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# AP<sup>®</sup> English Literature and Composition

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

# DRAFT

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## ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

## SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

3 Questions

## Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In Richard Blanco’s poem “Shaving,” published in 1998, the speaker writes about the act of shaving. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Blanco uses literary elements and techniques to develop the speaker’s complex associations with the ritual of shaving.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

## Shaving

I am not shaving, I’m writing about it.  
 And I conjure the most elaborate idea—  
 how my beard is a creation of silent labor  
 like ocean steam rising to form clouds,  
 5 or the bloom of spiderwebs each morning;  
 the discrete mystery of how whiskers grow,  
 like the drink roses take from the vase,  
 or the fall of fresh rain, becoming  
 a river, and then rain again, so silently.  
 10 I think of all these slow and silent forces  
 and how quietly my father’s life passed us by.

I think of those mornings, when I *am* shaving,  
 and remember him in a masquerade of foam, then,  
 as if it was his beard I took the blade to,  
 15 the memory of him in tiny snips of black whiskers  
 swirling in the drain—dead pieces of the self  
 from the face that never taught me how to shave.

His legacy of whiskers that grow like black seeds  
 sown over my cheek and chin, my own flesh.

20 I am not shaving, but I will tell you about the  
 mornings  
 with a full beard and the blade in my hand,  
 when my eyes don’t recognize themselves  
 in a mirror echoed with a hundred faces  
 I have washed and shaved—it is in that split second,  
 25 when perhaps the roses drink and the clouds form,  
 when perhaps the spider spins and rain transforms,  
 that I most understand the invisibility of life  
 and the intensity of vanishing, like steam  
 at the slick edges of the mirror, without a trace.

“Shaving” from *City of a Hundred Fires* by Richard Blanco, © 1998. All rights are controlled by the University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, PA 15260. Used by permission of the University of Pittsburgh Press.

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**Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.**

**Question 1: Poetry Analysis****6 points**

In Richard Blanco’s poem “Shaving,” published in 1998, the speaker writes about the act of shaving. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Blanco uses literary elements and techniques to develop the speaker’s complex associations with the ritual of shaving.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p><b>Row A</b> <b>Thesis</b> <b>(0-1 points)</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b> For any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no defensible thesis.</li> <li>• The intended thesis only restates the prompt.</li> <li>• The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim.</li> <li>• There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 point</b> Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the poem.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>		
<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only restate the prompt.</li> <li>• Make a generalized comment about the poem that doesn't respond to the prompt.</li> <li>• Describe the poem or features of the poem rather than making a claim that requires a defense.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a defensible interpretation of the speaker's complex associations with the ritual of shaving.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Restate the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"The poet develops the complex associations with shaving through the use of several literary techniques."</i></li> <li>• <i>"In his poem 'Shaving,' published in 1998, Richard Blanco presents a speaker that writes about the act of shaving and his complex relationship with it."</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Do not relate to the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"The loss of a parent is a difficult one, something that many people have to deal with as they get older."</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Describe the poem or features of the poem</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Blanco's poem is made up of three stanzas that talk about shaving. He uses figurative language to convey many of his ideas."</i></li> </ul>		<p><b>Examples that earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Provide a defensible interpretation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"In the 1998 poem 'Shaving,' Richard Blanco employs the literary technique of stream of consciousness to show how the simple act of shaving inspires complex associations with the father he barely knew."</i></li> <li>• <i>"The poem links the speaker's daily ritual of shaving new growth to the cycles of regeneration in nature and then ultimately to his father, whom he starts to see reborn in himself."</i></li> <li>• <i>"Blanco uses vivid imagery and the presentation of the narrator's thoughts to reveal how the act of shaving connects the narrator to his father, who seems to have died young, which then reminds the narrator of his own mortality."</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity.</li> <li>• The thesis may be anywhere within the response.</li> <li>• For a thesis to be defensible, the poem must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>• The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>• A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.</li> </ul>		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
<p><b>Row B</b>  <b>Evidence</b>  <b>AND</b>  <b>Commentary</b>  <b>(0-4 points)</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b>                      Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b>  <b>EVIDENCE:</b>                      Provides evidence that is mostly general.   <b>AND</b>   <b>COMMENTARY:</b>                      Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student’s argument.</p>	<p><b>2 points</b>  <b>EVIDENCE:</b>                      Provides some specific, relevant evidence.   <b>AND</b>   <b>COMMENTARY:</b>                      Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.</p>	<p><b>3 points</b>  <b>EVIDENCE:</b>                      Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning.   <b>AND</b>   <b>COMMENTARY:</b>                      Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.   <b>AND</b>                      Explains how at least one literary element or technique in the poem contributes to its meaning.</p>	<p><b>4 points</b>  <b>EVIDENCE:</b>                      Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning.   <b>AND</b>   <b>COMMENTARY:</b>                      Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.   <b>AND</b>                      Explains how multiple literary elements or techniques in the poem contribute to its meaning.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>					
<p><b>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are incoherent or do not address the prompt.</li> <li>• May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 1 point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tend to focus on summary or description of a poem rather than specific details or techniques.</li> <li>• Mention literary elements, devices, or techniques with little or no explanation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities.</li> <li>• May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument.</li> <li>• May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim.</li> <li>• Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 3 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>• Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the poem to build an interpretation.</li> <li>• Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims.</li> <li>• Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>• Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the poem to build an interpretation.</li> <li>• Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.</li> <li>• Explain how the writer’s use of multiple literary techniques contributes to the student’s interpretation of the poem.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.</li> <li>• To earn the fourth point in this row, the response may observe multiple instances of the same literary element or technique if each instance further contributes to the meaning of the poem.</li> </ul>					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p>Row C Sophistication (0-1 points)</p>	<p><b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b> Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or develops a complex literary argument.</p>
	<p><b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b></p>	
	<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempt to contextualize their interpretation, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>Human experiences always include...</i>” OR “<i>In a world where...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time...</i>”).</li> <li>• Only hint at or suggest other possible interpretations (“<i>While another reader may see...</i>” OR “<i>Though the poem could be said to...</i>”).</li> <li>• Make a single statement about how an interpretation of the poem comments on something thematic without consistently maintaining that thematic interpretation.</li> <li>• Oversimplify complexities in the poem.</li> <li>• Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the student’s argument.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate a sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument by doing any of the following:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identifying and exploring complexities or tensions within the poem.</li> <li>2. Illuminating the student’s interpretation by situating it within a broader context.</li> <li>3. Accounting for alternative interpretations of the poem.</li> <li>4. Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.</li> </ul>		

Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In Richard Blanco's "Shaving," the elaborate use of similes and the idea of shaving itself as a metaphor for fatherly traces in the narrator's memories portrays that life is fragile and silently slips by, just like ~~the~~ the miniscule ~~growth~~ unperceivable growth of whiskers or a beard, and that while such changes are often overlooked, one instance in life can allow one to perceive such changes, as those are essential to the identity of an individual. In the beginning, the narrator starts out by comparing the formation of the beard to elaborate descriptions of "silent labor," "like ocean steam rising to form clouds; or the bloom of spiderwebs each morning." The simile comparing the growth of the beard to the imagery of ocean water rising serves to portray such growth of hair as unperceivable, yet can ~~to~~ create a large effect ~~in~~ in the long run, just like how the evaporation of water is unable to be seen with the naked eye, yet, it allows the formation of large perceivable clouds in the sky. The growth of hair, just like the ~~the~~ circulation of water from the ocean to the sky as the water itself changes phase, but does not change its molecular identity, is also a symbol ~~is~~ for the passage of time and the idea of aging and life. Even as the length of hair changes, the individual's identity stays the same. This idea of hair growth and the silent ~~but~~ change associated with time portrays the idea that life ~~and~~ continuously moves on and time continuously ticks, even if it is not perceivable to the narrator. The blooms of spiderwebs also serve a similar purpose as the ~~the~~ metaphor comparing spiderwebs as something that can bloom, like a flower, portrays the presence of life and vitality. Soon, however, the narrator shifts from this ethereal and calm perception of hair growth to the sudden ~~death~~ death of the father, ~~and~~.

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- **Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

The narrator recalls their father in a memory of which <sup>his father</sup> ~~he~~ was "in tiny snips of black whiskers swirling in the drain — dead pieces of the self from the face that never taught me how to shave." First, ~~the~~ the act of shaving acts as a symbol of combatting with the continual nature of time, as shaving cuts off the "silent" growth of hair, or the traces of the passage of time. By comparing the narrator's memories of their passed father with a sudden, jarring stop in hair growth, indicates the abruptness of the father's death. However, ironically, such death is caused by the ~~the~~ unperceivable passage of time again as the narrator seems to recall as if their father slipped away from life slowly and silently. ~~the passage~~. The black whiskers act as a reminder of the growth of hair, the passage of time, and the past, specifically as the act of shaving itself is imprinted in the narrator's mind as an activity closely associated to their father. Therefore, such act of shaving not only acts as a reminder of the father's death, but also of the impermanence of life and how even the slow growth of hair — like the <sup>slow</sup> progression of time — can be halted instantly, as for the father, because of his death, and for the son, the figurative stopping of time due to ~~the~~ the massive impact of his father's death on his individual identity and life.

~~The slow progression of time, the~~

In addition, shaving seems to act as an extended metaphor for the ability to reflect and "stop" <sup>one's perception of</sup> time as the act of cutting the growth of ~~the~~ hair momentarily changes the course of growth. As the narrator recalls, before shaving, his face contained a "full beard ... [as if his] eyes don't recognize themselves in a mirror echoed with a hundred faces."

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~~The usage of eyes~~ The usage of eyes and recognition acts as a synecdoche to portray the identity of the narrator itself, as eyes are typically associated with perception and perspective. The fact that the narrator is unable to recognize his own face acts as an indication that the beard, reminiscent of the passing of time, indicates that ~~the~~ such passing of time changes an individual drastically ~~at~~ over a long period. ~~However, as the poem returns back to the idea of~~ The fact that shaving, can, in a "split second" revert the narrator to ~~the~~ where "roses drink and clouds form" indicates the power of the act of shaving to seemingly stop the passage of time and allow the narrator to reflect on himself. In addition, ~~the fact that the poem repeats~~ the repetition of the same similes as stated in the beginning of the poem indicate that to the narrator, the act of shaving brings him back to the past, where everything seemed calm and tranquil. However, since this is also the present, the mention of such similes acts as an indication of the cyclical nature of life, as one ending leads to another beginning, and regardless of the events that occur in a lifetime that may alter an individual, time, and therefore life continues to progress. Hardships may ~~they~~ present themselves, but life goes on and the slow, silent works of time continuously changes an individual.

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In the poem "Shaving", Blanco presents natural symbols ~~and~~ ~~in order to~~ ~~illustrate~~ ~~how~~ ~~the~~ ~~speaker~~ ~~is~~ ~~independent~~ ~~yet~~ ~~he~~ ~~sees~~ ~~his~~ ~~father~~ ~~in~~ ~~himself~~ ~~ultimately~~ ~~illustrating~~ ~~that~~ ~~we~~ ~~people~~ ~~can~~ ~~never~~ ~~completely~~ ~~rid~~ ~~themselves~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~impact~~ ~~that~~ ~~others~~ ~~have~~ ~~had~~ ~~on~~ ~~them~~.

Blanco makes use of natural ~~symbols~~ <sup>symbols</sup> to explain that life is an endless cycle that is constantly occurring. On line 7 he describes how his beard silently grows as being similar to "the drink roses take from the vase" which is a metaphor for the speaker growing from his father. Just like the rose gains its strength from the water, the speaker's beard was passed on from his father's. This can be generalized into the fact that the speaker believes he is very similar to his dad in some ways since he used him to grow and become strong as the rose uses the water.

Blanco also discusses how rain "[becomes] a river," "then rain again" which is also a metaphor for how the speaker has part of his father in him. His father, the original rain, became a river with his death yet some of that river became rain again in the form of his son. Blanco mentions that both of these processes happen silently and continuously which relates to when he describes his father's

Page 2

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life as passing "quietly". Even if the speaker didn't want to be influenced by his father, or doesn't think he was, there is no way to avoid it since it is one of the "forces" of nature that is inevitable. Even though the speaker wants to be independent and live his own life, like the rose, he needs the water, his father, to help him grow into the person that he is.

Blanco also uses flashbacks to times that he was shaving to demonstrate that the speaker sees himself as independent, yet influenced by his father. He describes his beard as "his legacy... down over my cheek and chin, my own flesh". Even though the speaker recognizes that his father's legacy is imprinted on him he also feels that he has his own life and flesh. By shaving the speaker is destroying "the memory of him" but he can never stop the beard from growing back. The speaker says that he doesn't recognize himself before he shaves since he sees his father in himself. This allows him to see the "instability of life" since when he shaves it appears that his father's influence on him is gone but in reality it is still there. No matter how many times he shaves the beard will continue to grow back and remind the speaker of the influence

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

That his dad permanently had on him. ~~It~~ It doesn't matter how much a person tries to change, others will always impact and impact themselves on them.

By utilizing natural symbols and flashbacks Blanco is able to make his point that everyone in ~~our~~ <sup>people's</sup> lives has an impact on us whether ~~we~~ they like TV or not. It is a natural force and can't be avoided, just like how clouds will continue to rise and spiders will spin their webs.

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Question 1

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Question 3

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In "Shaving", a poem by Richard Blanco published in 1998, the speaker is contemplative about the natural aspect of his beard; compares his beard to natural processes, but is then reminded of his father's quiet passing, reminiscent of his father. Although slightly saddened by his father's death, he becomes understanding about how quickly things vanish right before us.

Instead of viewing his beard as an ordinary object, the speaker considers it "a creation of silent labor", which he then compares to "ocean steam rising to form clouds". This shows that the growth of hair is something that happens right before our eyes, but it is a process so quiet, we do not often realize it. This also establishes the theme of the poem, that things can occur and disappear without a moment's hesitation or single notice.

While contemplating processes that happen before us, yet we fail to notice, the speaker is reminded of his late father, whose "life passed us by". The speaker reveals that whenever he does shave, he "remembers him in a masquerade of foam". This shows that the speaker is reminiscent of his father, and only recently realizes how quickly his life passed before him. This also alludes to the speaker having the regret of not realizing how quickly good things can vanish.

The speaker, however, comes out enlightened, assenting that he "most understand(s) the invisibility of life", as well as "the intensity of vanishing". This shows that the speaker has

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

come to terms with the fact that things will eventually vanish, even right before him. This implies that the speaker has also come to terms with his father's passing.

In real life, things often come & go, often times so fast, we do not even notice. We should appreciate what we have now, otherwise we'll regret not doing so later.

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

There have been many works of literature that have taken a mundane thing and gave it a deep, thought-provoking meaning. One such work is Richard Blanco's poem "Shaving," wherein he takes the mundane act of shaving and transforms it into a meaningful reflection of family heritage. Utilizing a variety of different literary techniques and devices, including diction, imagery, and contrast, Blanco connects the mundane act of shaving to his family, and more specifically, his father.

The choice of diction in this poem gives it its atmosphere and overall tone. Usage of literary devices, such as alliteration or repetition further reinforces the development of the poem. Lines 4-7 serve as a great example of this (like ocean... so silently), as it provides a variety of different takes on the symbolism of something as ordinary as a man shaving his beard. The ~~contrast~~ such a contrast between the serene and the philosophical speaks to the author's capabilities of self-reflection.

Diction is not the only device used to convey the speaker's reflection on shaving; imagery plays a large part in the poem as well. Phrases such as "a mesquerme of foam" or "a mirror echoed with a hundred faces" convey how the speaker considers himself each time he reneges his beard. On the other hand, phrases such as "dead pieces of the soft" or

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"His legend of whiskers" ~~is~~ connects to speaks bear with his father.

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In Richard Blanco's poem "Shaving", Blanco uses literary elements and techniques such as ~~figurative~~ ~~metaphor~~ metaphor in order to show us how fast life passes and the changes that occurs without even realizing it. Sometimes, we focus too much on doing something that we don't even pay attention to the things that we have at the moment. Forgetting that one day we can lose it. Blanco demonstrates the use of the literary element called "metaphor" by stating: "how my beard is a creation of silent labor like ocean steam rising to form clouds, or the bloom of spiderwebs each morning; the discrete mystery of how whiskers grow, like the drink roses take from the vase, or the fall of fresh rain, becoming a river, and then rain again, so silently." This evidence reveals that things can change from one day to another, sometimes ~~for us~~ what we see as a normality can turn into something unusual or unexpected for you and many other people. Additionally, this evidence supports my statement because when you concentrate too much on your own things you don't care about other people business; what I mean by this is that when you are doing something that you really enjoy, you lose track of time and don't even have time to check on and ask about other people lives. Furthermore, the author also ~~illustrates~~ ~~the~~ ~~idea~~ ~~that~~ tries to convey that as life goes very fast and things can suddenly change we should really enjoy it by taking care of our loved ones before it's too late.

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## Question 1 - Poetry Analysis

**Sample Identifier: A**

**Score: 1-4-1**

### **A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This thorough and insightful essay offers cogent analysis of Richard Blanco’s depiction of the simple act of shaving in order to convey complex connections to life.
- The introduction of the response focuses on the fragility of life and presents the argument that Blanco’s depiction of shaving is a metaphor for that fragility. A defensible, thoughtful and complex interpretation is eloquently presented in the thesis: “In Richard Blanco’s ‘Shaving,’ the elaborate use of similes and the idea of shaving itself as a metaphor for fatherly traces in the narrator’s memories portrays that life is fragile and silently slips by, just like the miniscule unperceivable growth of whiskers on a beard, and that while such changes are often overlooked, one instance in life can allow one to perceive such changes, as those are essential to the identity of an individual.” This essay earned the thesis point in Row A.

### **B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 4**

- The line of reasoning focusing on the passage of time established in the introduction is developed and supported throughout the essay through the consideration of a wide range of specific evidence. In paragraph 2, the response examines Blanco’s use of figurative language and symbolism and offers insightful commentary on their significance. The essay argues that the water cycle is “a symbol for the passage of time and the idea of aging and life.” Later, the essay suggests that the metaphor of the spiderweb “portrays the presence of life and vitality.” The combination of apt evidence from the poem coupled with insightful commentary that explains how the different devices contribute to the meaning of the poem enhances the essay’s interpretation.
- In a close examination of the speaker’s memories of his father and “in tiny snips of black whiskers swirling in the drain,” the essay argues that the shaving is “a symbol of combatting with the continual nature of time” and that shaving “acts as a reminder of the father’s death, but also of the impermanence of life and how even the slow growth of hair--like the slow progression of time—can be halted instantly.” The commentary consistently connects the evidence from the poem back to the central argument.
- The essay further argues that Blanco’s description of shaving is an extended metaphor “for the ability to reflect and ‘stop’ one’s perception of time” and presents the use of eyes as synecdoche, “as eyes are typically associated with perception and perspective.” The essay also notes the connection between the figurative language in the first and third stanzas and comments, “The fact that shaving can, in a ‘split second’ revert the narrator to where ‘roses drink and clouds form’ indicates the power of the act of shaving to seemingly stop the passage of time and allow the narrator to reflect on him self.” This seamless incorporation of textual evidence and commentary strengthens the argument and clarifies the line of reasoning. This essay earned all 4 points in Row B.

### **C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 1**

- This essay earned the sophistication point thanks to its compelling analysis of the complexities and tensions within the poem: “The black whiskers act as a reminder of the growth of hair, the passage of time, and the past, specifically as the act of shaving itself is imprinted in the

narrator’s mind as an activity closely associated to their father.” Furthermore, the essay is written in a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.

**Sample Identifier: B**

**Score: 1-4-0**

**A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This solid essay carefully examines how Richard Blanco uses literary devices such as symbols and metaphors to convey complex associations with the ritual of shaving.
- The thesis presented in the introduction argues, “In the poem ‘Shaving,’ Blanco presents natural symbols and flashbacks in order to illustrate how the speaker is independent yet he sees his father in himself ultimately illustrating that people can never completely rid themselves of the impact that others have had on them.” This defensible thesis addresses the complexity of the poem by juxtaposing the independence of the speaker with the connection all people share. The essay earned the point in Row A.

**B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 4**

- The essay uses specific evidence and insightful commentary to develop a line of reasoning that focuses on the cyclical aspects of nature and human relationships. The essay explains how multiple literary elements contribute to the meaning of the poem. In paragraph 2, for example, the essay examines the “natural symbols” of roses: “the drink roses take from the vase’ which is a metaphor for the speaker growing from his father. The essay also explores the water imagery of the poem and posits that the connection between the rain and a river “is also a metaphor for how the speaker has part of his father in him. His father, the original rain, became a river with his death yet some of that river became rain again in the form of his son.” The paragraph concludes with the insightful comment, “Even though the speaker wants to be independent and live his own life, like the rose, he needs the water, his father, to help him grow into the person that he is.” This commentary reinforces the claim presented in the thesis.
- The duality of the speaker who “sees himself as independent, yet influenced by his father” is examined in paragraph 3. The essay considers Blanco’s use of flashbacks as another form of complexity found in the poem: “Even though the speaker recognizes that his father’s legacy is imprinted on him he also feels that he has his own life and flesh.” Through the commentary provided (“It doesn’t matter how much a person tries to change, others will always impact and imprint themselves on them.”), the student reinforces the argument. The essay earned 4 points in Row B.

**C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- While the essay offers clearly organized support of the thesis, it does not fully explore the complexities or tensions within the poem, situate the argument within a broader context, account for an alternative explanation, or employ a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive. It did not, therefore, earn the point in Row C.

**Sample Identifier: C**

**Score: 1-3-0**

**A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This essay analyzes how Richard Blanco develops some complex associations with the act of shaving in his poem “Shaving.”
- The introductory paragraph establishes a clear connection between nature and “the “natural aspect of the [the speaker’s] beard.” The thesis, “Although slightly saddened by his father’s death, he becomes understanding about how quickly things vanish right before us,” responds to the prompt with a defensible interpretation of the poem. The essay earned the point in Row A.

**B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 3**

- The line of reasoning established in the introduction focuses on the transient nature of life. The essay moves on to examine specific details from the poem, such as comparing “ocean steam rising to form clouds” with hair growth “that happens right before our eyes, but it is a process so quiet, we do not often realize it.” In paragraph 3, the essay focuses on the line, “remembers him in a masquerade of foam” and offers the commentary that “This also alludes to the speaker having the regret of not realizing how quickly good things can vanish.” While this evidence and commentary are apt, the essay fails to clearly connect all the evidence to the line of reasoning. For example, the connection between “processes that happen before us, yet we fail to notice” and the speaker’s late father is not adequately explained.
- While the essay makes implicit references to imagery and flashbacks, it does not directly address literary elements. The explanations of the imagery found in paragraphs 2 and 3 do, however, help to describe how this element contributes to the meaning of the poem. This essay earned 3 points in Row B.

**C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- This essay’s tendency to oversimplify (“This also establishes the theme of the poem, that things can occur & disappear” and “We should appreciate what we have now, otherwise we’ll regret not doing so later.”) resulted in the essay not earning the sophistication point in Row C.

**Sample Identifier: D**

**Score: 1-2-0**

**A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This essay considers how Richard Blanco develops meaning through the simple act of shaving.
- The essay’s thesis presented in the introduction is defensible and offers a clear path to analysis: “Utilizing a variety of different literary techniques and devices, including diction, imagery, and contrast, Blanco connects the mundane act of shaving to his family and more specifically his father.” This essay earned the point for thesis in Row A.

**B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 2**

- While this response offers some specific textual details and discusses some literary devices, it does not establish a line of reasoning. In paragraph 2, the essay claims “The choice of diction in this poem drives it’s atmosphere and overall tone.” The essay does not, however, describe the tone of the poem or connect tone and diction to the thesis. In paragraph 3, the essay considers the imagery of the poem but does not explain how the examples offered relate to the thesis. The

essay simply suggests that the imagery conveys “how the speaker considers himself each time he removes his beard.” Again, no connection is drawn between the imagery and a line of reasoning.

- Commentary is not fully developed or is generalized. For example, after pointing out the image in line 4, the commentary argues that a contrast between the description of shaving “and the philosophical speaks to the author’s capabilities of self reflection.” The final sentence of the response focuses on the phrases “dead pieces of the self” and “His legacy of whiskers,” but the only commentary is that these lines “connect the speaker’s beard with his father.” No explanation of how the connection is made is offered. This essay earned 2 points in Row B.

### **C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- Because the essay oversimplifies the complexities of the poem, the response does not meet the criteria for the sophistication point in Row C. The writing does not enhance the argument.

### **Sample Identifier: E**

**Score: 1-1-0**

#### **A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This essay attempts to explain how Richard Blanco’s poem “Shaving” develops complex associations with the act of shaving.
- A defensible thesis is presented in the first sentences of the essay: “In Richard Blanco’s poem ‘Shaving,’ Blanco uses literary elements and techniques such as metaphor in order to show us how fast life passes and the changes that occurs without even realizing it. Some times, we focus too much on doing something that we don’t even pay attention to the things that we have at the moment. Forgetting that one day we can loose it.” This essay earned the point in Row A.

#### **B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 1**

- The essay presents one piece of evidence which consists of lines 3-9 of the poem and states that “Blanco demonstrates the use of the literary element called ‘metaphor’ within these lines. The essay, however, goes on to cite six lines of the poem without articulating what the specific metaphor is or how it operates within the context of the poem. No line of reasoning is established, and the evidence offered is not clearly connected to the thesis.
- The commentary offered focuses on broader experiences than those described in the poem: “This evidence reveals that things can change from one day to another” and “when you concentrate too much on your own things you don’t care about other people business; what I mean by this is that when you are doing something that you really enjoy, you lose track of time.” This commentary does not explain how the evidence proffered supports the essay’s argument. This essay earned 1 point in Row B.

#### **C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- Because the response oversimplifies the complexities in the poem (“Furthermore, the author also tries to convey that as life goes very fast and things can suddenly change we should really enjoy it by taking care of our loved ones before it’s too late), the essay did not earn the sophistication point in Row C.

## Question 2

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

The following excerpt is from Linda Hogan’s novel *People of the Whale*, published in 2008. In this passage, the narrator describes two events that occur in a community: an infant’s birth shortly followed by an octopus’s walking out of the sea. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how the author uses literary elements and techniques to develop a complex characterization of the community.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

The infant Thomas W. Just was born on July 2, 1947, to much happiness and many pictures of his mother smiling down at him. It was the day just  
 Line before the octopus left the water, walked on all eight  
 5 legs across land and into Seal Cave. Sometimes young people made love in that cave. Sometimes boys escaped school and smoked cigarettes there.

But on this day, the day after Thomas was born, the octopus walked out of the sea and they watched it.  
 10 Every one of these ocean people stood back, amazed to see it walk, the eye of it looking at them, each one seen, as if each one were known in all their past, all their future. Its skin paled at the sight of men smoking cigarettes and women in their cardigans pulled tight,  
 15 with their dark windblown hair. One child stepped toward it as if to speak before his mother grabbed his arm and pulled him back to her, claiming him as a land dweller and no communicator or friend of any eight-legged sea creature.

None of them, not even the oldest, had ever seen an octopus do this and their people had lived there for thousands of years. It scared them into silence, then they talked about it. They knew it meant something. They didn’t know what. Four fishermen in dirty  
 20 clothes wanted to kill it and use it for fishing bait. “It’s only practical!” they argued. “It’s the best thing that could happen to us.” They could take it, undigested, out of the stomach of flounder and halibut and use it again. For days they talked about it. They  
 25 quarreled. They cried about how blessed they were. A few wild-haired men, afraid of its potent meaning, wanted to throw kerosene in the cave and burn it.

But one of the powerful women stepped up. She believed it had a purpose for going into the cave and  
 35 that the humans, a small group of lives beside a big

ocean, should leave it alone. Others agreed. Its purpose was a mystery. Or perhaps it was sick or going to give birth. It turned a shade of red as it reached the safety of the cave. And so the people  
 40 thought it was holy and they left gifts outside the entrance to the black rock cave. Some left sage and red cedar. Some offered shining things, glass smoothed by the sea, even their watches. As for the infant Thomas, his mother, whose own infancy was  
 45 fed on whale and seal fat, was one of those who thought it was a holy creature and its presence at the time of his birth granted to Thomas a special life. She came from Thomas’s birth at the place of the old people and stood before the entrance of the octopus  
 50 cave and held her kicking baby up to it, to be seen by it. “Here is my son. You knew his grandfather. Watch over him.” They were poor people. She had little to leave but the pearl she inherited from her father, Witka. She rolled it into the cave. She was convinced  
 55 the octopus would be the spirit-keeper of her son, because she thought like the old people used to think, that such helpers existed and they were benevolent spirits. An older man named Samuel left his silver ring at the entrance to the cave; it was his finest  
 60 possession. Not to have given something they cared about would have been no gift at all, so, following his example, others left sparkling glasses, pieces of gold, beads, all the shining things the octopus people love in their homes beneath water.

For the time it dwelt there, they brought offerings, even the first flowers of morning. The treasures built up like small middens.<sup>1</sup> Even the children didn’t take the treasures, although they did go look at them and marvel at what they found, until their mothers  
 70 grabbed them away. The younger children tasted them

and found them without flavor except the salt from the air.

75 Those who were afraid the octopus was created by magic or called into being by some force on land not benevolent kept an eye on how it stood in the back of the cave. But it sensed their emotions and formed itself to fit beneath a ledge. It could shape itself to fit into anything, a bottle, a basket. That was how they were caught in the old days, by baskets lowered into  
80 the water at night and lifted in the mornings, the creature inside it. Yet, that quality scared people who knew little about them, but had heard much about

shape-shifters and their deceits and witchery on humans, always with poor outcomes for the mortals.

85 Nevertheless, the mother of Thomas, in a plain white dress, took the baby Thomas daily across the sand to the cave when the tide was out.

<sup>1</sup> piles of odds and ends gathered by rodents

From *People of the Whale: A Novel* by Linda Hogan. Copyright © 2008 by Linda Hogan. Used by permission of W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

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**Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.**

**Question 2: Prose Fiction Analysis****6 points**

The following excerpt is from Linda Hogan’s novel *People of the Whale*, published in 2008. In this passage, the narrator describes two events that occur in a community: an infant’s birth shortly followed by an octopus’s walking out of the sea. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how the author uses literary elements and techniques to develop a complex characterization of the community.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.



Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p><b>Row A</b> <b>Thesis</b> <b>(0-1 points)</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b></p> <p>For any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no defensible thesis.</li> <li>• The intended thesis only restates the prompt.</li> <li>• The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim.</li> <li>• There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 point</b></p> <p>Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the passage.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>		
<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only restate the prompt.</li> <li>• Make a generalized comment about the passage that doesn't respond to the prompt.</li> <li>• Describe the passage or features of the passage rather than making a claim that requires a defense.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a defensible interpretation of the complex characterization of the community.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Restate the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“In this excerpt, the author depicts the community as complex through the use of various literary elements and techniques.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Do not respond to the prompt but make a generalized comment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“In many communities, people react in different ways to strange events.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Describe the passage or features of the passage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“This passage employs magic realism to illustrate its point.”</i></li> </ul>		<p><b>Examples that earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Provide a defensible interpretation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“The community in this passage is characterized by fear, practicality, and reverence for the unknown.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“While the community collectively considers the appearance of the octopus to be significant—despite being uncertain of its meaning—the mother of Thomas personally sees it as a specific response to the birth of her son.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“Through the use of an unusual plot event and the characters’ responses to the octopus, the author exposes fault lines within the community that are not otherwise visible.”</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity.</li> <li>• The thesis may be anywhere within the response.</li> <li>• For a thesis to be defensible, the passage must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>• The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>• A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.</li> </ul>		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
<p><b>Row B</b></p> <p><b>Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points)</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b></p> <p>Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides evidence that is mostly general.</p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student’s argument.</p>	<p><b>2 points</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides some specific, relevant evidence.</p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.</p>	<p><b>3 points</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning.</p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.</p> <p><b>AND</b> Explains how at least one literary element or technique in the passage contributes to its meaning.</p>	<p><b>4 points</b></p> <p><b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning.</p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p><b>COMMENTARY:</b> Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.</p> <p><b>AND</b> Explains how multiple literary elements or techniques in the passage contribute to its meaning.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>					
<p><b>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are incoherent or do not address the prompt.</li> <li>• May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 1 point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tend to focus on overarching narrative developments or description of a passage rather than specific details or techniques.</li> <li>• Mention literary elements, devices, or techniques with little or no explanation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities.</li> <li>• May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument.</li> <li>• May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim.</li> <li>• Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 3 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>• Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an interpretation.</li> <li>• Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims.</li> <li>• Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>• Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an interpretation.</li> <li>• Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.</li> <li>• Explain how the writer’s use of multiple literary techniques contributes to the student’s interpretation of the passage.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.</li> <li>• To earn the fourth point in this row, the response may observe multiple instances of the same literary element or technique if each instance further contributes to the meaning of the passage.</li> </ul>					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p><b>Row C</b> <b>Sophistication</b> <b>(0-1 points)</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b> Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or develops a complex literary argument.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>		
<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempt to contextualize their interpretation, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>Human experiences always include...</i>” OR “<i>In a world where...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time...</i>”).</li> <li>• Only hint at or suggest other possible interpretations (“<i>While another reader may see...</i>” OR “<i>Though the passage could be said to...</i>”).</li> <li>• Make a single statement about how an interpretation of the passage comments on something thematic without consistently maintaining that thematic interpretation.</li> <li>• Oversimplify complexities in the passage.</li> <li>• Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the student’s argument.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate a sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument by doing any of the following:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identifying and exploring complexities or tensions within the passage.</li> <li>2. Illuminating the student’s interpretation by situating it within a broader context.</li> <li>3. Accounting for alternative interpretations of the passage.</li> <li>4. Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.</li> </ul>		

Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In unfamiliar situations, groups of people will likely band together so as to limit the risk of everyone fighting for themselves. Of course, there are usually some dissenters who choose to stray from popular opinion. In Linda Hogan's "People of the Whales," the author depicts a community as superstitious but largely cooperative through incorporating varying points of view but also a central connection to show the surprise and intrigue surrounding the arrival of the octopus.

The passage is structured in a way that features multiple different community members' perspectives and ideas on what to do about the octopus. Children were outlined as generally curious and ambitious to visit Seal Cave and interact with the octopus, much to the chagrin of their parents. These reactions directly contrast the reactions of greedy fishermen, whose only interest in seeing the octopus is to kill it for bait. By presenting these two points of view consecutively, Hogan shows how the community was not uniform at their greeting of the octopus. However, the passage continues on to the community's next steps in dealing with their new resident, with that being to leave it offerings as a sign of respect. "For the time it dwelt there," writes Hogan about the octopus' stay in Seal Cave, "they brought

Page 4

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**Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

offerings, even the first flowers of morning" (65-66). Even those in the community who were still apprehensive about the octopus' presence "kept an eye on how it stood in the back of the cave" (Hogan 75-76). While the community was at first shocked and unsure of what to do, they ultimately came together after agreeing upon the octopus' sanctity.

Mentioned at a few points throughout the passage, baby Thomas W. Just serves as a central connection and rock that the community surrounds. Born the day preceding the octopus' arrival, Thomas was believed by his mother to have been specially blessed (Hogan 43-47). Such a fastidious and bold claim by a mother likely ~~was~~ bolstered the community's belief in the spirituality of the octopus. It is also revealed that former inhabitants of the village believed in magic and divine beings, which influenced some of the current villagers' thoughts on the octopus. This included Thomas' mother, in that "she was convinced the octopus would be the spirit-keeper of her son, because she thought like the old people used to think" (Hogan 54-56). Her steadfastness and firm belief in the octopus' divinity contributed to the community's overall motivation to appease the creature.

The community in Hogan's narrative is illustrated

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

to be initially jumbled but ultimately in accordance in their treatment of the walking octopus. This is revealed through community members' different feelings on the matter and how they were all connected via the birth of Thomas the day before the arrival.

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In People of the Whale by Linda Hogan, the ~~direct~~ use of selection of detail and ~~specific~~ characterization reveal how the community is both honestly hopeful but irresponsible with their superstitions.

With the use of selection of detail, the community is illustrated ~~as an honest~~ with honest ideals of hope and blessings. It is revealed early on after the octopus incident that many people ~~"believed"~~ "cried about how blessed they were" when arguing what to do with the octopus in the cave. Later, the decision is made to leave it alone since humans were the minority in comparison to the ocean. After this, many of the community begin to believe it is a holy creature and leave gifts outside the cave, ~~or~~ such as "shining things... even their watches."

This ~~of~~ selection of detail pertaining to the villagers' actions reveals that they have honest intentions. They view the octopus with reverence, and place their hopes in their gifts that maybe the octopus, if it is holy, would give them the things they wished for. In moderation, this is a positive characterization of the community, since being respectful and even reverent towards the octopus demonstrates honest and good intentions in the community. ~~direct~~

However, in specific characterization of certain characters, it is revealed that the community lacked

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- **Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1    Question 2    Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

The moderation needed for a responsible reverence, taking a leap into superstition. The gifts for the octopus, which had just started as small trinkets and shiny objects, soon developed to an act of worship with sacrificing valuables. Thomas' mother is a primary example of this, as she believes the octopus to be "a holy creature and its presence... granted Thomas a special life." It is also revealed that she was poor, and had little to her name but "the pearl ~~she~~ she inherited from her father," which she gives to the octopus instead of selling it for money to feed her family. The rest of the community soon follows suit, and ~~the~~ more and more valuables pile up as gifts for an octopus. In this direct characterization of Thomas' mother and the rest of the community, it is revealed how their practices of reverence have now become irresponsible superstition. Instead of doing the responsible thing and taking action for her family, Thomas' mother leaves her fate in the hands of an octopus. With the growing piles of treasure, ~~many~~ much of the community does the same, placing their ~~trust~~ <sup>faith</sup> in an animal, instead of growing more competent in themselves.

The actions of the villagers place an emphasis on the actions of humanity as a whole. ~~Often times,~~ ~~humanity~~ Faith is a universal concept, held by each

Page 9

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

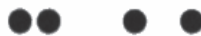
and every person, each to his own. Faith does not discriminate—it may be in religion, money, nature, others, validation, or self. In the case of the community, they place their faith in an octopus—a fallible, inconsequential creation that is even lower than themselves—and trust their lives work to it. The irresponsible actions of the villagers serve as a warning to humanity; faith is not inherently a bad thing. In fact, it is essential and hard-wired into the human condition. It's important, however, to moderate that faith and place it in something substantial, not an everyday wonder of nature that gives nothing ~~back to that faith~~ in return for that faith.

Linda Hogan's People of the Whale, utilizing both selection of detail and direct characterization, clearly communicates the community's honest hopes but irresponsible practices. In doing so, it creates an introspective commentary about the human condition and its tendency to place faith in a fallible source.

Page 10

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0266804



Q5326/10

Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Communities are often associated with a characteristic that members all hold. In Linda Hogan's novel "People of the Whale" the community shares a distinct fear of the unknown, however the community is divided in how individuals express it. Hogan emphasizes the complexity within the community by employing imagery and narration in the third person.

Hogan sets the story in a small beach town filled with life. The day after Thomas was born an octopus traveled from the ocean into a local cave. Many members of the community expressed fear as they had never seen an occurrence such as this one. The incidence "scared them into silence" as the community stood and watched in shock. All in the community were fearful of this event, but the fear is shown differently by individuals acts. Some sought to remove the source of their fear as "a few wild-haired men, afraid of its potent meaning, wanted to throw kerosene in the cave and burn it". This creates an image of unkept men seeking to use aggressive tactics to solve a problem. The imagery of "wild-haired men" serves to reflect the recklessness in which they act due to fear. An opposing response to fear of the unknown is to turn the fear into

Page 2

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**Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

reverance. Unlike those who wanted to kill the octopus, other members began to worship the octopus and seek spiritual meaning. A shrine of sorts began to accumulate in front of the cave. Hogan details, "For the time it dwelt there, they brought offerings, even the first flowers of the morning. The treasures ~~with~~ built up like small middens." The image depicted here shows the vast reverance the people had for the octopus as mounds of offerings and sacrifices accumulated. Rather than trying to fight the unknown, this sector of the community embraced it and used the fear to fuel their spiritual connection with the ocean and its creatures.

Utilizing the third person omniscient point of view to narrate the story best displays the complexity of the community by allowing all perspectives to be shown. By letting the reader interpret both the reckless and reverant responses to the octopus and its mystery the novel is better understood.

Page 3

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In a community there are many different types of people. In the novel "People of the whale" by Linda Hogan, the reader explores a ocean side community in which something very strange happens. The members of this community all had mixed reactions to this mysterious event. The author uses diction and various details to develop a complex characterization of the community.

When a octopus walking out of the sea into a cave is seen in a ocean side community. Many people had different reactions. The author uses diction to showcase the different reactions to this mysterious event. "Four fishermen in dirty clothes wanted to kill it and use it for fishing bait. "it's only practical!" they argued. "It's the best thing that could happen to us." (line 24-27). This shows one side of the community, while the other one had a ~~completely~~ completely different opinion. "Here is my son. You knew his grandfather. Watch over him" (line 51-52). This side of the community saw the octopus as holy. There where ~~many~~ many different opinions going on in the community because of the octopus.

The author also gives various details to ~~show~~ display and develop the characterization of

Page 4

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- **Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

the community. "not even the oldest, had ever seen an octopus do this and their people had lived there for thousands of years." (Line 20-22). The author includes this detail to show ~~show~~ why this event is so mysterious and is causing a lot of commotion in the community. ~~show~~ He includes many detail of what people wanted to do to the octopus to show how different everybody's opinion was on it. "A few wild-haired men, ~~the~~ afraid of its potent meaning, wanted to throw kerosene in the cave and burn it" (Line 31-32). "Other agreed. Its purpose wa a mystery. Or perhaps it was sick or, going to give birth." (Line 36-38). This show the reader some of the different opinions going ground in the community. All of these detail included by the author characterize the community as divided but equal. Everybody got to express their personal opinion. There were many different opinions and the community couldn't decide on one, this causes their community to be divided.

The author develops a complex characterization of the community in the novel "People of the Whale" as divided but equal. This is showcase through different literary elements and techniques. Although most prominent diction and very specific details, ~~this~~ helps the author showcase the division in the community.

Page 5

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● Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

The people of the community are in awe of the sight of a walking octopus. There are multiple speculations on the reasoning for it, yet the answer is never truly given. The cave that the octopus was in was a famous cave many people would use for numerous reasons. People seemed scared about what it meant and didn't know what to do about it. Yet eventually led to them leaving offerings to it and treating it as a holy sign. A day prior a baby named Thomas was born, so his mother thought of the octopus was like a guardian or a heavenly sign for her son and praised him daily for protection of her son. There were many mixed emotions, yet no one did anything about the octopus, they had just left it inside of the cave, unbothered, yet constantly left offers such as jewelry, food, and other.

Page 3

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0120457



## Question 2 - Prose Fiction Analysis

**Sample Identifier: A**

**Score: 1-4-1**

### A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1

- This perceptive essay thoroughly analyzes how Linda Hogan develops a complex characterization of the ocean people as they respond to the octopus depicted in the passage.
- This response presents a strong and defensible thesis in the introductory paragraph: “In Linda Hogan’s ‘People of the Whale,’ the author depicts a community as superstitious but largely cooperative through incorporating varying points of view but also a central connection to show the surprise and intrigue surrounding the arrival of the octopus.” The thesis reflects the complexity of the community’s response and clearly characterizes those responses. It earned the point in Row A.

### B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 4

- The essay uses the variety of reactions among the community members in order to develop a line of reasoning. The second paragraph focuses on the structure of the passage and the contrast between the curious children and the “greedy fishermen.” The response argues that this juxtaposition “shows how the community was not uniform at their greeting of the octopus.” The same paragraph considers a third reaction among the community members—those who “leave it offerings as a sign of respect.” The final commentary of the paragraph argues that “While the community was at first shocked and unsure of what to do, they ultimately came together after agreeing upon the octopus’ sanctity.” This insightful commentary connects the evidence to the thesis and solidifies the line of reasoning.
- The response contemplates how the arrival of the octopus aligns with the birth of Thomas W. Just. By connecting the parallel events, the response cogently explains why the community embraces the spirituality of the octopus. By using the evidence that Thomas’ mother “was convinced the octopus would be the spirit-keeper of her son,” and commenting that “Her steadfastness and firm belief in the octopus’ divinity contributed to the community’s overall motivation to appease the creature,” the response soundly supports the argument. The essay earned all 4 points possible in Row B.

### C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 1

- The essay offers a sustained examination of the community’s “surprise and intrigue” and an insightful culmination that notes how the members were “initially jumbled but ultimately in accordance in their treatment of the walking octopus.” Additionally, the response achieves a vivid and persuasive style, exemplified in the sentence, “Such a fastidious and bold claim by a mother likely bolstered the community’s belief in the spirituality of the octopus.” This style complements the complex literary argument. The essay earned the sophistication point in Row C.

**Sample Identifier: B**

**Score: 1-4-0**

### A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1

- This essay responds to the prompt with an insightful examination of the diverse reactions of the community members when faced with the unusual actions of the octopus in the excerpt from *People of the Whale*.
- The introductory paragraph of the response presents a defensible thesis: “In People of the Whale by Linda Hogan, the use of selection of detail and direct characterization reveal how the community is both honestly hopeful but irresponsible with their superstitions.” The thesis reflects the divergent behavior of the community members and establishes a clear line of reasoning. The essay earned the point in Row A.

#### **B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 4**

- The line of reasoning is developed through discerning examination of Hogan’s selection of detail and characterization. In paragraph 2, the response considers the significance of the gifts the humans leave for the octopus, “shining things...even their watches.” This paragraph also emphasizes the “honest intentions” of the ocean people and argues, “They view the octopus with reverence, and place their hopes in their gifts that maybe the octopus, if it is holy would give them the things they wished for.” This commentary supports the point that the people are “honestly hopeful.”
- In paragraph 3, the essay focuses on characterization of the community and suggests that the respect and reverence of the community shifts, “taking a leap into superstition.” The response specifically considers the actions of Thomas’ mother “as she believes the octopus to be ‘a holy creature and its presence...granted Thomas a special life.’” The essay argues that the mother’s willingness to offer “‘the pearl she inherited from her father’” is further evidence of “how their practices of reverence have now become irresponsible superstition.” This direct connection to the thesis strengthens and develops the line of reasoning. The assertion that the community places “their faith in an animal instead of growing more competent in themselves” articulately characterizes the community. This essay earned 4 points in Row B.

#### **C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- While the essay is insightful, the generalizations about how “Faith does not discriminate—it may be in religion, money, nature, others, validation or self” and that faith “is not inherently a bad thing” create a lapse in the consistency of the complex literary argument about the community’s irresponsibility. This essay did not, therefore, earn the sophistication point in Row C.

#### **Sample Identifier: C**

**Score: 1-3-0**

#### **A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This response offers an analysis of the community members’ complex reaction to the octopus described in the passage.
- The thesis is presented in the introductory paragraph: “In Linda Hogan’s novel ‘People of the Whale’ the community shares a distinct fear of the unknown, however, the community is divided in how individuals express it.” The thesis presents a line of reasoning focused on fear and addresses the different manifestations of that emotion. This thesis earned the point in Row A.



### **B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 3**

- The essay focuses on two literary devices, “imagery” and “narration in the third person.” The analysis of imagery found in paragraph 2 points out that the actions of the octopus “scared them (members of the community) into silence.” The response delves more deeply into the specific images of “a few wild-haired men” and the shrine where the people “brought offerings, even the first flowers of the morning.” In the commentary provided, the essay argues that the two images differ in their effects. The image of “wild-haired men” serves to reflect the recklessness in which they act due to fear,” while the image of the shrine built in front of the cave “shows the vast reverence the people had for the octopus.” The essay argues those who left sacrifices “used the fear to fuel their spiritual connection with the ocean and its creatures.” The analysis of the imagery illustrates both the fear of the people and the different consequences of that fear and directly supports the thesis.
- In paragraph 3, the response briefly considers how the third person omniscient point of view “best displays the complexity of the community by allowing all perspectives to be shown.” This support is not fully developed and its connection to the thesis is tenuous.
- The response offers slightly limited explanations supporting the complex characterization of the community, focusing mostly on the “fear” and how it relates to the “spiritual connection” the speaker describes. This essay earned 3 points in Row B.

### **C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- While the essay does exhibit insights, the response does not meet the criteria to earn the point in Row C, as it does not employ a style that enhances the writer’s argument, account for alternative interpretations, situate the interpretation within a broader context, or explore in much depth the complexities or tensions within the passage.

### **Sample Identifier: D**

**Score: 1-2-0**

#### **A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This response considers the complex characterization of a community as it reacts to the events described in the excerpt from Linda Hogan’s *People of the Whale*.
- The essay responds to the prompt with its thesis located in the introductory paragraph: “The members of this community all had mixed reactions to this mysterious event.” The thesis presents a simple yet defensible interpretation and, therefore, earned the point in Row A.

#### **B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 2**

- While the essay offers a mix of specific words and phrases that illustrate the community’s responses as evidence, the focus on “diction” is overgeneralized. The response quotes the descriptions of the fishermen and other others in the community. The commentary provided consists of the simplistic explanation, “This shows one side of the community, while the other one had a completely different opinion.” The commentary offers repetitive observations about the “many different opinions going on in the community.” This commentary does not help to develop a clear line of reasoning.
- The essay also considers Hogan’s use of details “to display and develop the characterization of the community.” The details presented, however, are followed by commentary that fails to

clearly support the thesis. The commentary generalizes the effect of the details with its assertion, “All of these detail included by the author characterize the community as divided but equal.” The repetitive and simplistic explanations fail to strengthen the argument. The essay earned 2 points in Row B.

**C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- Because the response oversimplifies the complexities in the passage, it does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument. The essay did not earn the sophistication point in Row C.

**Sample Identifier: E**

**Score: 1-1-0**

**A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This brief essay attempts to analyze the community’s response to an octopus walking out of the sea as depicted in the passage.
- The response includes the defensible claim, “The people of this community are in awe of the sight of a walking octopus.” This thesis earned the point in Row A.

**B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 1**

- The evidence provided consists largely of summary and tends to focus on the overarching narrative. The commentary is sparse and generalized: “There are multiple speculations on the reasoning for it (the octopus), yet the answer is never truly given.” No literary devices are mentioned, and the analysis of the complex characterization of the community consists solely of the comment, “There were many mixed emotions, yet no one did anything about the octopus, they had just left it inside of the cave, unbothered.” No line of reasoning is established in the essay. The essay received 1 point in Row B.

**C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- The essay did not earn the point in Row C due to its oversimplified attempt at analysis. No literary argument is present in the essay; therefore, it did not earn the sophistication point.

**Question 3**

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

Many works of literature feature characters who accept or reject a hierarchical structure. This hierarchy may be social, economic, political, or familial, or it may apply to some other kind of structure.

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which a character responds to a hierarchy in some significant way. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how that character’s response to the hierarchy contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Provide evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

*The Bluest Eye*

*Brighton Rock*

*Catch-22*

*The Dispossessed*

*Dominicana*

*The Dragon Can’t Dance*

*East of Eden*

*Fahrenheit 451*

*Great Expectations*

*Hope Leslie*

*The House of the Spirits*

*The Hummingbird’s Daughter*

*If Beale Street Could Talk*

*The Inheritance of Loss*

*Invisible Man*

*Jane Eyre*

*The Kite Runner*

*Love Medicine*

*The Mill on the Floss*

*Native Son*

*The Nickel Boys*

*Nineteen Eighty-Four*

*On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*

*On Such a Full Sea*

*Othello*

*Parable of the Sower*

*A Passage to India*

*Pride and Prejudice*

*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*

*Purple Hibiscus*

*A Raisin in the Sun*

*Robinson Crusoe*

*The Scarlet Letter*

*Sweat*

*Their Eyes Were Watching God*

*Things Fall Apart*

*Vanity Fair*

*White Tiger*

*The Women of Brewster Place*

*Wuthering Heights*

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**Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.**

**Question 3: Literary Argument****6 points**

Many works of literature feature characters who accept or reject a hierarchical structure. This hierarchy may be social, economic, political, or familial, or it may apply to some other kind of structure.

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which a character responds to a hierarchy in some significant way. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how that character's response to the hierarchy contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

In your response, you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Provide evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p><b>Row A</b> <b>Thesis</b> <b>(0-1 points)</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b></p> <p>For any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no defensible thesis.</li> <li>• The intended thesis only restates the prompt.</li> <li>• The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim.</li> <li>• There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 point</b></p> <p>Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the selected work.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>		
<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only restate the prompt.</li> <li>• Make a generalized comment about the selected work that doesn't respond to the prompt.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a defensible interpretation of how a character responds to a hierarchy in the selected work.</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a claim about how a character's response to a hierarchy contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Restate the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Hierarchical structures are a major part of society. In literature, characters can be seen either accepting or rejecting economic, political, and familial hierarchies among others."</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Do not respond to the prompt but make a generalized comment about the selected work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"In <u>The Chrysalids</u> by John Wyndham, David and the other telepaths hide their mutation from the rest of Waknuk, which is not an easy thing to do."</i></li> <li>• <i>"People establish hierarchies because they believe they help keep order. Going against a hierarchy is very difficult. Many works of literature have characters that suffer the consequences of doing this."</i></li> </ul>		<p><b>Examples that earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Provides a defensible interpretation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Offred's development as a character in <u>The Handmaid's Tale</u> is shaped by her quiet rebellion against a government hierarchy that enforces her assigned role as a Handmaid."</i></li> <li>• <i>"In S.E. Hinton's <u>The Outsiders</u>, Ponyboy and Cherry's violation of the strict hierarchy of Greasers versus Socs causes several characters to question their loyalty to these groups and brings tragedy to those who try to uphold these rules."</i></li> <li>• <i>"Hurston shows how the expectations put on Janie Crawford by her grandmother and her first two husbands are meant to uphold gender-based hierarchies in society and the family. After Janie revolts against these hierarchies and runs away with Tea Cake, she is able to become independent."</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity.</li> <li>• The thesis may be anywhere within the response.</li> <li>• For a thesis to be defensible, the selected work must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>• A thesis that offers a defensible claim about a character's response to any type of hierarchical structure in the selected work may earn the point; any reasonable student interpretation of the terms "hierarchical structure" or "hierarchy" is acceptable.</li> <li>• The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>• A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.</li> </ul>		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
<b>Row B</b> <b>Evidence</b> <b>AND</b> <b>Commentary</b> <b>(0-4 points)</b>	<b>0 points</b> Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	<b>1 point</b> <b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides evidence that is mostly general.  <b>AND</b>  <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the argument.	<b>2 points</b> <b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides some specific, relevant evidence.  <b>AND</b>  <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	<b>3 points</b> <b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning.  <b>AND</b>  <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.	<b>4 points</b> <b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning.  <b>AND</b>  <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>					
<b>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are incoherent or do not address the prompt.</li> <li>• May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.</li> </ul>	<b>Typical responses that earn 1 point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tend to focus on overarching narrative developments or description of a selected work rather than specific details.</li> </ul>	<b>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities.</li> <li>• May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument.</li> <li>• May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim.</li> <li>• Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.</li> </ul>	<b>Typical responses that earn 3 points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>• Focus on the importance of specific details from the selected work to build an interpretation.</li> <li>• Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims.</li> <li>• Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.</li> </ul>	<b>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>• Focus on the importance of specific details from the selected work to build an interpretation.</li> <li>• Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.</li> </ul>	
<b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.</li> <li>• To earn the fourth point in this row, the response must address the interpretation of the selected work as a whole.</li> </ul>					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0-1 points)	<b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.	<b>1 point</b> Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or develops a complex literary argument.
	<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>	
	<b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempt to contextualize their interpretation, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>Human experiences always include...</i>” OR “<i>In a world where...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time...</i>”).</li> <li>• Only hint at or suggest other possible interpretations (“<i>While another reader may see...</i>” OR “<i>Though the text could be said to...</i>”).</li> <li>• Oversimplify complexities of the topic and/or the selected work.</li> <li>• Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the student’s argument.</li> </ul>	<b>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate a sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument by doing any of the following:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identifying and exploring complexities or tensions within the selected work.</li> <li>2. Illuminating the student’s interpretation by situating it within a broader context.</li> <li>3. Accounting for alternative interpretations of the text.</li> <li>4. Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.</li> </ol>
<b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.</li> </ul>		

Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* <sup>features</sup> an unfortunate character demise due to the weighty expectations of society. As Edna Pontellier, the novel's protagonist longs for social freedom and her own identity, she is bound by societal ~~exp~~ tradition and hierarchy. Edna actively rejects the familial hierarchy that confine her to the role of the subservient wife and doting mother as well as social hierarchy that prevent her from attaining freedom. Together, ~~edna~~ the chains of these hierarchies on Edna's life ultimately lead to her suicide, ~~the~~ developing the tragic theme of struggle between desire and expectation. To accomplish this, Chopin employs the use of a powerful foil against Edna, an inner struggle that undermines her relationships, and prominent bird/house metaphors.

As part of the family hierarchy Edna tries to reject, she is confined to the role of a doting mother within this structure. To develop her response, Chopin utilizes a foil, Adele Ratignolle, to exaggerate Edna's desire to break away. Adele is described as a perfect mother and woman, symbolizing the woman that Edna is expected to become. Edna often looks up to Adele but is uncomfortable with the life she leads; at a certain point when Adele is giving birth, Edna cannot stand her discomfort. Here, it becomes apparent that Edna is unable to accept the expectation that society has for her compliance within the family hierarchy. ~~However~~ Instead, Edna rejects this and attempts to break away. She even says that "she would give up the unessential... but she wouldn't give herself" for her children. This is a direct explanation for Edna's inability to remain

Page 8

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**Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

within the family hierarchy since she desires more for her life than to devote it to her children. On the other hand, Adele is ~~also~~ shocked by this statement and her reaction reassures her status as a foil to Edna, exaggerating Edna's rejection of the societal standard. Thus, the use of a foil is very prominent in *The Awakening* as it contributes to the development of Edna wanting to separate away from family hierarchy. As a whole, this connects back to the tragic theme of internal desire and external expectation since Edna's wants of independence clash with what Adele symbolizes as societal expectation for a mother.

Also within the family hierarchy is the role of a subservient wife. To develop Edna's rejection to this as well and build upon a larger meaning, Chopin includes an internal conflict. Edna is torn between her relationship to Leonce, her husband, and her growing feelings for Robert. This man vs. self conflict begins to define Edna as she comes to realize her unhappiness in her marriage. This escalates to the point where Edna even attempts to smash her wedding ring but her "boot heel does not make an indenture". ~~However~~ As Edna struggles to reconcile her place in her relationship with Leonce and her attraction to Robert, Edna begins to externalize this internal conflict. The wedding ring acts as metonymy since it represents the marriage as whole, deepening the conflict. However, the issue with this sect of the family hierarchy is Edna's unfortunate ~~issue~~ confinement as a subservient wife regardless of if she rejects this specific family. In the setting of late 1800s Louisiana, all women were expected to be inferior in their partnership and Edna would not be able to make an exception. Leaving Leonce would

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simply bind her in the same position in the family hierarchy with Robert. The inescapability of this status drives Edna to realize her ~~despair~~ hidden despair and the struggle leads to her suicide. Although Edna attempts to reject this position within the family hierarchy, she cannot, and this contributes to the larger themes that play within the novel.

Outside of the family hierarchy, Edna also challenges the social hierarchy. Edna recognizes and is largely uncomfortable with her role as an upper class member in New Orleans society. Her ~~rich~~ wealthy status however has offered little ~~reprieve~~ reprieve to her despair and her inability to create change as a woman. She, as a result, rejects this status and attempts to downgrade. To show this progression, Chopin utilizes heavy house and bird imagery/metaphors. For example, when living in the large and luxurious estate in her husband's name, Edna is often described as confined and unhappy. As she begins to seek independence and explore her own identity, Edna separates from her family and moves into a "pigeon house". Here, although the space is much smaller and enclosed, Edna is ironically much freer and happy. By rejecting the social hierarchy as symbolized by wealth and status, Edna begins to find herself and shed the persona she has been trapped within. However, the burden of social expectation and judgment troubles Edna and forces her to realize she can never fully live as she pleases especially since she is tied to her place in the social hierarchy. Thus, she chooses to drown herself and in the final moments, sees a broken winged bird. The image of

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

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this bird induces despair, as it is free and uncaged yet unable to fly, symbolizing Edna herself. Thus, in her journey to freedom from the social hierarchy, Edna meets a tragic end, which adds to the meaning of the work as a whole in its commentary on social expectation.

Chopin's novel *The Awakening* is a profound yet saddening work. Edna's desires for independence and self-expression are constantly hindered by the ever-present social and familial hierarchies. By developing these ideas with foils, man vs. self conflicts, and powerful metaphors/imagery, Chopin demonstrates how societal expectation and judgment can destroy a person, even as they break free.

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The entire premise of <sup>George Orwell's</sup> *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is focused on the attempted rejection of the social, political, and familial hierarchies that the Party and Big Brother tries to impose on the world of the novel.

Winston, the protagonist, bleakly reflects on how Big Brother weaponizes social and familial bonds to keep the people of Oceania under control. The populace is not only monitored by party officials and telescreens but also the very people that are closest to them.

One specific familial tie that is often exploited, to Winston's horror, is the relationship between parent and child. Children are raised to be so loyal to Big Brother that it is common for children to enthusiastically report their parents for thoughtcrimes. This realization is one of many that inspires Winston to fight against the political hierarchy imposed and enforced by the party.

Winston's struggle to be with Julia is a representation of his fight against the social and familial hierarchy that is imposed on the world. A loving relationship is a normal and encouraged part of our

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society that is forbidden in the world of Nineteen Eighty-Four. The party fears that such relationships could make more people more loyal to each other than to Big Brother. Winston's struggle to reject the social hierarchy of Oceania leads him to fight against the political hierarchy as well. It was Winston's love for Julia that pushed him to treason and torture.

Big Brother and his societal structures to win in the end, however, Winston is tortured into not only hating Big Brother but into betraying Julia as well.

Winston's neighbor ends up detained along with Winston, having been reported by his own daughter for a thoughtcrime. While the characters attempt to tear down the structures imposed by Big Brother, they fail.

The Party controls all aspects of society, a far cry from the economic reform originally dreamed of by the revolution.

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

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Every ~~person~~ ~~struggles~~ ~~with~~ ~~a~~ ~~ter~~ ~~rible~~ person struggles to find their role in their family. Whether you are the youngest child, the oldest, or even a parent, you ~~will~~ will find yourself struggling to figure out where you belong and who is in charge. In the play "A Raisin in the Sun", Lorraine Hansbury shows how Mama uses her familial hierarchy to do what is best for her family though the characters' actions, societies expectations, and gender roles.

Each member of the younger family has their own idea of ~~what~~ how the money from their father's inheritance would be best suited. Beneatha and Walter Lee's arguments lead Mama to the realization of her own family's competitive <sup>and</sup> strong willed nature. When Ruth discovers her pregnancy and Walter dismisses her concerns and intentions, Mama knows what she must do for her family. She knows that the family needs to rekindle their love and appreciation for one another. This is when Mama uses her power to buy a new house for her family.

After Mr. Younger's death, Mama took ~~the~~ over his job as the "head of the household." She was ~~was~~ responsible for both the role she plays as mother and now, the paternal role as well. ~~Mama~~ Without the help of her husband, mama had tremendous pressure ~~at~~ on her shoulders. Society had an idea for what the "ideal" family would look like and ~~was~~ Mama was responsible for making up what was lost after Mr. Younger's death.

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In order to maintain a reasonable status as a family, Mama was led to making decisions in everyone's best interest. She knew what she had to do to keep everyone happy and she was willing to sacrifice for her family.

In addition to Society's extremely high standards putting pressure on Mama, she was also faced with the challenge of overcoming gender roles. Mama knew that she did not fit into the conventional head of the house role for the sole purpose of her gender. Women were not meant to run a family and they were not seen as equals with the men of Society. Luckily, Walter Lee was able to fill the father's role as the man of the house. However, Mama is ~~still~~ much older and wiser than Walter, who is still trying to find his place in the world.

~~The wrong answer~~ Through the character's actions, Society's expectations, and gender roles in society, Mama struggles to find her own place in her family. She is responsible for looking out for the family's best interests and has the pressure on herself to make everyone happy. Mama overcomes ~~her~~ the unbelievable stress she faces when she decides to use the money for a downpayment on a new house. She knows this will be good for her family and is hopeful this will be the beginning of a new life.

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In Frank Kafka's the Metamorphosis, Gregor breaks away from the social hierarchy he must follow, ~~causing~~ causing him to turn into a giant bug and descend into madness. This highlights the idea that straying away from social regulations may lead to dire consequences.

~~Throughout the Metamorphosis,~~

The constricting social standards throughout the book causes Gregor to break away and begin his descent into insanity. ~~As~~ ~~is~~ ~~a~~ ~~Gregor~~, a traveling salesman, never ~~stop~~ stop due to pressuring ~~social standards~~ <sup>regulations</sup> from his employer. ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~realization~~ ~~of~~ ~~his~~ ~~employer~~ ~~Gregor~~ ~~being~~ ~~worth~~ ~~less~~ ~~and~~ ~~expendable~~ ~~in~~ ~~social~~ ~~hierarchy~~ ~~after~~ ~~his~~ ~~manager~~ ~~is~~ ~~possibly~~ ~~due~~ ~~to~~ ~~stress~~, ~~he~~ ~~thinks~~ ~~causes~~ ~~Gregor~~ ~~to~~ ~~take~~ ~~up~~ ~~transformed~~ ~~into~~ ~~a~~ ~~giant~~ ~~bug~~. After calling in sick due to his situation, Gregor's manager pays him a visit trying to force him to work. This apparent ~~uncaring~~ uncaring attitude causes Gregor to realize his true standing in society. The realization that Gregor is "worth less" and is expendable ~~forces~~ ~~him~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ pushes him over the edge. ~~From~~ ~~this~~ ~~point~~, Gregor takes on his ~~new~~ ~~new~~ ~~identity~~ as a bug. Gregor's rejection of his social standing leads to extreme consequences. ~~This~~ ~~idea~~ ~~is~~ ~~common~~ ~~in~~ ~~our~~ ~~society~~. ~~Rejecting~~ ~~the~~ ~~social~~ ~~hierarchy~~ ~~may~~ ~~cause~~ ~~rejection~~ ~~from~~ ~~other~~ ~~people~~, similar to how Gregor's family ends up ~~just~~ ~~leaving~~ ~~Gregor~~ ~~to~~ ~~die~~. In rejecting the social hierarchy, Gregor loses his job as ~~well~~ ~~more~~, ~~by~~ ~~rejecting~~ he is consumed by his madness. Similar in our society, the rejection of social standing may cause people to feel isolated. Similar to Gregor's isolation, people may face these ~~unlucky~~ <sup>unlucky</sup> misfortunes. ~~Denying~~ <sup>Denying</sup> ~~escaping~~ social constructs may cause us to be in a similar situation to Gregor, despite escaping these hierarchies.

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Furthermore, Gregor's rejection <sup>of</sup> the hierarchy also causes rejection within his family, showing how we may face harsh consequences when denying social hierarchies. After escaping the confines of his job and the social hierarchies, Gregor becomes rejected by his family. After being the breadwinner for so long, his family no longer finds value <sup>of</sup> from him when he becomes unable to work due to his transformation. ~~regardless of the transformation helping Gregor escape, his family~~ This idea is similar to our society. Often, those who reject social standards are shunned while those who embrace them are rewarded. Similar to how Gregor's family leaves Gregor to die, people in our society are left on their own for breaking regulations.

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In the novel Fences by August Wilson, the main character responds to the social hierarchy by becoming stuck in his past, losing his family. ~~and losing his family.~~

In the novel, Troy, the main character faces hardship with his society, trying to find a place to belong. The problem of color is introduced which affects how he looks at the outside world. For instance, Cory asked his Troy can he go play football in college knowing it meant everything to him. But Troy denied him, risking ~~his~~ his son's spot. Troy was scared they wouldn't accept him because of his color in which he didn't want to see his son go through the same thing he went through. The fear of his son experiencing the same thing, made their relationship fall.

Trying to move on from the past takes change. In the novel the rejection of their ~~own~~ skin color caused Troy to fear the outside world. As the main character in the novel Fences responds to the hierarchy, he concluded on willing to risk his family. The work of whole contributed to Troy being stuck in the past, unable to move on, losing his relationship with his family.

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### Question 3 - Literary Argument

Sample Identifier: A—*The Awakening*

Score: 1-4-1

#### A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1

- This response provides a thorough and insightful analysis of Edna Pontellier’s complex response to the hierarchies she encounters in Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening*.
- The thesis for this essay is presented in the introductory paragraph in two sentences: “Edna actively rejects the familial hierarchy that confine her to the role of the subservient wife and doting mother as well as social hierarchy that prevent her from attaining freedom. Together, the chains of these hierarchies on Edna’s life ultimately lead to her suicide, developing the tragic theme of struggle between desire and expectation.” The thesis provides a defensible interpretation of Edna’s response to the hierarchies and makes a claim about how that response contributes to the interpretation of the work as a whole. The thesis earned the point in Row A.

#### B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 4

- The evidence and commentary found in the response work in tandem to support a line of reasoning that focuses on Edna’s struggles against the hierarchies of her time. The essay examines the role of Adele Ratignolle as a foil to Edna and argues, “Adele is described as a perfect mother and woman, symbolizing the woman that Edna is expected to become.” The commentary argues that “Edna is unable to accept the expectation that society has for her compliance within the family hierarchy.” The commentary points out that Edna’s rejection of these expectations is emphasized in her affirmation that she would “give up the unessential...but she wouldn’t give herself” for her children. The essay clearly connects this supporting evidence to the “tragic theme of internal desire and external expectation.” The focus on specific details from the work, coupled with astute commentary, builds the line of reasoning.
- The essay closely examines Edna’s struggle against familial hierarchy as it considers her marriage to Leonce. The response characterizes this struggle as “man vs. self conflict” and offers the example of Edna’s unsuccessful attempt to destroy her wedding ring as symbolic. (“The wedding ring acts as metonymy since it represents the marriage as whole...”) In the commentary, the response connects this point to the thesis through the argument that “The inescapability of this status drives Edna to realize her hidden despair and the struggle leads to her suicide.”
- The essay also examines the “heavy house and bird imagery/metaphors” within the novel. The response asserts that Edna’s move to the “pigeon house” is ironic because moving to a smaller house makes Edna feel “much freer and happy.” The writer also points out that Edna in her final moments “sees a broken winged bird” and argues, “The image of this bird induces despair, as it is free and uncaged yet unable to fly, symbolizing Edna herself.” The essay eloquently weaves together multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is explicitly explained. This response earned all 4 points possible in Row B.

#### C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 1

- The writing of this cogent response is consistently vivid and persuasive. The essay explores tensions and subtleties: “The burden of social expectation and judgment troubles Edna and forces her to realize she can never fully live as she pleases especially since she is tied to her place in the social hierarchy.” For these reasons, the essay earned the sophistication point in Row C.

**Sample Identifier: B—*Nineteen Eighty-Four***

**Score: 1-4-0**

**A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This essay analyzes how Winston Smith struggles against the various hierarchies George Orwell depicts in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.
- The essay clearly responds to the prompt with a defensible interpretation of the work. The thesis, “The entire premise of George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is focused on the attempted rejection of the social, political, and familial hierarchies that the Party and Big Brother tries to impose on the world of the novel,” introduces the essay. This thesis earned the point in Row A.

**B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 4**

- The evidence presented in the response examines Winston’s responses to specific incidents, including the relationship between parent and child and his relationship with Julia. The commentary provided after each example connects the evidence to the line of reasoning which focuses on Winston’s attempted rejection of the hierarchies. For example, in paragraph 2, the response argues that Winston’s realization (“to Winston’s horror”) that children are turning in their parents to Big Brother “inspires Winston to fight against the political hierarchy imposed and enforced by the party.” The commentary in paragraph 3 continues this argument by suggesting, “It was Winston’s love for Julia that pushed him to treason and torture.” The structure of the essay clearly organizes the specific details and uses them to build the argument.
- The conclusion of the essay moves beyond Winston’s responses to the hierarchies and recognizes the futility of Winston’s struggle. The essay acknowledges, “While the characters attempt to tear down the structures imposed by Big Brother, they fail.” This insight further strengthens the essay’s interpretation. The essay earned 4 points in Row B because it presents multiple supporting claims, each with evidence to support the line of reasoning.

**C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- While insightful, the response does not employ a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive, nor does it fully explore complexities within the novel, or situate the interpretation within a broader context, or account for an alternative interpretation of the text. Therefore, it did not earn the sophistication point in Row C.

**Sample Identifier: C—*A Raisin in the Sun***

**Score: 1-3-0**

**A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This response analyzes Mama Younger’s response to the societal and gender hierarchies she faces in Lorraine Hansberry’s *A Raisin in the Sun*.
- A defensible thesis is presented in the introductory paragraph: “In the play ‘A Raisin in the Sun,’ Lorraine Hansberry shows how Mama uses her familial hierarchy to do what is best for her family though the characters’ actions, societies expectations, and gender roles.” This thesis earned the point possible in Row A.

**B. Evidence and Commentary (0-3 points): 3**

- The response offers specific evidence focusing on Mama’s struggles to do what is best for her family after her husband’s death. While noting “Beneatha and Walter Lee’s arguments lead Mama to the realization of her own family’s competitive and strong willed nature,” the response contends that “Mama uses her power to buy a new house for her family.” In consideration of Mama’s newfound role as “‘head of the household,’” the response offers the commentary that “Society had an idea for what the ‘ideal’ family would look like and Mama was responsible for making up what was lost after Mr. Younger’s death.” This evidence and commentary support the line of reasoning that focuses on Mama’s struggles to deal with both familial and societal hierarchies.
- In paragraph 4, the essay also considers Mama’s “challenge of overcoming gender roles.” The commentary here argues that “Mama knew that she did not fit into the conventional head of the house role for the sole purpose of her gender.” Later, the essay asserts, “Luckily, Walter Lee was able to fill the father’s role as the man of the house.” This piece of evidence, however, is offered without commentary explaining clearly how this was done or why it is significant. Because the response does not consistently explain how all of the evidence supports the line of the reasoning, it earned a score of 3 in Row B.

**C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- Complexities within the novel are oversimplified in this essay. For example, “(Mama) knew what she had to do to keep everyone happy and she was willing to sacrifice for her family” diminishes the familial tension and does not adequately explain what Mama sacrifices. Additionally, the writing of the essay does not enhance the argument; therefore, the essay did not earn the sophistication point in Row C.

**Sample Identifier: D—*The Metamorphosis***

**Score: 1-2-0**

**A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This response attempts to analyze Gregor Samsa’s response to the social hierarchy as depicted in Franz Kafka’s *The Metamorphosis*.
- A defensible thesis presented in the introduction argues “In Frank Kafka’s The Metamorphosis, Gregor breaks away from the social hierarchy he must follow, causing him to turn into a giant bug and descend into madness.” This highlights the idea that straying away from social regulations may lead to dire consequences.” This thesis earns the point in Row A.

**B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 2**

- In paragraph 2, the response asserts, “The constricting social standards throughout the book causes Gregor to break away and begin his descent into insanity”; however, these social standards are not articulated. The essay describes Gregor’s manager’s visit to his home and characterizes the manager’s “uncaring attitude,” but this detail is not directly connected to a social hierarchy. In paragraph 3, the essay considers how Gregor’s loss of his job affects his family and concludes, “After being the bread winner for so long, his family no longer finds value of him.” These two pieces of evidence, however, lack sufficient commentary to develop a line of reasoning.

- The commentary provided is limited. For example, the response posits, “Gregor’s rejection of his social standing leads to extreme consequences.” The commentary fails to elaborate, however, on which social standing Gregor rejects. The essay earns a score of 2 in Row B because while it does provide some specific and relevant evidence from the text, it does not explain the connection or progression through multiple claims in order to fully establish a line of reasoning.

**C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- While the essay does attempt to contextualize Gregor’s struggles (“This idea is similar to our society.”), the attempt consists of a sweeping generalization (“people in our society are left on their own for breaking regulations”). The writing is not consistently vivid and persuasive. This response did not earn the sophistication point in Row C.

**Sample Identifier: E—*Fences***

**Score: 1-1-0**

**A. Thesis (0-1 points): 1**

- This essay focuses on Troy Maxson’s hardships in *Fences* by August Wilson.
- The response offers a defensible thesis in the first sentence: “In the novel Fences by August Wilson, the main character responds to the social hierarchy by becoming stuck in his past, losing his family.” The response earned the thesis point in Row A.

**B. Evidence and Commentary (0-4 points): 1**

- The essay presents some general evidence about Troy’s reaction to Cory’s football plans in paragraph 2, but the commentary lacks direct connection to the thesis: “Troy was scared they wouldn’t accept him (Cory) because of his color in which he didn’t want to see his son go through the same thing he went through.” No explanation of Troy’s earlier experience is offered. In the last paragraph, the essay contends, “As the main character in the novel Fences responds to the hierarchy, he concluded on willing to risk his family.” No explanations of how Troy responds to the hierarchy or how he risks his family are provided. Without adequate evidence and commentary, no line of reasoning is established. This essay earns 1 point in Row B.

**C. Sophistication (0-1 points): 0**

- The response lacks consistently vivid or persuasive language. Context, tensions, or alternate interpretations are not explored, and the response oversimplifies complexities, such as in the first sentence of the final paragraph: “Trying to move on from the past takes change.” This essay did not earn the sophistication point in Row C.