby, Nick finally secures an invitation. With this invitation comes a sense of self-importance and pride to Nick. He feels accepted. At the party, many people are pictured in their best clothes, dancing, drinking, cavorting about and gossiping. Here, Fitzgerald is commenting upon the rash abandon of the high society. Nick only feels accepted once he has been invited to partake in this higher lifestyle, but once there, the scenes he describes bely the waste and futility of the entire situation. The party-goers have no deeper aspirations than to drink and socialize and be merry. Although seemingly grateful to Gatsby for this diversion, the attendees gossip about his past, making queries as to the legality of his past and present employment and connections. <b>Fitzgerald's strongest foray against the emptiness of the 1920's high life appears during this party scene.</b> These people are not glitzy, secure, powerful, and worthy of idolatry. They are superficial, worrying about how they appear to others both physically and socially. They are lacking in direction and ambition, making no attempts to better themselves or the world, to set and achieve goals--they are hollow men. And with this tasteless depiction of the parties, Fitzgerald sums up his feelings about 1920's society life as a whole, lending a melancholic and wasted feel</p>	<p>The writer here defines the particular social occasion.</p> <p>The author dexterously links the particular to the general here.</p>
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over the entirety of the novel. Also important about the party scene is its revelation about the two main characters—Nick and Gatsby. **Nick, in feeling so important and accepted once finally invited, reveals his own personal short comings, both as a person and narrator.** Throughout the book, acting as the narrator, Nick attempts to judge and compare those around him, concluding that most are unfeeling and worthless, and generally inferior to himself. His greedy acceptance of the invitation, his need to be one, to party, to belong, refutes his conclusions by portraying Nick as one of the great many he judges and for whom he holds contempt. Nick, too, goes to enjoy himself, to lose himself in socializing and scandal, making him no better than the others, and thus unveiling his lies as a narrator. How can his judgements be taken seriously if he does not recognize himself for being one of “them?” Gatsby, also, enters into the party scene, but Fitzgerald’s illustration of Gatsby is more complex. Although he throws these massive parties, he doesn’t do it for social standing amongst other party-goers. He doesn’t drink or act foolishly in their presence. **Gatsby’s goal is to reunite with his lost love.** He hopes that by throwing reputable parties she will come over and they will meet again. So Gatsby’s purpose is not as base as that of the others, but he is living in a dream. For in all the party scenes, he is never happy with the outcome, whether his love is present or not. He lives for an ideal, an unrealistic ideal, which becomes the basis of the novel.

Fitzgerald’s great party scenes in *The Great Gatsby* play a monumentally important role in the scope of his entire book. **It is there that he illustrates the waste and hollowness of society as a whole, that he discredits his narrator, and that he lays the foundation for the conflict of the rest of the book.** Gatsby wants to see his princess, but goes about it in a back words, unreliable manner, setting the tone for all of his further interactions with her, his dreams and hopes of a happy reunion once displayed in their futility and distance from reality. It is here, in these three aspects, that Fitzgerald makes the

An in-depth analysis of one character found in the scene.

A succinct explanation of Gatsby’s larger motivation.

Here the writer sums up the importance of the scene to the novel as a whole.

collapsal connection between the party scenes and the importance of his novel as a whole.

### Score 5

**In Shakespeare's Hamlet one scene is very important, Ophiliass funeral. This scene shows the values of characters there mental stability and the final breaking point for many of the people present. It finalizes Leartes thoughts on wheather to kill Hamlet, the depth of love Hamlet has for Ophilia is shown and the amount of grief each character feels.**

Hamlet returns from his trip full of him self beliving his has out wited the king by changing the letter Rosancratze and Gildenstern are carring. So they will be killed and not him. He finds a new grave being dug and to his horror discovers it is for the recently decosed Ophilia who has comited suicide. The final chink in Hamlets armor.

**The funeral procession arrives and Ophilia is placed in the grave, Leartes then gets in the grave with her and begins ranting and raving.** At this point it is quite clear he is not in a good mental condition, he is angry, depressed, and guilty. The only way for him to fix this is to kill Hamlet who is the reason for his siter and fathers death. Hamlet upsett by Leartes grief jumps in the grave and tries to make him stop raving. **Both are equally crazy with grief but showing it in different ways Hamlet dislikes Leartes open showing of grief, he prefers to silently brood.** And Leartes dislikes Hamlets presense let alone him telling him hoe to grive.

This sceen finalizes a lot of things. With Ophiliass death the last innocent was lost and the minds of three different men were made up and the inevitable end of death was decided. Leartes decides he will kill Hamlet and use the kings plan. Hamlet decides he must stop the king and the king is absolutly certain hamlet must be killed. **This also shows how the grief of one man drove so many to death and insanity. And so many innocent lives**

This introduction—though written in rather stilted sentences—does isolate one scene and attempt to explain its larger significance.

A run-on sentence that is characteristic of the mechanical flaws found throughout the paper. Persistent flaws such as this one can result in lowered scores.

A good observation marred by faulty syntax. While the idea here is good, it needs to be more fully developed.

These choppy sentences would demonstrate more language skill if they were combined.

<p><b>were lost and or ruthlessly disposed of.</b></p> <p><b>Greed is a suductress and will run a lot of lives and in the end leads to nothing but death. In the end almost everyone is dead and the funeral you know that is the only possible ending for the play. The innocent lives must be avenged as the destructers of innocents must be killed to attone for these lost and clean up the mess they made.</b></p>	<p>This conclusion attempts to relate the social occasion to a larger context, but it is very general and lacks depth. Scorers will note both what is done well (the attempt to respond to the essay prompt and relate the particular scene to the work as a whole), and what is done poorly (the lack of in-depth analysis) when they read this conclusion.</p>
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Each of the samples that follow are from Ursula Le Guin’s book *Steering the Craft: A Twenty-first Century Guide to Sailing the Sea of Story*. Teachers can use these examples from respected authors to model the process and guide students through analysis of them to independent analysis of other works.

In sample one by Rudyard Kipling, students should note the beauty of the sound of the words in the story. How does Kipling achieve the “Lively, well-paced, flowing, strong, beautiful” sound of prose that Le Guin mentions? Students could discuss how they can achieve a more “beautiful” sound in their own prose.

In sample two by Mark Twain, students should note the vocal quality of the writing. How does Twain attain a conversational quality in the writing? Students should be aware of Twain’s “incorrect” syntax which helps to create the conversational feeling.

Sample three by Virginia Woolf contains writing that is a bit more difficult for some students, but all students should note the variety of sentence length and rhythm changes which “flow” and interrupt the “flow” of the writing. How does this variety help us to better understand the message in the passage?

Sample four by Charles Dickens showcases his commanding use of repetition. Student writers (and even adult writers) are often guilty of the awkward repetition that Le Guin discusses at the beginning; students need practice experiencing repetition used well and correctly.

The last sample by J.R.R. Tolkien demonstrates a quiet change in the POV that gives us another facet of the great adventure that is beginning for the Hobbits.

“A good writer, like a good reader, has a mind’s ear. We mostly read prose in silence, but many readers have a keen inner ear that hears it. Dull, choppy, droning, jerky, feeble: these common criticisms of narrative are all faults in the sound of it. Lively, well-paced, flowing, strong, beautiful: these are all qualities of the sound of prose, and we rejoice in them as we read.”

... generations of kids know how nonsensically beautiful a story can sound. And there’s nothing in either nonsense or beauty that restricts it to children. Pg 2-3 K., Le Guin Ursula. *Steering the Craft: A Twenty-first Century Guide to Sailing the Sea of Story*. Boston New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015. Print.

From “*How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin*”

by Rudyard Kipling

ONCE upon a time, on an uninhabited island on the shores of the Red Sea, there lived a Parsee from whose hat the rays of the sun were reflected in more-than-oriental splendour. And the Parsee lived by the Red Sea with nothing but his hat and his knife and a cooking-stove of the kind that you must particularly never touch. And one day he took flour and water and currants and plums and sugar and things, and made himself one cake which was two feet across and three feet thick. It was indeed a Superior Comestible (that's magic), and he put it on the stove because he was allowed to cook on that stove, and he baked it and he baked it till it was all done brown and smelt most sentimental. But just as he was going to eat it there came down to the beach from the Altogether Uninhabited Interior one Rhinoceros with a horn on his nose, two piggy eyes, and few manners. In those days the Rhinoceros's skin fitted him quite tight. There were no wrinkles in it anywhere. He looked exactly like a Noah's Ark Rhinoceros, but of course much bigger. All the same, he had no manners then, and he has no manners now, and he never will have any manners. He said, 'How!' and the Parsee left that cake and climbed to the top of a palm tree with nothing on but his hat, from which the rays of the sun were always reflected in more-than-oriental splendour. And the Rhinoceros upset the oil-stove with his nose, and the cake rolled on the sand, and he spiked that cake on the horn of his nose, and he ate it, and he went away, waving his tail, to the desolate and Exclusively Uninhabited Interior which abuts on the islands of Mazanderan, Socotra, and the Promontories of the Larger Equinox.

**My Notes**

“Every sentence has a rhythm of its own, which is also part of the rhythm of the whole piece. Rhythm is what keeps the song going, the horse galloping, the story moving.

And the rhythm of prose depends very much—very prosaically—on the *length* of the sentences.” Pg. 23

“...an example of a very long sentence, consisting of short or fairly short subsentences strung together by semicolons, which catches the rhythm and even the voice quality of a person talking aloud—quietly....It’s calm, gentle, singsong. It flows as quiet as the river and as sure as the coming of day. The words are mostly short and simple. There’s a bit of syntax that the grammarians would call ‘incorrect’, which snags up and flows on just exactly like the snag and the water it describes.” Pg 28 K., Le Guin Ursula. *Steering the Craft: A Twenty-first Century Guide to Sailing the Sea of Story*. Boston New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015. Print.

from *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain

...then we set down on the sandy bottom where the water was about knee deep, and watched the daylight come. Not a sound anywheres—perfectly still—just like the whole world was asleep, only sometimes the bullfrogs a-cluttering, maybe. The first thing to see, looking away over the water, was a kind of dull line—that was the woods on t’other side; you couldn’t make nothing else out; then a pale place in the sky; then more paleness spreading around; then the river softened up away off, and warn’t black any more, but gray; you could see little dark spots drifting along ever so far away—trading scows, and such things; and long black streaks—rafts; sometimes you could hear a sweep screaming; or jumbled up voices, it was so still, and sounds come so far; and by and by you could see a streak on the water which you know by the look of the streak that there’s a snag there in a swift current which breaks on it and makes that streak look that way; and you see the mist curl up off of the water, and the east reddens up, and the river, and you make out a log-cabin in the edge of the woods, away on the bank on t’other side of the river, being a woodyard, likely, and piled by them cheats so you can throw a dog through it anywheres; then the nice breeze springs up, and comes fanning you from over there, so cool and fresh and sweet to smell on account of the woods and the flowers; but sometimes not that way, because they’ve left dead fish laying around, gars and such, and they do get pretty rank; and next you’ve got the full day, and everything smiling in the sun, and the song-birds just going it!

### My Notes

“In This passage listen to the variety of sentence length, the complexity of the syntax, including the use of parentheses, and the rhythm thus obtained, which flows and breaks, pauses, flows again—and then, in a one-word sentence, stops.” Pg 30

from "Time Passes" in *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf

Then indeed peace had come. Messages of peace breathed from the sea to the shore. Never to break its sleep any more, to lull it rather more deeply to rest, and whatever the dreamers dreamt holily, dreamt wisely, to confirm--what else was it murmuring--as Lily Briscoe laid her head on the pillow in the clean still room and heard the sea. Through the open window the voice of the beauty of the world came murmuring, too softly to hear exactly what it said--but what mattered if the meaning were plain? entreating the sleepers (the house was full again; Mrs. Beckwith was staying there, also Mr. Carmichael), if they would not actually come down to the beach itself at least to lift the blind and look out. They would see then night flowing down in purple; his head crowned; his sceptre jewelled; and how in his eyes a child might look. And if they still faltered (Lily was tired out with travelling and slept almost at once; but Mr. Carmichael read a book by candlelight), if they still said no, that it was vapour, this splendour of his, and the dew had more power than he, and they preferred sleeping; gently then without complaint, or argument, the voice would sing its song. Gently the waves would break (Lily heard them in her sleep); tenderly the light fell (it seemed to come through her eyelids). And it all looked, Mr. Carmichael thought, shutting his book, falling asleep, much as it used to look.

Indeed, the voice might resume, as the curtains of dark wrapped themselves over the house, over Mrs. Beckwith, Mr. Carmichael, and Lily Briscoe so that they lay with several folds of blackness on their eyes, why not accept this, be content with this, acquiesce and resign? The sigh of all the seas breaking in measure round the isles soothed them; the night wrapped them; nothing broke their sleep, until, the birds beginning and the dawn weaving their thin voices in to its whiteness, a cart grinding, a dog somewhere barking, the sun lifted the curtains, broke the veil on their eyes, and Lily Briscoe stirring in her sleep. She clutched at her blankets as a faller clutches at the turf on the edge of a cliff. Her eyes opened wide. Here she was again, she thought, sitting bolt upright in bed. Awake.

## My Notes

“Repetition is awkward when it happens too often, emphasizing a word for no reason: ‘He was studying in his study. The book he was studying was Plato.’...Everybody does it now and then. It’s easy to fix in revision by finding a synonym or a different phrasing: ‘He was in his study, reading Plato and making notes,’ or whatever.

But to make a rule never to use the same word twice in one paragraph, or to state flatly that repetition is to be avoided, is to go right against the nature of narrative prose. Repetition of words, of phrases, of images; repetition of things said; near-repetition of events; reflections, variations: from the grandmother telling a folktale to the most sophisticated novelist, all narrators use these devices, and the skillful use of them is a great part of the power of prose.” Pg.37 K., Le Guin Ursula. *Steering the Craft: A Twenty-first Century Guide to Sailing the Sea of Story*. Boston New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015

“... a glaringly bright scene sets the mood for a long, dark novel, a single word is repeated like a hammer blow” pg. 39

From <i>Little Dorrit</i> by Charles Dickens	My Notes
<p>Thirty years ago, Marseilles lay burning in the sun, one day.</p> <p>A blazing sun upon a fierce August day was no greater rarity in southern France then, than at any other time, before or since. Everything in Marseilles, and about Marseilles, had stared at the fervid sky, and been stared at in return, until a staring habit had become universal there. Strangers were stared out of countenance by staring white houses, staring white walls, staring white streets, staring tracts of arid road, staring hills from which verdure was burnt away. The only things to be seen not fixedly staring and glaring were the vines drooping under their load of grapes....</p> <p>The universal stare made the eyes ache. Towards the distant line of Italian coast, indeed, it was a little relieved by light clouds of mist, slowly rising from the evaporation of the sea, but it softened nowhere else. Far away the staring roads, deep in dust, stared from the hill-side, stared from the hollow, stared from the interminable plain. Far away the dusty vines overhanging wayside cottages, and the monotonous wayside avenues of parched trees without shade, drooped beneath the stare of earth and sky.</p>	



“...a bit from *The Lord of the Rings*, gives a charming glimpse of the range open to the involved author, who can drop into the POV of a passing fox. The fox ‘never found out any more about I,’ and we never find out any more about the fox; but there he is, alert and alive, all in one moment, watching for us the obscure beginning of a great adventure. Pg. 82

<p>from <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> by J.R.R. Tolkien</p> <p>I am so sleepy,’ he said, ‘that soon I shall fall down on the road. Are you going to sleep on your legs? It is nearly midnight.’</p> <p>‘I thought you liked walking in the dark,’ said Frodo. ‘But there is no great hurry. Merry expects us some time the day after tomorrow; but that leaves us nearly two days more. We’ll halt at the first likely spot.’</p> <p>‘The wind’s in the West,’ said Sam. ‘If we get to the other side of this hill, we shall find a spot that is sheltered and snug enough, sir. There is a dry fir-wood just ahead, if I remember rightly.’ Sam knew the land well within twenty miles of Hobbiton, but that was the limit of his geography.</p> <p>Just over the top of the hill they came on the patch of fir-wood. Leaving the road they went into the deep resin-scented darkness of the trees, and gathered dead sticks and cones to make a fire. Soon they had a merry crackle of flame at the foot of a large fir-tree and they sat round it for a while, until they began to nod. Then, each in an angle of the great tree’s roots, they curled up in their cloaks and blankets, and were soon fast asleep. They set no watch; even Frodo feared no danger yet, for they were still in the heart of the Shire. A few creatures came and looked at them when the fire had died away. A fox passing through the wood on business of his own stopped several minutes and sniffed.</p> <p>‘Hobbits!’ he thought. ‘Well, what next? I have heard of strange doings in this land, but I have seldom heard of a hobbit sleeping out of doors under a tree. Three of them! There’s something mighty queer behind this.’ He was quite right, but he never found out any more about it.</p>	<b>My Notes</b>
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