

**Examples of the
Standards for
Students' Writing 2015**

**English
Language Arts
Grade 9**

- **Narrative / Essay Writing**

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Other Information

Follow these steps for easy access to the [Alberta Education](http://www.alberta.ca) website:

Step 1: Type education.alberta.ca

Step 2: Click on “[Administrators](#)”

Step 3: Under “[Provincial Testing](#),” click on “[Achievement Tests](#)”

On the “Achievement Tests” web page, there is a specific link to “[Subject Bulletins](#).” These bulletins provide students and teachers with information about the achievement tests scheduled for the current school year. Please share the contents of the *Grade 9 English Language Arts Subject Bulletin* with your students.

Also on this web page, there is a specific link to “[Examples of the Standards for Students’ Writing](#).” These samples are intended to be used to enhance students’ writing and to assist teachers in assessing student writing relative to the standards embedded in the scoring criteria in the scoring guides.

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Introduction

The written responses in this document are examples of Grade 9 English Language Arts writing that meet or exceed the acceptable standard for student achievement. Along with the commentaries that accompany them, they should help teachers and students to understand the standards for the Grade 9 English Language Arts *Part A: Writing Achievement Test* in relation to the scoring criteria.

The purpose of the sample responses is to illustrate the standards that governed the 2015 marking session and that anchor the selection of similar sample responses for marking sessions in subsequent years. The sample papers and commentaries were used to train markers to apply the scoring criteria consistently and to justify their decisions about scores in terms of each student's work and the scoring criteria.

The sample responses included in this document represent a very small sample of successful approaches to the Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment.

Cautions

1. *The commentaries are brief.* The commentaries were written for groups of markers to discuss and apply during the marking session. Although brief, they provide a model for relating specific examples from student work to the details in a specific scoring criterion.
2. *Neither the scoring guide nor the assignment is meant to limit students to a single organizational or rhetorical approach in completing any achievement test assignment.* Students must be free to select and organize their material in a manner that they feel will enable them to best present their ideas. In fact, part of what is being assessed is the final effectiveness of the content, the form and structure, and the rhetorical choices that students make. The student writing in this document illustrates just a few of the many successful organizational and rhetorical strategies used by students. We strongly recommend that you caution your students that there is no preferred approach to an assignment except that which enables the student to communicate his or her own ideas about the topic effectively. We advise you not to draw any conclusions about common patterns of approach taken by students.
3. *The sample papers presented in this document must not be used as models to be reiterated.* Because these papers are only illustrations of sample responses to a set topic, students must not memorize the content of any sample response with the intention of reiterating parts or all of a sample response when either completing classroom assignments or writing future achievement tests. The approaches taken by students at the standard of excellence, not their words or ideas, are what students being examined in the future should emulate. In fact, it is hoped that the variety of approaches presented here will inspire students to experiment with diction, syntax, and form and structure as a way of developing an individual voice and engaging the reader in ideas and forms that the student has considered. Achievement test markers and staff at Alberta Education take plagiarism and cheating seriously.

4. *It is essential that each of these examples of student writing be considered in light of the constraints of the test-writing situation.* Under time constraints, students produce first-draft writing. Given more time, they would be expected to produce papers of considerably improved quality, particularly in the dimensions of **Sentence Structure**, **Vocabulary**, and **Conventions**.
5. For further information regarding student performance on *Part A: Writing* of the Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test, access the *Grade 9 English Language Arts 2015 Assessment Highlights* document that is posted on the Alberta Education website.

Suggestions

To provide each paper with the most accurate and impartial judgment possible, use only the scoring criteria and the standards set by the Exemplars and Rationales. Each student is a person trying to do his or her very best. All students are completely reliant on your careful, professional consideration of their work.

Markers are responsible for

- reviewing and internalizing the scoring criteria and their application to student writing
- applying the scoring criteria impartially, independently, and consistently to **all** papers
- refraining from marking a response if personal biases—such as the student’s handwriting, development of topic, idiosyncrasies of voice, and/or political or religious preference—interfere with an impartial judgment of the response
- ensuring that every paper is scored
 - fairly
 - according to the scoring criteria
 - in accordance with the standards illustrated in the Exemplars and Rationales

The scores awarded to students’ papers must be based solely on the scoring criteria with reference to the Exemplars and Rationales. Fairness to all students is the most important requirement of the marking process.

To facilitate fair and valid assessment of all student work during both local and central marking, **teachers must not** mark or write in student booklets. Teacher-created scoring sheets, which may be used during local marking, are **not** to be included in student test booklets.

Please feel free to contact Provincial Assessment Sector staff members to discuss any questions or concerns.

Maintaining Consistent Standards

For all achievement test scoring sessions, teacher working groups for Exemplar Selection, Exemplar Validation, and Standards Confirmation are used both to establish expectations for student work in relation to the scoring criteria and to ensure scoring consistency within and between marking sessions. These working groups are crucial to ensuring that marks are valid, reliable, and fair measures of student achievement.

Exemplar Selection Working Group

Exemplars are selections of student work, taken from field tests, that best illustrate the scoring criteria. The Exemplar Selection Working Group is composed of experienced teachers representing various regions of the province who read a large sample of students' written responses. Working-group members select responses that best match the established standards in the Exemplars and Rationales from the previous marking session. The working group then writes Rationales that explain the relationship between each Exemplar and the scoring criteria in each scoring category. The same process also occurs at this time in the selection of Training Papers. These papers are selected to illustrate characteristics of student work that might not be covered in the Exemplars and that might lead to inconsistent judgments or marking difficulties. While Exemplars usually receive consistent scores across all categories, Training Papers typically do not. This is due to the reality that students rarely perform with equal ability in every scoring category, as well as to the necessity of evaluating each scoring category as a distinct skill area.

Exemplar Validation Working Group

The Exemplar Validation Working Group, another group of experienced teachers from various provincial regions, reviews and approves the Exemplars, Training Papers, and Rationales that have been prepared for local marking. The working group ensures that the Rationales accurately reflect the standards embedded in the descriptors in the Scoring Guide while verifying that appropriate and accurate references have been made to student work. Working-group members also strive to ensure that there is clarity within the Rationales.

Standards Confirmation Working Group

Teachers from throughout the province who serve on the Standards Confirmation Working Group read a large sample of student responses to *Part A: Writing* to confirm the appropriateness of the standards set by the test in relation to actual student work on the Achievement Test. The working group ensures that the Exemplars, Training Papers, and Rationales are appropriate for central marking. Working-group members also select student responses that are to be used for daily Reliability Reviews. Once a day, all markers score a copy of the same student paper for inter-rater reliability. Reliability Reviews confirm that all markers are consistently awarding scores that accurately reflect the standards embedded in the scoring criteria.

Working groups for Exemplar Selection, Exemplar Validation, and Standards Confirmation are part of a complex set of processes that have evolved over the years of Achievement Test administration. These teacher working groups are crucial to ensuring that standards are consistently and fairly applied to student work.

Local Marking

Classroom teachers are encouraged to assess students' writing, using the Scoring Guides, Exemplars, and Rationales that are sent to the schools along with the *Part A: Writing* tests, before returning the tests to Alberta Education. All papers are scored centrally in Edmonton in July.

Scores awarded locally can be submitted to Alberta Education, where they will be used as the first reading of a student's response. Local markers are to use the "**For Teacher Use Only**" section on the back of each *Part A: Writing* test booklet to record their scores by filling in the appropriate circles. The "**School Code**" and "**Accommodations Used**" sections should also be completed (see accommodations in the *General Information Bulletin* for information). If a teacher wants to know how his or her locally awarded scores compare with the scores that the tests received when scored centrally, then he or she must create a three-digit identification number and enter it in the section labelled "**ID No.**" on the back of each student booklet. No two teachers from the same school should create and use the same ID number. **No other marks are to be made in the test booklet by the teacher.**

Tests are to be returned to Alberta Education according to the scheduling information in the online *General Information Bulletin*. The tests will then be scored centrally by Alberta Education as the second reading. Both sets of scores are used when calculating each student's final mark. In the case of a discrepancy between these two sets of scores, papers will receive a third reading. All three sets of scores will be used to determine the final scores that a paper is awarded. In this way, valid and reliable individual and group results can be reported. Papers that are **not assessed locally** by teachers will be **scored centrally only once**.

After central marking has been completed and school reports have been sent to the schools, teachers who submitted their scores with an ID number will receive a confidential report on their marking. This report is called the **Local Marker Report** and includes the locally awarded scores, centrally awarded scores, third-read scores if applicable, and the final scores assigned.

Teachers may make photocopies of student writing from only the English Language Arts *Part A: Writing* tests after the May administration of the test for inclusion in portfolios of the year's work. Copies can be made for parents who request them.

The levels of student achievement in the scoring guides are identified by specific words to describe student achievement in each scoring category. Classroom teachers are encouraged to discuss and use the scoring criteria with their students during the year.

To determine a student's mark, convert the word descriptors to the following numeric values: Excellent = 5, Proficient = 4, Satisfactory = 3, Limited = 2, Poor = 1.

A total score for a student’s written response may be calculated by a teacher using the following procedure. For the **Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment**, assign a score of 1 to 5 for each of *Content*, *Organization*, *Sentence Structure*, *Vocabulary*, and *Conventions*. Then, multiply the scores for *Content* and *Organization* by 2 as these categories are worth twice as much as the other categories. The maximum score possible for Narrative/Essay Writing is 35. For the **Functional Writing Assignment**, assign a score of 1 to 5 for each of *Content* and *Content Management*. Then, multiply each score by 2. The maximum score possible for Functional Writing is 20. To calculate the **Total Part A: Writing Score**, add the Narrative/Essay Writing and Functional Writing scores as follows: **Narrative/Essay Writing /35 (63.6%) + Functional Writing /20 (36.4%) = Total Score /55 (100%)**. The mark for *Part A: Writing* is worth 50% of the total mark for the Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test.

Because students’ responses to the *Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment* vary widely—from philosophical discussions to personal narratives to creative approaches—assessment of the *Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment* on the achievement test will be in the context of Louise Rosenblatt’s suggestion that “the evaluation of the answers would be in terms of the amount of evidence that the youngster has actually read something and thought about it, not a question of whether, necessarily, he has thought about it the way an adult would, or given an adult’s ‘correct answer.’”

Rosenblatt, Louise. “The Reader’s Contribution in the Literary Experience: Interview with Louise Rosenblatt.” By Lionel Wilson. *English Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (Spring, 1981): 3–12.

Consider also Grant P. Wiggins’ suggestion to assess students’ writing “with the tact of Socrates: tact to respect the student’s ideas enough to enter them fully—even more fully than the thinker sometimes—and thus the tact to accept apt but unanticipatable or unique responses.”

Wiggins, Grant P. *Assessing Student Performance: Exploring the Purpose and Limits of Testing*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993, p. 40.

To assess locally those students with special test-writing needs, specifically a scribed response (test accommodation 5) or a taped response (test accommodation 10), teachers are to refrain from scoring **Conventions** for *Assignment I: Narrative/Essay Writing* as well as **Content Management** for *Assignment II: Functional Writing*.

Scoring Guide: Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment

Content

When marking **Content** appropriate for the Grade 9 Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment, the marker should consider how effectively the student

- explores the topic
- establishes a purpose
- presents ideas
- supports the response
- considers the reader

Cross-Reference to Outcomes in the Program of Studies for Grade 9 English Language Arts: 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3

<p>Excellent</p> <p>E</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student’s exploration of the topic is insightful and/or imaginative. • The student’s purpose, whether stated or implied, is deliberate. • The ideas presented by the student are perceptive and/or carefully chosen. • Supporting details are precise and/or original. • The writing is confident and/or creative and holds the reader’s interest.
<p>Proficient</p> <p>Pf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student’s exploration of the topic is adept and/or plausible. • The student’s purpose, whether stated or implied, is intentional. • The ideas presented by the student are thoughtful and/or sound. • Supporting details are specific and/or apt. • The writing is considered and/or elaborated and draws the reader’s interest.
<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>S</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student’s exploration of the topic is clear and/or logical. • The student’s purpose, whether stated or implied, is evident. • The ideas presented by the student are appropriate and/or predictable. • Supporting details are relevant and/or generic. • The writing is straightforward and/or generalized and occasionally appeals to the reader’s interest.
<p>Limited</p> <p>L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student’s exploration of the topic is tenuous and/or simplistic. • The student’s purpose, whether stated or implied, is vague. • The ideas presented by the student are superficial and/or ambiguous. • Supporting details are imprecise and/or abbreviated. • The writing is uncertain and/or incomplete and does not appeal to the reader’s interest.
<p>Poor</p> <p>P</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student’s exploration of the topic is minimal and/or tangential. • The student’s purpose, whether stated or implied, is insubstantial. • The ideas presented by the student are overgeneralized and/or underdeveloped. • Supporting details are irrelevant and/or scant. • The writing is confusing and/or lacks validity and does not interest the reader.
<p>Insufficient</p> <p>INS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to address the task presented in the assignment, or the student has written so little that it is not possible to assess Content.

Note: **Content** and **Organization** are weighted to be worth twice as much as the other scoring categories.

Student work must address the task presented in the assignment. Responses that are completely unrelated to the topic and/or prompts will be awarded a score of **Insufficient**.

Organization

When marking **Organization** appropriate for the Grade 9 Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment, the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- focus
- coherent order
- connections between events and/or details
- closure

Cross-Reference to Outcomes in the Program of Studies for Grade 9 English Language Arts: 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3

<p>Excellent E</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction is engaging and skillfully establishes a focus that is consistently sustained. • Events and/or details are developed in a judicious order, and coherence is maintained. • Transitions, either explicit or implicit, fluently connect events and/or details within and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs. • Closure is effective and related to the focus.
<p>Proficient Pf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction is purposeful and clearly establishes a focus that is capably sustained. • Events and/or details are developed in a sensible order, and coherence is generally maintained. • Transitions, either explicit or implicit, clearly connect events and/or details within and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs. • Closure is appropriate and related to the focus.
<p>Satisfactory S</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction is functional and establishes a focus that is generally sustained. • Events and/or details are developed in a discernible order, although coherence may falter occasionally. • Transitions, either explicit or implicit, tend to be mechanical and are generally used to connect events and/or details within and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs. • Closure is related to the focus and is mechanical and/or artificial.
<p>Limited L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction lacks purpose and/or is not functional; any focus established provides little direction and/or is not sustained. • The development of events and/or details is not clearly discernible, and coherence falters frequently. • Transitions, either explicit or implicit, are lacking and/or indiscriminately used to connect events and/or details within and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs. • Closure is abrupt, contrived, and/or unrelated to the focus.
<p>Poor P</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction, if present, is obscure and/or ineffective; any focus established provides no direction and/or is undeveloped. • The development of events and/or details is haphazard and/or incoherent. • Transitions, either explicit or implicit, are absent and/or inappropriately used to connect events and/or details within and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs. • Closure is ineffectual or missing.
<p>Insufficient INS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response has been awarded an INS for Content.

Note: **Content** and **Organization** are weighted to be worth twice as much as the other scoring categories.

Sentence Structure

When marking **Sentence Structure** appropriate for the Grade 9 Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the extent to which

- sentence structure is controlled
- sentence type and sentence length are effective and varied
- sentence beginnings are varied

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.

Cross-Reference to Outcomes in the Program of Studies for Grade 9 English Language Arts: 4.1, 4.2

<p>Excellent E</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled. • Sentence type and sentence length are consistently effective and varied. • Sentence beginnings are consistently varied.
<p>Proficient Pf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure is consistently controlled. • Sentence type and sentence length are usually effective and varied. • Sentence beginnings are often varied.
<p>Satisfactory S</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure is generally controlled, but lapses may occasionally impede meaning. • Sentence type and sentence length are sometimes effective and/or varied. • Some variety of sentence beginnings is evident.
<p>Limited L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure often lacks control, and this may impede meaning. • Sentence type and sentence length are seldom effective and/or varied; syntactic structures are frequently awkward. • There is little variety of sentence beginnings.
<p>Poor P</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure generally lacks control, and this often impedes meaning. • There is essentially no variation in sentence type or sentence length; syntactic structures are unintelligible. • There is essentially no variety of sentence beginnings.
<p>Insufficient INS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response has been awarded an INS for Content.

Vocabulary

When marking **Vocabulary** appropriate for the Grade 9 Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the

- accuracy of the words and expressions
- effectiveness of the words and expressions
- appropriateness and effectiveness of the voice/tone created by the student

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.

Cross-Reference to Outcomes in the Program of Studies for Grade 9 English Language Arts: 4.1, 4.2

<p>Excellent E</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions are used accurately and deliberately. • Precise words and expressions are used to create vivid images and/or to enrich details. • The voice/tone created by the student is convincing.
<p>Proficient Pf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions are often used accurately. • Specific words and expressions show some evidence of careful selection and/or some awareness of connotative effect. • The voice/tone created by the student is distinct.
<p>Satisfactory S</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions are generally used appropriately. • General words and expressions are used adequately to clarify meaning. • The voice/tone created by the student is discernible but may be inconsistent or uneven.
<p>Limited L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions are often used inexactly. • Imprecise words and expressions predominate; specific words, if present, may be improperly used. • The voice/tone created by the student is not clearly established or is indistinct.
<p>Poor P</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions are generally used inaccurately. • Ineffective words and expressions predominate; specific words, if present, are frequently misused. • The voice/tone created by the student is not evident or is indiscreet.
<p>Insufficient INS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response has been awarded an INS for Content.

Conventions

When marking **Conventions** appropriate for the Grade 9 Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the extent to which the student has control of

- mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, indentation for new speakers, etc.) and usage (subject-verb agreement, pronoun-antecedent agreement, etc.)
- clarity and flow of the response

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.

Cross-Reference to Outcomes in the Program of Studies for Grade 9 English Language Arts: 4.2

<p>Excellent E</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the writing is enhanced because it is essentially error-free. • Any errors that are present do not reduce clarity and/or do not interrupt the flow of the response.
<p>Proficient Pf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the writing is sustained because it contains only minor convention errors. • Any errors that are present rarely reduce clarity and/or seldom interrupt the flow of the response.
<p>Satisfactory S</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the writing is sustained through generally correct use of conventions. • Errors occasionally reduce clarity and/or sometimes interrupt the flow of the response.
<p>Limited L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the writing is weakened by the frequently incorrect use of conventions. • Errors blur clarity and/or interrupt the flow of the response.
<p>Poor P</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the writing is impaired by the consistently incorrect use of conventions. • Errors severely reduce clarity and/or impede the flow of the response.
<p>Insufficient INS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response has been awarded an INS for Content.

Part A: Writing – *Description and Instructions*

Grade 9 Achievement Test

English Language Arts

Part A: Writing

Description

Part A: Writing contributes 50% of the total Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test mark and consists of two assignments:

- **Assignment I:**

Narrative / Essay Writing

This assignment contains some material for you to consider. You must then respond in writing to the topic presented in the assignment. You should take about 70 minutes to complete Assignment I.

Value: Approximately 65% of the total Part A: Writing test mark

- **Assignment II:**

Functional Writing

This assignment describes a situation to which you must respond in the format of a business letter. You should take about 40 minutes to complete Assignment II.

Value: Approximately 35% of the total Part A: Writing test mark

Before beginning to write, you will have 10 minutes to talk with your classmates (in groups of two to four) about both writing assignments or to think about them alone. During this time, you may record your ideas on the *Planning* pages provided.

This test was developed to be completed in two hours; however, you may take an additional 30 minutes to complete the test.

Do not write your name anywhere in this booklet. You may make corrections and revisions directly on your written work.

2015

Instructions

- You **may** use the following **print** references:
 - a dictionary (English and/or bilingual)
 - a thesaurus
- Complete **both** assignments.
- Record your ideas and/or make a **plan** before you write. Do this on the *Planning* pages.
- Write in pencil, or blue or black ink, on the lined pages provided.
- You are to do only **one handwritten copy** of your writing.

Additional Instructions for Students Using Word Processors

- **Format** your work using an **easy-to-read** 12-point or larger font, such as Times.
- **Double-space** your **final printed copy**. For the Functional Writing assignment, this should be applied to the body of the business letter but not to the other parts.
- **Staple** your printed work to the page indicated for word-processed work for each assignment. Hand in **all** work.
- **Indicate** in the space provided on the back cover that you have attached **word-processed** pages.
- You may make handwritten corrections and revisions directly on your printed work.

Assignment I: Narrative/Essay Writing

(suggested time—70 minutes)

Assignment

Write either a narrative or an essay about **the importance of overcoming obstacles in life**. You may wish to write about yourself or other people, real or fictional. You may set your writing in the past, present, or future.

Ideas

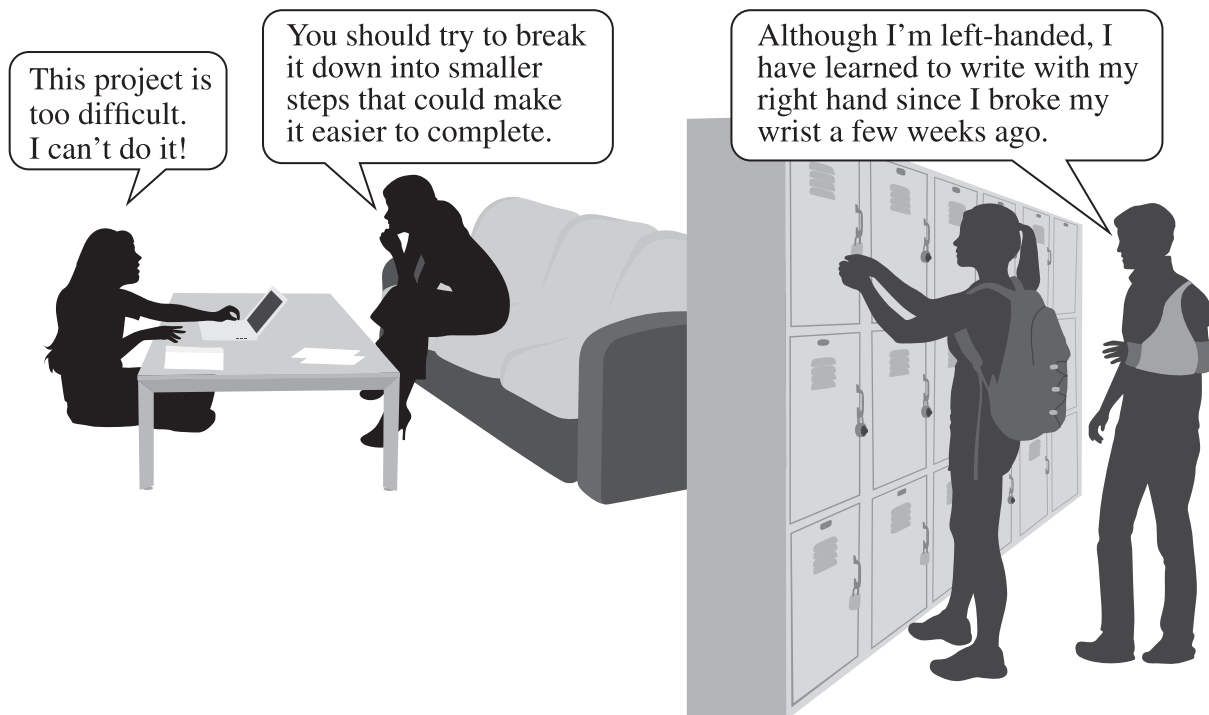
The following material may give you ideas for your writing. **You do not have to refer directly to any of it.** Consider the knowledge and experience you have gained from reading, listening, viewing, discussing, thinking, or imagining.

Another source of greatness is difficulty. When any work seems to have required immense force and labour to effect it, the idea is grand.

—*Edmund Burke*

Nothing upon earth is without its difficulties! It is the secret impulse within, it is the love and the delight we feel, that help us to conquer obstacles, to clear out new paths, and to overleap the bounds of that narrow circle in which others poorly toil.

—*Johann Goethe*



Burke, Edmund. "Difficulty." In *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful: With an Introductory Discourse Concerning Taste, and Several Other Additions*. London: Printed for A. Robertson & Co., 1824.

Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship and Travels*. New York: A. L. Burt, 1839.

First by right comes the true explorer, for whom travel is not a means, but an end in itself. [...] For him the life of the trail, the triumph over obstacles, the thrill of danger, are things in themselves desirable and beyond price; his reward lies not in the attainment, but in the quest.

—*Roland Dixon*

I believe that difficulties are more important to the human mind than what we call assistances. Work we all must, if we mean to bring out and perfect our nature. Even if we do not work with the hands, we must undergo equivalent toil in some other direction. No business or study which does not present obstacles, tasking to the full the intellect and the will, is worthy of a man.

—*William Channing*

We lost our first game but, if we practise and work together as a team, we will win the next one!



When I moved to Canada, I had to learn English in order to get a job. Hard work and determination helped me gain the skills I needed to be successful.



Dixon, Roland Burrage. "Voyages and Travel: General Introduction." In *Lectures on the Harvard Classics*. Edited by William Allan Neilson. The Harvard Classics. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1914.

Channing, William Ellery. "On the Elevation of the Laboring Classes." In *The Works of William E. Channing*. New and Complete Edition, Rearranged. Boston: American Unitarian Association, 1886.

When writing, be sure to

- **consider** your **audience**
- **focus** on your **purpose** and **point of view**
- **organize** your **thoughts** appropriately in sentences and paragraphs
- **use vocabulary** that is interesting and effective
- **edit** your **work** directly on your writing
- **budget** your **time**

Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2015: General Impressions

Throughout the 2015 marking session, every effort was made to reward student strengths where evident rather than to critique what was missing or speculate on what a student should have added or included. When marking student responses, markers were encouraged to conscientiously return to the “**Focus**” section of the scoring categories to consider the extent to which each student had demonstrated competence in the criteria listed. There are several scoring descriptors in each scoring category to be assessed in order to arrive at judgments regarding the qualities of a response. Markers were encouraged to review—at the start of each marking day—each assignment and the prompt materials provided in the test booklet with the expectation that many students’ ideas regarding the assignments were informed by details within the prompts. Occasionally, markers needed to re-read a response to appreciate what a student had attempted and, in fact, accomplished. All markers acknowledged that student responses were first drafts written under time constraints.

In the **Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment**, students were required to “Write either a narrative or an essay about **the importance of overcoming obstacles in life.**” This assignment was accessible for students at all levels of achievement. The **literary prompts**—that included quotations from works by Edmund Burke (as in “Another source of greatness is difficulty. When any work seems to have required immense force and labour to effect it, the idea is grand.”), Johann Goethe (as in “Nothing upon earth is without its difficulties! It is the secret impulse within, it is the love and the delight we feel, that helps us to conquer obstacles, to clear out new paths, and to overleap the bounds of that narrow circle in which others poorly toil.”), Roland Dixon (as in “First by right comes the true explorer, for whom travel is not a means, but an end in itself. [...] For him the life of the trail, the triumph over obstacles, the thrill of danger, are things in themselves desirable and beyond price; his reward lies not in the attainment, but in the quest.”), and William Channing (as in “I believe that difficulties are more important to the human mind than what we call assistances. Work we all must, if we mean to bring out and perfect our nature. Even if we do not work with the hands, we must undergo equivalent toil in some other direction. No business or study which does not present obstacles, tasking to the full the intellect and the will, is worthy of a man.”)—provided many students with opportunities to explore ideas related to overcoming obstacles in life.

The **visual prompts**—that included two girls having a conversation (wherein one girl states “This project is too difficult. I can’t do it!” and the other girl says “You should try to break it down into smaller steps that could make it easier to complete.”), a student with an arm in a sling speaking to another student in a school hallway (saying “Although I’m left-handed, I have learned to write with my right hand since I broke my wrist a few weeks ago.”), a coach speaking to members of a sports team (saying “We lost our first game but, if we practise and work together as a team, we will win the next one!”), and an elderly woman speaking to a boy (saying “When I moved to Canada, I had to learn English in order to get a job. Hard work and determination helped me gain the skills I needed to be successful.”)—also offered students a variety of ideas to choose to explore in their responses.

In responses to the Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment, many students addressed the topic through a discussion of terms synonymous with “obstacles”—including “challenges,” “difficulties,” “obstructions,” “impediments,” “hindrances,” and “barriers”—and commented on the importance of “dealing with,” “addressing,” “resolving,” or “coming to terms with” a variety of antagonistic forces. When developing their responses, a number of students responded to the

assignment by recounting or explaining situations in which individuals have striven to overcome obstacles. Such responses examined experiences associated with moving to a new city or country, going to a different school, doing homework, studying in order to pass a test in a difficult subject, or playing a sport. Other responses documented obstacles to be overcome when learning how to drive, recovering from a physical injury, or enduring mistreatment when being bullied or discriminated against by other students. Still others commented on the obstacles inherent in advancements in technology, including conflicts arising from interactions on social media such as Facebook.

Some students analyzed character traits that enable individuals to overcome obstacles in their lives. Perseverance, determination, adaptability, courageousness, and optimism were among the traits students deemed necessary for success in overcoming obstacles. Other students reflected on personal experiences and elaborated on the value of having the support of siblings, parents, grandparents, and/or friends when overcoming obstacles. In some responses, students presented a process analysis of the sequence of steps involved in being able to overcome obstacles or offered advice regarding the benefits of breaking complex tasks down into smaller parts, staying focused on a goal, and putting in great effort.

A number of students elucidated on the benefits of being able to overcome obstacles such as becoming stronger emotionally and physically, gaining a feeling of accomplishment, building confidence, being proud of one's achievements, and learning life lessons. Still others spoke of the value of overcoming obstacles in empowering individuals to strengthen their character, earn the respect of others, and avoid having personal regrets. Some students chose to support their ideas with a discussion of the obstacles overcome by celebrities in professional sports (such as Michael Jordan, Usain Bolt, and Brett Favre), the music industry (such as Taylor Swift, Nick Jonas, and Lenny Kravitz), or television and movies (such as Oprah Winfrey, Ellen DeGeneres, and Angelina Jolie) as well as historical figures (such as Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Terry Fox), political leaders (such as Barack Obama, Nelson Mandela, and Sir Winston Churchill), and notable humanitarians (such as Bill Gates, Maya Angelou, and Mother Teresa). Other students referenced characters from literary works including *The Wild Children*, *Touching Spirit Bear*, *The Giver*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *Ender's Game* or incorporated elements from video games such as *Dragon Age*, *Skyrim*, and *Assassin's Creed* into their responses.

The **Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment** provided students with myriad opportunities to successfully demonstrate their attainment of text creation outcomes in the Program of Studies. Most students succeeded in meeting the achievement standards expected of students in the Narrative/Essay Writing Assignment on *Part A: Writing* of the 2015 Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test.

Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2015: Qualities of Student Writing that Did Not Meet the Acceptable Standard

Student writing scored “**Poor**” or “**Limited**” in “**Content**” was often characterized by an exploration of the topic that was tenuous, simplistic, minimal, and/or tangential. For example, some students discussed the topic in absolute terms, through statements such as “When you give up just like you will always have a harder life,” “It dosent matter if you handle the obsacle good or bad it dosent matter you will always get over it,” and “Obstacles keep you doing the same thing over and over and you don’t know that to do about it.” In some responses, students quoted randomly from the prompts provided without elaborating on them or connecting them to ideas presented. In other responses, students depicted scenarios in which little context was provided regarding a character’s personality, circumstances, or behaviour in the synopsis of events presented. Some students addressed the topic through ambiguous declarations such as “You will never get very far if you dont give up in a sanario where its hard or confusing” and “Everyones obstacles are different because we all have different interests and different views on the world and skills.” Students at this level of achievement often struggled with clarifying their ideas in relation to the topic and were not always successful in conveying their thoughts clearly and completely.

The following excerpts were taken from student responses awarded “**Poor**” or “**Limited**” scores:

- “About 2 years ago i spraned my ankel and i couldnt play soccer for 2 months so i ran ever day to stay in shape so i was able to play again i could still keep up with everone and not fall behind in any thing. [...] If i didnt i could of been done with soccer or just gave up.”
- “If you were getting a new job and you never thought that you could get it because you don’t have much experience with that kind of work. That is the best felling because you will get to learn things. [...] If you get mad when you don’t get things right the first time and you have to keep trying till you get it. If you ever loss in some kind of sport you probally feel sad if you are really into that sport. All you have to do is try harder.”
- “How my cuzin broke his arm well frist of all he was riding his friends bike and flue front words and landed on his arm and broke it. So when he played guitar hero he can go Jimy Hendrix and he got into a fight and he won because he’s the best. And this time he broke his arm doing the same thing but this time not as bad.”
- “Obsticles are important to have them because with out them life would be very boring. For example if we didn’t have to try in school people would not come to school and they would fall asleep if they did so people would not get jobs because they didn’t go to school and didn’t learn for that job.”
- “Over comeing obstacles gives you a sence of accomplishment beacuse when you accomplish your goal you feel good it will make you happier when you accomplish your goal. [...] So that’s why you need to over come obstacles to feel a feeling of accomplishment.”
- “Anne and Natalie were the coolest friends ever. They were always with each other ever time. When ever they went out they always stuck together they never leave each other behind they always had each other to have support. [...] They never ever had fights or arguements or get mad at each other because they never do. When they were little they use to get mad but now not any more. They would always be just like sisters.”
- “If you do not over com obstacals you will not get any ware in life and some obstacals they can kill you, for example hanging over a cliff by a braking branch and you have the choice to jump to a safty spot or hang on to the root you would have to over com obstacals. [...] If you do not over com obstacals and you are hanging on that cliff you arnt going to make it to the safe spot you would die. And that’s why over coming obstacals is important.”

- “Jon all ways wanted to be a cop. He all ways tried his hardest and work hard practis till he got it right for example his education he studded alot at math, soc, sience, and LA and got the markes he needed to go to collage. [...] He learnt how to brake the work down and work as a team so when he was a cop he could have a chose for back up aka teamwork or solo on an armed guy with bomb. He chose back up and work as a team and was able to seccsed.”
- “Adam Swift was a 14 year old boy his pasion as a kid was one to be come a basket ball player. He learnd the skills to play basket ball he was new to it at first but kept on trying until he knew he was ready to play on a basket ball team. [...] Even though he wasnt the best he lead his team to the finals 3 years later ended up playing for a colleg team in New York.”
- “Coachs are people that help other people with obstecles in sports, they help them practis. They help people do good they cheer them on even if they arent doing that good. They help people when they go to the real game. They are very nice people but somtimes they are tough on you. They tell you to do better and some a lot of paitence but some have no paitence and that is onother obstecle you have but you have to keep trying.”

In student responses scored “**Poor**” or “**Limited**” in “**Content**,” such as those from which these excerpts were taken, the purpose was vague or insubstantial. Ideas presented were superficial, ambiguous, overgeneralized, and/or underdeveloped. Supporting details were imprecise, abbreviated, irrelevant, and/or scant. The writing was uncertain, incomplete, confusing, and/or lacking in validity with little appeal to the reader’s interest. In “**Organization**,” the introduction lacked purpose and was obscure, ineffective, and/or not functional. The development of events and/or details was not clearly discernible, haphazard, and/or incoherent. Transitions were lacking, indiscriminately used, absent, and/or inappropriately used to connect events and/or details within and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs. Closure was abrupt, contrived, unrelated to the focus, ineffectual, and/or missing. “**Sentence Structure**,” “**Vocabulary**,” and “**Conventions**” in responses receiving scores of “**Poor**” or “**Limited**” typically demonstrated a lack of control and little or no variety in sentence structure. Imprecise and/or ineffective words and expressions were used inexactly or inaccurately. The voice or tone created by the student was indistinct, not clearly established, indiscreet, and/or not evident. Errors in conventions weakened or impaired communication, blurred or reduced clarity, and interrupted or impeded the flow of the response.

As is often the case each year, the connection between the assignment and the ideas contained in some student responses was difficult to determine. Markers were to consult with group leaders when drawing conclusions about whether or not a response sufficiently addressed the task presented in the assignment. Most often, there was evidence that the student had implicitly addressed the topic and/or prompts, and the response was assessed. If, however, extensive examination of a student’s work by both a marker and a group leader led to the conclusion that the response was “**Insufficient**,” then the floor supervisors in consultation with the team leader made a final judgment.

Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2015: Qualities of Student Writing that Met the Acceptable Standard

In many responses that received a score of “**Satisfactory**” in “**Content**,” students presented ideas stemming from the premise that “In everything you do, there will be obstacles. Because you cannot avoid them, you need to try to find ways to deal with them.” Some students suggested that facing “day to day” obstacles prepares us for the “really big obstacles we may encounter in life.” Others presented examples of individuals whose obstacles include learning a new language, making new friends, and rebounding from the breakup of a personal relationship. A number of students examined the struggles of individuals in attempting to deal with peer pressure, the loss of a loved one, addictions to alcohol or drugs, or eating disorders. Still other students purported that overcoming obstacles requires “a positive attitude,” “hard work,” “the will to survive,” and “the ability to focus on your goals.” In some responses, students spoke of how confronting obstacles enables individuals to “learn from mistakes,” “decrease stress levels,” and keep “moving forward in life to a better future.” In other responses, students commented on the value of “believing in yourself” when attempting to overcome obstacles, “facing obstacles as soon as they happen,” and “improving your skills by creating new ones that you probably never knew you had.” In addition, a number of students acknowledged that “When overcoming an obstacle it’s okay to ask for help from others” and some noted how “by overcoming obstacles, you can help others do the same.”

The following excerpts illustrate some of the ideas presented by students whose responses were awarded “**Satisfactory**” scores:

- “Cory was just a regular boy in a regular school trying to get through so he can get somewhere later in life. But he is being bullied by some other kids at his school. [...] Once Cory told his parents what was going on, they met with the school principle and the parent’s of the other boys. They were able to make the other boy’s apologize to Cory and from that day on Cory was able to go about his day without him worrying about being bullied by these boys any more.”
- “Our team, the storm raiders haven’t won a game all season which was not helping our teams self-esteem. Nobody ever went to practice because nobody cared. [...] Coach confronted us all one day telling us if we don’t want to be losers we need to work hard. Nobody wanted to be a loser so we all showed up for practice. [...] Running obstacles, jumping hurdles, tackling, we did every kind of exerise you can think of over and over. [...] The next game was against the wild cats. [...] We tied the game and we needed one more touchdown. 24 seconds and our quarterback threw the winning touchdown. [...] All our hard work paid off and we over-came an obstacle and won our first game.”
- “Obstacles are in every day of our life. Some are easier and some are harder than others to overcome. [...] By pursueing through obstacles, you get stronger and smarter so you can set yourself up for success when your older, because you have all these skills and stratigies for getting over obstacles. Soon overcoming obstacles will get easier if you practice, break bad habits, and never give up.”
- “Many teenagers and adults go through rough times in their life. But the ones that can deal with those rough times are the ones that have stratagies and skills that help them with these situations. The three skills and stratagies that are good to have while dealing with a tough situation are having a strong mind, physically strong body, and to have self-motivation.”
- “Marcus sat on the edge of his bed. It had been four years since the bear attack and he didn’t feel any better about it now then he did when it happened. He dreamed about it all the time. Every week he went to a specialist who tried but couldn’t help him. No matter how hard Marcus tried he couldn’t over come this barrier in his life.”

- “Peoples lives are full of constant emotional trouble. We get caught up in stress and question if we should keep following our goals. It gets to the point where you want to quit trying. But at the end of the day, no matter how hard you try to run away from your obstacles, you can’t do it. You have to keep trying and it will help you discover new things, have better self esteem and we are prepared for the upcoming obstacles that haven’t happened yet.”
- “Life is all about overcoming obsticals. From the time we’re born untill we take our very last breathe we are overcoming obsticals. These obsticals make us better people and give us a better life. We learn alot from them and without overcoming obsticals we wouldn’t be able to do half the things we want to. The obsticals we face are not there to punish us or tear us down. They are there to reward us and build us into better people.”
- “When I was young I strived to be the best at soccer but I was always the shortest person. I spent every day playing in the field against the taller kids. I would always lose and I wanted to give up. But I would always keep on practicing. [...] After many years and a lot of practice I became very skilled at soccer and I was able to play against the other players that were bigger then me. What I learned from this is that I am capable of solving my own personal issues as long as I am willing to never give up.”
- “Many years ago when I was a child my parents decided to move to Canada in order to get me a better education and a brighter future. It was a long process which took us five years, my parents hard work and lots of English and French grammar books. [...] Even though I can not say it was easy when we first came here my parents new that they would have to overcome obstacles in their journey. They showed me that any obstacles can be overcome and I am grateful for it.”
- “Sometimes you have to face many different obstacles in life. But the real problem is overcoming them. Like when you first learned how to ride a bike, you most likely didn’t know how to ride a bike right from the start. You had to practice. That’s how it is with most other things in life. If you want to do good at sports you need to keep practicing so that you can get better and better.”

In narrative and essay responses scored “**Satisfactory**” in “**Content**,” such as those from which these excerpts were taken, the students’ exploration of the topic was clear and/or logical, the purpose was evident, relevant and/or generic details were provided to support appropriate and/or predictable ideas, and the writing was straightforward and/or generalized and occasionally appealed to the reader’s interest. The “**Organization**” of such responses was characterized by a functional introduction that established a focus that was generally sustained, events and/or details that were developed in a discernible order, transitions that mechanically connected events and/or details within and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs, and a mechanical and/or artificial closure that was related to the focus. Student responses scored “**Satisfactory**” in “**Sentence Structure**,” “**Vocabulary**,” and “**Conventions**” demonstrated generally controlled and sometimes effective and/or varied sentence structure, general words and expressions that were generally used appropriately, a discernible voice or tone, generally correct use of conventions, and errors that occasionally reduced clarity and/or sometimes interrupted the flow of the response.

Student Exemplar – Satisfactory (Essay)

Assignment I: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

Importance of overcoming obstacles in life:

- It keeps our lives moving forward
- It means we are trying to have the best life possible
- It shows that we believe in a better future

The Importance of Overcoming Obstacles (Title)

Each and every person on this planet runs into obstacles during their life time.

All of these people overcome their personal obstacles in their own way. The importance of overcoming our personal obstacles is that it keeps our lives moving forward, and it means we are trying to have the best life possible, and it shows that we believe in a better future.

Overcoming an obstacle is important because it keeps our lives moving forward. This means that if we didn't hit any obstacles or chose to ignore them our lives would just keep repeating themselves because there is no reason to do something differently. An example of this would be if you wrote a test without being prepared and failed but you did the exact same thing a short time later and you ignored your first failure.

Overcoming obstacles is also important because it means we are trying to have the best life possible. IF we were to ignore all the problems and issues in the world it would show that we don't really care about ourselves or others. But if we do care about all these problems and issues it shows that we want to have a good life and we want others to have a good life. A real life example is the recent disaster in japan and how every country tried to help overcome the obstacle and show that they cared about all the people effected.

A third reason why overcoming obstacles is important to everyone is that it shows that we want a better future for everyone. IF we didn't want a better future then why would we care about all the disasters in the world such as oil spills or earthquakes. IF we didn't overcome obstacles like the ones I recently mentioned

then there wouldn't be a future for anyone and by overcoming them we show that we care for the welfare of all the people in the world.

Overcoming obstacles is an important thing for ourselves, moving our lives forward, for the world, having and giving to others the best life possible, and for the future. This is why we should overcome any obstacles that find us.

Rationale for Student Exemplar – Satisfactory (Essay)

Title: “The Importance of Overcoming Obstacles”

Score	Reporting Category
S	<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="345 432 1421 575"> <p>S • The student’s exploration of the topic in the discussion of how “overcoming our personal obstacles” is important in that “it keeps our lives moving forward,” “it means we are trying to have the best life possible,” and “it shows that we believe in a better future” is clear.</p> <li data-bbox="345 600 1421 743"> <p>S • The student’s purpose (to argue that because “Each and every person on this planet runs into obstacles during their life time,” overcoming “personal obstacles” enables individuals to keep their “lives moving forward,” strive for “the best life possible,” and “want a better future for everyone”) is evident.</p> <li data-bbox="345 768 1421 987"> <p>S • The ideas presented by the student in counterarguments related to how—“if we didn’t hit any obstacles or chose to ignore them”—“our lives would just keep repeating themselves because there is no reason to do something differently,” “it would show that we don’t really care about ourselves or others,” and “there wouldn’t be a future for anyone” are appropriate and predictable.</p> <li data-bbox="345 1012 1421 1230"> <p>S • Supporting details pertaining to writing “a test without being prepared,” failing, and doing “the exact same thing a short time later” because “you ignored your first failure,” “the recent disaster in Japan and how every country tried to help overcome the obstacle,” and caring “about all the disasters in the world such as oil spills or earthquakes” are relevant and generic.</p> <li data-bbox="345 1255 1421 1432"> <p>S • The writing is straightforward and generalized (as shown in “But if we do care about all these problems and issues it shows that we want to have a good life and we want others to have a good life”) and the personalization of the discussion (as in “by overcoming them we show that we care for the welfare of all the people in the world”) occasionally appeals to the reader’s interest.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
S	<p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="342 279 1406 499">S • The opening (“Each and every person on this planet runs into obstacles during their life time. All of these people overcome their personal obstacles in their own way”) in the introduction is functional, and establishes a focus (on the value of obstacles in keeping “our lives moving forward,” having “the best life possible,” and believing “in a better future”) that is generally sustained. <li data-bbox="342 520 1414 741">S • Details regarding how “Overcoming an obstacle is important because it keeps our lives moving forward,” how “Overcoming obstacles is also important because it means we are trying to have the best life possible,” and how “A third reason why overcoming obstacles is important to everyone is that it shows that we want a better future for everyone” are developed in a discernible order. <li data-bbox="342 762 1390 909">S • Transitions—as in “An example of this would be,” “A real life example is the recent disaster in japan,” and “If we didn’t want a better future then why would we”—tend to be mechanical and are generally used to connect details within and between sentences and paragraphs. <li data-bbox="342 930 1406 1108">S • The restatement of ideas (in “Overcoming obstacles is an important thing for ourselves, moving our lives forward, for the world, having and giving to others the best life possible, and for the future”) in the closure is mechanical, and the concluding affirmation (that “This is why we should overcome any obstacles that find us”) is related to the focus.
S	<p>Sentence Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="342 1203 1406 1465">S • As illustrated in “This means that if we didn’t hit any obstacles or chose to ignore them our lives would just keep repeating them selves because there is no reason to do something differently,” sentence structure is generally controlled, but lapses (as in “An example of this would be if you wrote a test without being prepared and failed but you did the exact same thing a short time later and you ignored your first failure”) may occasionally impede meaning. <li data-bbox="342 1486 1398 1633">S • Sentence type and sentence length—as in “If we didn’t overcome obstacles like the ones I recently mentioned then there wouldn’t be a future for anyone and by overcoming them we show that we care for the welfare of all the people in the world”—are sometimes effective and varied. <li data-bbox="342 1654 1406 1801">S • Some variety of sentence beginnings (such as in “Each and every person on this planet,” “The importance of overcoming our personal obstacles is that,” “Overcoming an obstacle is important because,” “But if we do,” “A third reason why,” “If we didn’t,” and “This is why we should”) is evident. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="342 279 1406 426">S • As seen in “keeps our lives moving forward,” “the best life possible,” “a better future,” “do something differently,” “Overcoming obstacles is also important because,” “it shows that we want to have,” and “an important thing for ourselves,” words and expressions are generally used appropriately. <li data-bbox="342 447 1406 594">S • General words and expressions (as in “All of these people,” “chose to ignore them,” “the exact same thing,” “care about all these problems and issues,” “a good life,” “important to everyone,” “all the disasters in the world,” and “all the people in the world”) are used adequately to clarify meaning. <li data-bbox="342 615 1406 720">S • The tone created by the student—in declarative statements such as “If we were to ignore all the problems and issues in the world it would show that we don’t really care about ourselves or others”—is discernible. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="342 888 1406 1035">S • The quality of the writing is sustained through generally correct use of conventions—as demonstrated in “A real life example is the recent disaster in japan and how every country tryed to help overcome the obstacle and show that they cared about all the people effected.” <li data-bbox="342 1056 1406 1161">S • Errors (such as in “their life time,” “belive,” “faild,” “faliure,” “obsicals,” “earthquaks,” “obsticals,” “wellfare,” “forrward,” and “posible”) occasionally reduce the clarity of the response. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Student Exemplar – Satisfactory (Narrative)

Assignment I: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

- *Volley ball
- *How much we improved
- *The difficulties we had as a team
- * Getting the team together

Just a little Communication

It was another season for volleyball. All of us players were practicing Wednesday afternoon for our first game on Thursday. Most of us were quite good but we are not the best at working with each other. In practice games we wait for someone else to play the ball and it hits the floor and we all seem to crash into each other when we all go to play the ball.

Kirk served the ball when Coach Kline blew the whistle. When the ball came over the net Dean, Cameron, Shane and me all went to play it. We landed in a pile in the middle of the court and the ball went passed us. Coach blew his whistle and came up to us saying, "You guys need to learn to talk to each other!" He told us that from now on anytime the ball hits the floor, the players that are near it will have to run a lap of the gym.

The next serve came over and Shane called the ball and he made a great pass to the setter. Chet set the ball to me and I got a great hit. "Much better!" said Coach Kline, "keep it up!" We did good for a while. But then Jon served and three of us just stood there and the ball hit the floor. Coach said, "All right guys. One lap each and next time call the ball." We ran fast as we could and went back to our position. This time the serve went to me and I called it. "That's better boys. Now hit the showers!"

It was 3:15 Thursday afternoon with fifteen minutes of Math left. I couldn't wait for class to be over so we could get to our game. The bell rang and I ran to the gym to change and warm up. When the other team got there we got warmed up and started the game. We took the lead by five points until their best server went to serve. The first serve hit the floor next to James and Cameron. The next serve we all went to play it and me and Shane ended up hitting each other and the ball went into the net. The whistle blew and coach Kline called a time out.

"Come on guys! You know what you have to do. Talk to each other and call the ball. You don't want to do any laps right now do you?" Then we went back to our position. The next serve Shane called the ball. He passed it to the setter and I got a great hit scoring a point. "Do it again," coach Kline said. "Keep talking!" We kept calling the ball all the time and before we knew it we won the game. "That's what I'm talking about," said Coach Kline.

We kept talking to each other the next two games and we won both games. After saying cheers for the other team we stood next to coach and he was saying "I am proud of you guys. I knew you could do it. See what happens with a little communication."

Rationale for Student Exemplar – Satisfactory (Narrative)

Title: “Just a little Communication”

Score	Reporting Category
S	<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="342 432 1393 646"> <p>S • The student’s exploration of the topic—through the narrator’s telling of how “In practice games we wait for someone else to play the ball and it hits the floor and we all seem to crash into each other when we all go to play the ball,” how “anytime the ball hits the floor, the players that are near it will have to run a lap of the gym,” and how “We kept talking to each other [...] and we won both games”—is clear.</p> <li data-bbox="342 674 1409 814"> <p>S • The student’s purpose in the depiction of the players being told “to learn to talk to each other,” to run “One lap each and next time call the ball,” to “Talk to each other and call the ball,” to “Do it again,” to “Keep talking,” and to “See what happens with a little communication” is evident.</p> <li data-bbox="342 842 1409 1056"> <p>S • The ideas presented by the student (with regard to when “We landed in a pile in the middle of the court and the ball went passed us,” when “Shane called the ball and he made a great pass to the setter,” when “we all went to play it and me and Shane ended up hitting each other and the ball went into the net,” and when “We kept calling the ball all the time and before we new it we won the game”) are appropriate and predictable.</p> <li data-bbox="342 1083 1409 1262"> <p>S • Supporting details such as in “Kirk served the ball when Coach Kline blew the wistle. When the ball came over the net Dean, Cameron, Shane and me all went to play it,” “But then Jon served and three of us just stood there and the ball hit the floor,” and “The next serve Shane called the ball. He passed it to the setter and I got a great hit scoring a point” are relevant and generic.</p> <li data-bbox="342 1289 1360 1503"> <p>S • As shown in “Chet set the ball to me and I got a great hit,” “This time the serve went to me and I called it,” and “The first serve hit the floor next to James and Cameron,” the writing is straightforward and generalized and—through the use of dialogue (as in “That’s better boys. Now hit the showers!” and “Come on guys! You know what you have to do”)—occasionally appeals to the reader’s interest.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
S	<p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="342 275 1386 464">S • The exposition provided in “It was another season for volleyball. All of us players were practicing Wednesday afternoon for our first game on Thursday” in the introduction is functional, and establishes a focus—on the conflict inherent in how “Most of us were quite good but we are not the best at working with each other”—that is generally sustained. <li data-bbox="342 485 1403 674">S • Events that chronicle how the narrator “landed in a pile in the middle of the court,” “got a great hit” when “Shane called the ball” and “Chet set the ball,” “stood there and the ball hit the floor,” “called it” when “the serve went to” him, and “got a great hit scoring a point” when “Shane called the ball” and “passed it to the setter” are developed in a discernible order. <li data-bbox="342 695 1419 873">S • Transitions (such as in “‘Much better!’ said Coach Kline, ‘keep it up!’” “It was 3:15 Thursday afternoon with fifteen minutes of Math left. I couldn’t wait for class to be over so we could get to our game,” and “The whistle blew and coach Kline called a time out”) tend to be mechanical and are generally used to connect events within and between sentences and paragraphs. <li data-bbox="342 894 1395 1073">S • The summary of events (in “We kept talking to each other the next two games and we won both games”) in the closure is related to the focus, and the concluding moralization (in “After saying cheers for the other team we stood next to coach and he was saying ‘I am proud of you guys. I new you could do it. See what happens with a little communication’”) is mechanical.
S	<p>Sentence Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="342 1144 1395 1377">S • Sentence structure is generally controlled—as in “The bell rang and I ran to the gym to change and warm up. When the other team got there we got warmed up and started the game”—but lapses (as in “In practice games we wait for someone else to play the ball and it hits the floor and we all seem to crash into each other when we all go to play the ball”) may occasionally impede meaning. <li data-bbox="342 1398 1403 1535">S • Sentence type and sentence length (such as in “We did good for a while,” “We ran fast as we could and went back to our position,” “We took the lead by five points until there best server went to serve,” and “Then we went back to our position”) are sometimes effective and varied. <li data-bbox="342 1556 1386 1734">S • As demonstrated in “Most of us were,” “Kirk served the ball,” “He told us that from now on,” “The next serve came over,” “This time the serve went,” “It was 3:15 Thursday afternoon,” “The first serve hit the floor,” and “After saying cheers for the other team,” some variety of sentence beginnings is evident. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> S • Words and expressions such as “our first game on Thursday,” “When the ball came over the net,” “landed in a pile,” “run a lap of the gym,” “I couldn’t wait for class to be over,” “We took the lead,” “ended up hitting each other,” and “the ball went into the net” are generally used appropriately. S • General words and expressions—as in “All of us players were,” “quite good,” “anytime the ball hits the floor,” “made a great pass,” “a great hit,” “for a while,” “just stood there,” “we all went to play it,” “coach Kline said,” and “calling the ball all the time” —are used adequately to clarify meaning. S • The voice created by the student—in the portrayal of scenes such as in “The wistle blew and coach Kline called a time out. / ‘Come on guys! You know what you have to do. Talk to each other and call the ball. You don’t want to do any laps right now do you?’”—is discernible. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> S • As illustrated in “Coach blew his wistle and came up to us saying, ‘You guys need to learn to talk to each other!’” and “‘That’s what I’m talking about,’ said Coach Kline,” the quality of the writing is sustained through generally correct use of conventions. S • Errors—such as in “Wensday,” “wistle,” “went passed us,” “We did good,” “there best server,” “our position,” and “he was saying ‘I am proud of you guys. I new you could do it’”—occasionally reduce clarity. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2015: Qualities of Student Writing that Met the Standard of Excellence

Students whose responses received scores of “**Proficient**” or “**Excellent**” in “**Content**” often purported that it is necessary to be “open minded to new possibilities,” “resilient in overcoming adversity,” and “true to personal values” in order to be able to “refrain from dwelling on past regrets” and to “embark upon a process of self-discovery.” In many responses, students contended that when overcoming obstacles, individuals may face “a pivotal turning point in defining their character” through which “a new perspective on life may be gained” and “others can be inspired.” Some students presented ideas related to how “we need to try and fail rather than run and regret,” how “we learn best from our failures,” and how “what does not defeat us makes us stronger.” Other students discussed the challenges inherent in decisions made by “political leaders on the well-being of citizens, the state of the economy, or the safety of the country,” the bravery of “inventors like Isaac Newton and Galileo in uncovering newfound truths about the world,” and the global implications of “preserving the environment and endangered species.” Some students spoke figuratively about how “obstacles may open doors to new experiences,” “an obstacle is a mountain to be climbed,” “overcoming obstacles requires forging a path of your own,” “an obstacle is a fork in the road and you must make a decision about what you are going to do,” and “being able to overcome obstacles is like learning to ride a bike because the more times you succeed, the better you become at even more complex challenges.”

Examples from student responses that received scores of “**Proficient**” or “**Excellent**” are contained in the following excerpts:

- “We need to grow and learn. We must overcome obstacles instead of just overlooking problems and pretending that all is well. Accomplishing nothing will give nothing in return. That is why we must be willing to overcome our fears and venture into the unknown to discover what we are truly capable of. [...] Whether the challenges presented are of the mind or of the soul, they must not be left incomplete. Life wouldn’t be worth living if we just went about our days simply existing.”
- “All these events have led me to where I am now, living in a new city with new friends. I regularly travel back to Toronto to see old friends and family, who will always be a special part of my life. [...] What I have learned from my experience is that I should not cling to the past and I should not worry about the unknown future. What is most important is the here and now, facing each obstacle and finding contentment in my ability to adapt to new circumstances while remaining true to myself.”
- “As the Sultan rode back into Cairo after having lost the battle, he saw the downcast looks of the men and women in the streets. They were incredibly disheartened by the injured, limping soldiers who had once stood so proud and tall. Having faith that he could drive out the crusaders, Saladin planned retaliation. [...] He rose a new army to lead the offensive on the sands of the deserts. [...] In 1199, he succeeded in destroying the Hospitallers and the Templars, crushing Richard’s army. Through the lessons earned from losing the first battle, he gained the wisdom and the strength required to defend the caliphate against invaders.”
- “Sometimes the obstacles we face seem insurmountable, but if we look at them with a different perspective, we can understand how to overcome these difficulties. [...] Learning to conquer our obstacles enables us to explore the world that surrounds us, and as we learn about ourselves and our environment we gain maturity. Maturity is necessary in order for us to achieve independence and discover for ourselves how to overcome the challenges that occur each day in our lives.”

- “The emotions overwhelmed her as she sat beside his grave in the chilly, autumn winds. It had been an entire month without her brother, her best friend. The grass surrounding the gravesite had turned dry and brittle, unwelcoming to all but spiders and beetles. Peri stared at the headstone, yearning for her brother to be with her once again. [...] Taking one last heavy sigh, she arose. [...] Peri knew that somehow she would have to move on without him. Right now however it was all she could do to put one foot in front of the other.”
- “You know those days, that always seem to fall on a Monday, where you just wish you could crawl into some forgotten cave, somewhere in the depths of the mountains, and sleep for days. Well, today was that kind of day. Nothing seemed to be going my way, not my mom yelling at me to get out of bed because I had slept through my alarm and was late, not the fact that my kid brother Derek had eaten all my corn pops again, and not the fact that because of all of the above I missed my bus and was getting my exercise running to school. [...] At the end of the day, I realized that my obstacles were small in comparison to those faced by others less fortunate who must struggle to find even the most meagre necessities of life to survive.”
- “Going to summer camp was one of the scariest but most rewarding activities I have ever taken part in. Before that, I had never really faced a situation where I didn’t know anyone. I had always had the security blanket of my friends and family in any new situation. [...] I was surprised to find out that there were so many kids just like me who didn’t know anyone. It ended up being one of the best weeks of my life. I tried many new things that I never thought I would, such as waterskiing, rock climbing, and eating food cooked on a campfire. [...] Although many of these activities were difficult for me, I have found at this point in my life five years later that these experiences have helped me become less fearful of what I have yet to discover and more self-reliant.”
- “Cameron ran his fingers through his hair as he read the comments on the last video he posted on the internet. He encountered kind comments, enthusiastic about his unique voice and raw talent, but the majority were cruel. A knot formed in his stomach as he read them. He knew he shouldn’t be reading them at all; it was like constantly creating a new wound after the previous one had healed. [...] Cameron learned that dealing with criticism was like playing the guitar. Sometimes he got blisters on his fingers but this never stopped him from playing and they would always heal over time.”
- “Imagine what life would be like if everyone was too scared or lazy to overcome obstacles. The world would be completely different than it is now. People would never have sailed across the oceans to find new lands, the moon would have remained unexplored, and the technology we have today would not exist. However, overcoming obstacles is something people do every day. Although it may not be as daring as entering a new world, each and every person overcomes obstacles in their daily lives.”
- “Our everyday lives are filled with obstacles that we need to overcome. Yardwork, for example, is an activity some people find onerous. The grass needs to be cut regularly, the garden needs to be weeded, and the hedges need to be trimmed. [...] Going to school can also present individuals with obstacles to be overcome. Book reports, science labs, essays are daily requirements in school. [...] Regardless of the frequency or the magnitude of any obstacle, be tenacious, be dedicated, be realistic, and you will be successful.”

In responses receiving scores of “**Proficient**” or “**Excellent**” in “**Content**,” such as those from which these excerpts were taken, students explored the topic in an adept, plausible, insightful, and/or imaginative manner. The purpose was intentional or deliberate. Ideas presented were thoughtful, sound, perceptive, and/or carefully chosen. Supporting details were specific, apt,

precise, and/or original. The writing was considered, elaborated, confident, and/or creative and drew or held the reader's interest. In "**Organization**," "**Proficient**" or "**Excellent**" student work contained a purposeful or engaging introduction that clearly or skillfully established a focus that was capably or consistently sustained. Events and/or details were developed coherently in a sensible or judicious order. Transitions clearly or fluently connected events and/or details within and/or between sentences and/or paragraphs. An appropriate or effective closure was related to the focus. Student responses scored "**Proficient**" or "**Excellent**" in "**Sentence Structure**," "**Vocabulary**," and "**Conventions**" demonstrated consistently controlled and usually or consistently effective and varied sentence structure. Specific or precise words and expressions were used accurately and/or deliberately. The voice or tone created by the student was distinct or convincing. Minor convention errors rarely, seldom, or in no way reduced clarity or interrupted the flow of the response.

Student Exemplar – Proficient (Essay)

Assignment I: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

Start - Life is not an easy course

Ideas - 1. emotionally stronger

2. learn (gain experience)

3. Opportunities

Not an Easy Road

Life is not an easy road which we must all travel. Obstacles are unavoidable. While some people fear and try to avoid obstacles, others choose to overcome them and recognize the importance of those obstacles that come our way. As Edmund Burke once exclaimed, "Another source of greatness is difficulty. When any work seems to have required immense force and labour to effect it, the idea is grand." The obstacles that occur in one's life are what make us stronger. The strength we gain from facing obstacles gives us confidence in our selves as we move forward with our lives. With this confidence we are able to overcome even greater obstacles than what we thought was possible.

Overcoming obstacles in life can make a person become emotionally, mentally, and/or physically stronger. How we respond to obstacles that confront us says a lot about the kind of person we are. For example, learning how to ride a bike without training wheels. A child will likely fall or crash. By being willing to get back on and try again we will eventually succeed and soon will be peddling wherever we want to go.

We feel stronger physically by going faster and faster and going longer distances. We are mentally and emotionally stronger because we have learned that if we are determined and try our best we have the ability to do something that

we weren't able to do before. This will also affect how we deal with other obstacles that we encounter in the future.

Confidence is gained each time we overcome an obstacle. Instead of being afraid and trying to avoid obstacles we are able to remember how we overcame other obstacles before. A person can use the knowledge they gained from earlier experiences to help make the right decision. Being in grade 9 we are going to have to go to a new school for high school. This is very stressful for students my age.

But if we remember that just 3 years ago we came to a new junior high school and it wasn't as awful as we thought it would be. We just need to think about how we got to know where our classes were and who our teachers were in no time. I was able to make new friends and really enjoyed being here for the last 3 years. I am excited about going to high school because I know I will be able to get used to it and find my way where I need to be and have fun meeting new people.

With the confidence of knowing they have succeeded in overcoming obstacles in the past, a person can try to achieve even higher goals than they thought they ever could. Who would have thought when they were 6 years old that they would have a part-time job by the time they were 14? Yet that's what I'm doing right now on week-ends at the library.

I can now afford to buy things my parents think are too expensive for them to buy like an ipod. And I have a lot of freedom because I can pay my own way to

go out with friends and don't have to ask for money. Sure the job takes up time that I could be spending with my friends, but in the end, a person will discover that a new window has opened. The window maybe landing your dream job, or becoming a famous athlete, but whatever it is, you know it came to be because of that one obstacle you chose to overcome.

It is amazing to see what can happen when we overcome an obstacle. We become physically and emotionally stronger, which makes a person confident and willing to strive to achieve what they couldn't before. Obstacles are what make peoples' lives hard sometimes but in the end, we are all fortunate they exist.

Rationale for Student Exemplar – Proficient (Essay)

Title: “Not an Easy Road”

Score	Reporting Category
Pf	<p data-bbox="404 380 516 411">Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="337 432 1409 688"> <p data-bbox="337 432 375 464">Pf</p> <p data-bbox="404 432 1409 688">• The student’s exploration of the topic in the establishment of the premise that “Life is not an easy road” because “Obstacles are unavoidable” and the development of arguments related to how “Overcoming obstacles in life can make a person become emotionally, mentally, and/or physically stronger,” how “Confidence is gained each time we overcome an obstacle,” and how “overcoming obstacles” enables a person to “try to achieve even higher goals than they thought they ever could” is adept and plausible.</p> <li data-bbox="337 709 1409 926"> <p data-bbox="337 709 375 741">Pf</p> <p data-bbox="404 709 1409 926">• Given the manner in which Burke’s contention (that “greatness” can be achieved through “difficulty”) is connected to the reasoning that “The obstacles that occur in one’s life are what make us stronger,” that “The strength we gain from facing obstacles gives us confidence,” and that “With this confidence we are able to overcome even greater obstacles than what we thought was possible,” the student’s purpose is intentional.</p> <li data-bbox="337 947 1409 1203"> <p data-bbox="337 947 375 978">Pf</p> <p data-bbox="404 947 1409 1203">• Taken together, the ideas presented by the student—such as “How we respond to obstacles that confront us says a lot about the kind of person we are,” “This will also affect how we deal with other obstacles that we encounter in the future,” “Instead of being afraid and trying to avoid obstacles we are able to remember how we overcame other obstacles before,” and “in the end, a person will discover that a new window has opened”—are thoughtful and sound.</p> <li data-bbox="337 1224 1409 1480"> <p data-bbox="337 1224 375 1255">Pf</p> <p data-bbox="404 1224 1409 1480">• Supporting details related to “learning how to ride a bike without training wheels” (as in “A child will likely fall or crash” but “By being willing to get back on and try again we will eventually succeed”), going “to a new junior high school” (as in “we got to know where our classes were and who our teachers were in no time”), and working “week-ends at the library” (as in “I can now afford to buy things my parents think are too expensive for them to buy like an ipod”) are specific and apt.</p> <li data-bbox="337 1501 1409 1799"> <p data-bbox="337 1501 375 1533">Pf</p> <p data-bbox="404 1501 1409 1799">• The writing is considered and elaborated (as illustrated in “We feel stronger physically by going faster and faster and going longer distances. We are mentally and emotionally stronger because we have learned that if we are determined and try our best we have the ability to do something that we weren’t able to do before”) and—by engaging in a conversation with the reader (such as in “Who would have thought when they were 6 years old that they would have a part-time job by the time they were 14? Yet that’s what I’m doing right now”)—draws the reader’s interest.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
Pf	<p data-bbox="391 212 1430 268">Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 268 1430 625"> <p data-bbox="391 268 1430 325">Pf</p> <p data-bbox="391 325 1430 625">• The opening reflections—in “Life is not an easy road which we must all travel. Obstacles are unavoidable. While some people fear and try to avoid obstacles, others choose to overcome them and recognize the importance of those obstacles that come our way”—in the introduction are purposeful, and clearly establish a focus (on Burke’s idea that “Another source of greatness is difficulty. When any work seems to have required immense force and labour to effect it, the idea is grand”) that is capably sustained in the discussion of how gaining “strength” builds “confidence” and enables individuals to “overcome even greater obstacles.”</p> <li data-bbox="391 625 1430 898"> <p data-bbox="391 625 1430 682">Pf</p> <p data-bbox="391 682 1430 898">• Details that document how “Overcoming obstacles in life” makes people “stronger physically” as well as “mentally and emotionally stronger,” provides people with knowledge “gained from earlier experiences to help make the right decision,” and enables them to open a “window” to “landing your dream job, or becoming a famous athlete [...] because of that one obstacle you chose to overcome” are developed in a sensible order, and coherence is generally maintained.</p> <li data-bbox="391 898 1430 1182"> <p data-bbox="391 898 1430 955">Pf</p> <p data-bbox="391 955 1430 1182">• Transitions clearly connect details within and between sentences and paragraphs, as is evident in “I was able to make new friends and really enjoyed being here for the last 3 years. I am excited about going to high school because I know I will be able to get used to it and find my way where I need to be and have fun meeting new people” and “Sure the job takes up time that I could be spending with my friends, but in the end, a person will discover that a new window has opened.”</p> <li data-bbox="391 1182 1430 1415"> <p data-bbox="391 1182 1430 1239">Pf</p> <p data-bbox="391 1239 1430 1415">• The reiteration of ideas (in “It is amazing to see what can happen when we overcome an obstacle. We become physically and emotionally stronger, which makes a person confident and willing to strive to achieve what they couldn’t before”) in the closure is appropriate, and the concluding statement (“Obstacles are what make peoples’ lives hard sometimes but in the end, we are all fortunate they exist”) is related to the focus.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>Sentence Structure</p> <p>Pf • Sentence structure (such as in “A child will likely fall or crash. By being willing to get back on and try again we will eventually succeed and soon will be peddling where ever we want to go” and “But if we remember that just 3 years ago we came to a new junior high school and it wasn’t as awful as we thought it would be”) is consistently controlled.</p> <p>Pf • As demonstrated in “Being in grade 9 we are going to have to go to a new school for high school. This is very stressful for students my age” and “The window maybe landing your dream job, or becoming a famous athlete, but whatever it is, you know it came to be because of that one obstacle you chose to overcome,” sentence type and sentence length are usually effective and varied.</p> <p>Pf • Sentence beginnings are often varied—as can be seen in “While some people,” “As Edmund Burke,” “How we respond,” “For example,” “This will also affect,” “A person can use,” “We just need to think about,” “With the confidence of knowing,” “Who would have thought,” and “It is amazing to see.”</p> <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Pf</p>	<p>Vocabulary</p> <p>Pf • Words and expressions—such as “recognize the importance of those obstacles that come our way,” “as we move forward with our lives,” “if we are determined and try our best,” “other obstacles that we encounter in the future,” “excited about going to high school,” “succeeded in overcoming,” “what I’m doing right now on week-ends at the library,” and “confident and willing to strive to achieve”—are often used accurately.</p> <p>Pf • Specific words and expressions show some evidence of careful selection (as in “fear and try to avoid,” “overcome even greater obstacles than what we thought was possible,” “going faster and faster and going longer distances,” “Instead of being afraid and trying to avoid obstacles we are able to remember how we overcame other obstacles before,” “where our classes were and who our teachers were,” and “achieve even higher goals than they thought they ever could”).</p> <p>Pf • As shown in “The strength we gain from facing obstacles gives us confidence in our selves as we move forward with our lives” and “I can now afford to buy things my parents think are too expensive for them to buy like an ipod. And I have a lot of freedom because I can pay my own way to go out with friends and don’t have to ask for money,” the tone created by the student is distinct.</p> <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Pf</p>	<p data-bbox="391 212 1430 268">Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 268 1430 478">• The quality of the writing is sustained because it contains only minor convention errors, as is evident in “The obstacles that occur in one’s life are what make us stronger,” “How we respond to obstacles that confront us says a lot about the kind of person we are,” and “A person can use the knowledge they gained from earlier experiences to help make the right decision.” <li data-bbox="391 478 1430 646">• Any errors that are present—such as in “Edmund Burke one exclaimed,” “our selves,” “peddling,” “aweful,” “week-ends,” “The window maybe,” and “peoples’ lives”—rarely reduce clarity and seldom interrupt the flow of the response. <p data-bbox="391 646 1430 722">Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Student Exemplar – Proficient (Narrative)

Assignment I: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page below the text. It is intended for the student to use for planning the assignment.

Charlie and His Leg

(Title)

Charlie stepped out of his moms car, and rushed into the school gym shoving the remains of his breakfast into his mouth. He knew if he was late again for his 7:00 AM soccer practice one more time, Coach Klear would make him stay after school to clean the disgusting locker room.

Charlie whipped the gym doors open and sprinted into the gym where he could hear Coach Klear bellowing at his team mates. Because of Charlie's chaotic morning trying to get ready on time, he forgot to tie his shoelace. As he zoomed through the door, his left shoelace caught under his right cleat and he went down, and everything went black.

"Charlie? Charlie, it's me! Wake up!" Charlie slowly propped his eyes open. Coach Klear's large face hovered over his own. "He's up," bellowed Coach Klear, who clearly did not know what an

inside voice was. Charlie sat up, remembering what had happened. Soccer practice! He was going to be late, he thought, panicked. He tried to stand up, but something heavy weighed him down. Puzzled, Charlie looked down. His leg! A large plaster cast was on his leg! "What happened to me?!" exclaimed Charlie.

"You tripped over your lace and went down pretty hard," said the coach.

"Alright, you can go home now. But no physical activity for you, young man! You're going to have to take it pretty easy on this leg for at least a month!" said the nurse, helping Charlie out of his bed.

"Looks like you won't be able to championships! Oh well, there's always next year!" Coach Klett said. Charlie was too shocked to say anything. Championships meant everything to him.

After a long and challenging morning of trying to get ready with crutches, Charlie's mom dropped an annoyed Charlie off at school. "Have a good day," his mom said. Charlie ignored her, and hobbled to the school doors. He walked past the gym and saw the soccer team running drills. That should be me, Charlie thought angrily. All because of my stupid leg, I can't do anything. And I have to miss championships. This sucks, he thought.

Charlie made his way to his locker, and tried to open his lock. He dropped his crutches. He looked around helplessly. "Now what..." he muttered.

"Here, let me help you out," said Ella, a girl in Charlie's class. Ella picked up Charlie's crutches and helped him get to class. "Thanks, Ella. I'm not used to this. I've never broken a bone before," said Charlie.

"I understand," said Ella. "It's hard! I broke my arm last year and I had to learn to write with my left hand."

But honestly, there are some perks that come along with breaking bones! People get to sign your cast, and I met lots of new people and tried out things I would've never tried if I didn't break my arm!"

"What do you mean? I'm missing my soccer championship because of my stupid leg!" Charlie said.

"Yes, but missing soccer may give you the opportunity to try something that you wouldn't have tried otherwise! For example, maybe you could try playing an instrument!" suggested Ella.

"You know... I've always wanted to play the trumpet, but I never had time because of soccer practice," admitted Charlie.

"See? There you go! You can overcome this obstacle by making the best of the situation and having fun!"

"You're right, Ella! I'm going to go sign up for band right now! I guess breaking my leg wasn't so bad after all! Now... Ella, will you sign my cast?" Charlie asked, laughing.

Rationale for Student Exemplar – Proficient (Narrative)

Title: “Charlie and His Leg”

Score	Reporting Category
Pf	<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="334 432 1403 726"> <p>Pf • The student’s exploration of the topic through the account of the experiences of a boy named “Charlie”—who has a “chaotic morning trying to get ready on time” for soccer practice, falls when he forgets to “tie his shoelace,” awakens with “A large plaster cast [...] on his leg,” is told he has to “take it pretty easy on this leg for at least a month,” learns that he will “miss championships,” discovers that “there are some perks that come along with breaking bones,” and realizes that he now has time “to play the trumpet”—is adept and plausible.</p> <li data-bbox="334 747 1403 999"> <p>Pf • The student’s purpose is intentional in terms of how Charlie’s desire to avoid being “late again for his 7:00 AM soccer practice one more time” leads to “his left shoelace [being] caught under his right cleat,” how his being allowed “no physical activity” leads to his exclusion from the “Championships [which] meant everything to him,” and how his being helped by Ella, who “picked up Charlie’s crutches and helped him get to class,” leads to his epiphany that “breaking” his “leg wasn’t so bad afterall.”</p> <li data-bbox="334 1020 1403 1272"> <p>Pf • The ideas presented by the student (through the documentation of events wherein Charlie “whipped the gym doors open and sprinted into the gym,” “zoomed through the door [...] and everything went black,” “slowly pryed his eyes open,” “tried to stand up, but something heavy weighed him down,” “walked past the gym and saw the soccer team running drills,” “thought” to himself “This sucks,” and learned that he “can overcome this obstacle by making the best of the situation and having fun”) are thoughtful and sound.</p> <li data-bbox="334 1293 1403 1545"> <p>Pf • As is evident in “rushed into the school gym shoving the remains of his breakfast into his mouth,” “he could hear Coach Kleat bellowing at his team mates,” “Coach Kleats large face hovered over his own,” “a long and challenging morning of trying to get ready with crutches,” “hobbeled to the school doors,” “dropped his crutches,” “looked around helplessly,” and “‘Ella, will you sign my cast?’ Charlie asked, laughing,” supporting details are specific and apt.</p> <li data-bbox="334 1566 1403 1902"> <p>Pf • The writing is considered and elaborated (as seen in “‘He’s up,’ bellowed Coach Kleat, who clearly did not know what an inside voice was. Charlie sat up, remembering what had happened. Soccer practice! He was going to be late, he thought, panicked”) and draws the reader’s interest through the interaction of characters (as in “‘What do you mean? I’m missing my soccer championship because of my stupid leg!’ Charlie said. / ‘Yes, but missing soccer may give you the oppurtunity to try something that you wouldn’t have tried otherwise! For example, maybe you could try playing an intrument!’ suggested Ella”).</p>

Score	Reporting Category
Pf	<p data-bbox="391 212 1430 268">Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 268 1430 583"> <p data-bbox="391 268 1430 325">Pf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 325 1430 583">• The exposition (provided in “Charlie stepped out of his moms car, and rushed into the school gym shoving the remains of his breakfast into his mouth. He knew if he was late again for his 7:00 AM soccer practice one more time, Coach Kleat would make him stay after school to clean the disgusting locker room”) in the introduction is purposeful, and clearly establishes a focus—on the events that ensue from when “his left shoelace caught under his right cleat and he went down, and everything went black”—that is capably sustained. <li data-bbox="391 583 1430 856"> <p data-bbox="391 583 1430 640">Pf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 640 1430 856">• Events are developed in a sensible order—from when Charlie was “Puzzled,” “looked down” at “his leg,” and wondered “What happened” to when he was told he “won’t be able to [go to] championships,” “was too shocked to say anything,” and “thought angrily” that he “can’t do anything” because of his “stupid leg” to when he acknowledged that he “always wanted to play the trumpet” but “never had time because of soccer practice”—and coherence is generally maintained. <li data-bbox="391 856 1430 1140"> <p data-bbox="391 856 1430 913">Pf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 913 1430 1140">• As demonstrated in “‘Alright, you can go home now. But no physical activity for you, young man! You’re going to have to take it pretty easy on this leg for at least a month!’ said the nurse, helping Charlie out of his bed” and “‘Thanks, Ella. I’m not used to this. I’ve never broken a bone before,’ said Charlie. / ‘I understand,’ said Ella. ‘It’s hard! I broke my arm last year and I had to learn to write with my left hand,’” transitions clearly connect events within and between sentences and paragraphs. <li data-bbox="391 1140 1430 1339"> <p data-bbox="391 1140 1430 1197">Pf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 1197 1430 1339">• The resolution of the conflict in the closure (in “‘See? There you go! You can overcome this obstacle by making the best of the situation and having fun!’ / ‘You’re right, Ella! I’m going to go sign up for band right now! I guess breaking my leg wasn’t so bad afterall! Now ... Ella, will you sign my cast?’ Charlie asked, laughing”) is appropriate and related to the focus.

Score	Reporting Category
Pf	<p>Sentence Structure</p> <p>Pf • Sentence structure is consistently controlled, as in “Because of Charlie’s chaotic morning trying to get ready on time, he forgot to tie his shoelace” and “After a long and challenging morning of trying to get ready with crutches, Charlie’s mom dropped an annoyed Charlie off at school. ‘Have a good day,’ his mom said. Charlie ignored her, and hobbled to the school doors.”</p> <p>Pf • Sentence type and sentence length—such as in “‘You tripped over your lace and went down pretty hard,’ said the coach” and “Charlie made his way to his locker, and tried to open his lock. He dropped his crutches. He looked around helplessly. ‘Now what ... ’ he muttered. / ‘Here, let me help you out,’ said Ella, a girl in Charlie’s class”—are usually effective and varied.</p> <p>Pf • Sentence beginnings (as is evident in “He knew if he was,” “As he zoomed through the door,” “Looks like you won’t,” “Championships meant,” “But honestly, there are,” “What do you mean,” “For example, maybe you could,” “You know ... I’ve,” and “You’re right”) are often varied.</p> <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>
Pf	<p>Vocabulary</p> <p>Pf • As shown in “stay after school to clean the disgusting locker room,” “chaotic morning,” “He was going to be late, he thought, panicked,” “no physical activity for you, young man,” “dropped an annoyed Charlie off,” “some perks that come along with breaking bones,” “try something that you wouldn’t have tried otherwise,” and “admitted Charlie,” words and expressions are often used accurately.</p> <p>Pf • Specific words and expressions—such as “rushed into the school gym shoving the remains of his breakfast into his mouth,” “Charlie whipped the gym doors open and sprinted into the gym where he could hear Coach Kleat bellowing,” “Coach Kleats large face hovered over his own,” “clearly did not know what an inside voice was,” “too shocked to say anything,” and “he muttered”—show some evidence of careful selection and some awareness of connotative effect.</p> <p>Pf • The voice created by the student (such as in “He tried to stand up, but something heavy weighed him down. Puzzled, Charlie looked down. His leg! A large plaster cast was on his leg! ‘What happened to me?!’ exclaimed Charlie” and “That should be me, Charlie thought angrily. All because of my stupid leg, I can’t do anything. And I have to miss championships. This sucks, he thought”) is distinct.</p> <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Pf</p>	<p data-bbox="391 212 1430 268">Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 268 1430 478"> <p data-bbox="391 268 1430 325">Pf • The quality of the writing is sustained—as seen in “‘Charlie? Charlie, it’s me! Wake up!’ Charlie slowly pryed his eyes open,” “‘Oh well, theres always next year!’ Coach Kleat said,” and “People get to sign your cast, and I met lots of new people and tried out things I would’ve never tried if I didn’t break my arm!”—because it contains only minor convention errors.</p> <li data-bbox="391 478 1430 646"> <p data-bbox="391 478 1430 535">Pf • Any errors that are present (such as in “moms,” “7:00 AM,” “Coach Kleats large face,” “be able to championships,” “hobbeled,” “oppurtunity,” “intrument,” and “afterall”) rarely reduce clarity and seldom interrupt the flow of the response.</p> <p data-bbox="391 646 1430 726">Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Student Exemplar – Excellent (Essay)

Assignment I: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

Importance of overcoming obstacles

- Essay

- Confidence
- Show you what you can do

• Develops you as a person

• Open new possibilities

• Change outlook

Obstacles are a Necessity in Life!

“Nothing upon earth is without its difficulties!” (Johann Goethe)

Obstacles are an inevitable aspect of everyone’s life. Some may be relatively small and insignificant, such as a giving a speech at school. Others might define one’s life and overcoming them can bring about change in the world, such as a protest against social injustice. Whatever the obstacle, we as human beings need to learn how to overcome them because it is essential to our survival. An obstacle is a locked door and once we have the key we can unlock a world where new possibilities await.

An oyster is a tough, stubborn little creature that is nearly impossible to open. However, with the right tool and mindset one can open the oyster in order to find the treasure inside. This is also what happens with the obstacles in our life. They cause a sinking feeling in our stomachs, and a constant worry in the back of our minds. If one is faced with a daunting task and immediately turns and runs in the other direction they will not know what they are capable of doing or the new opportunities that could be created. For example, I am a person that enjoys talking to my friends, family and my class. I have opinions and ideas that could potentially benefit my school and the lives of others. However, until about six months ago if a teacher asked me to speak in front of all 500 students in my

school, I would have been utterly petrified. The idea of having the high achieving, ultra cool grade twelve students listening to me speak made me quiver in fear. It wasn't until I had to persuade the students of my school to elect me as president of student council that I realized it wasn't as terrifying as I had thought. I was able to use my skill in speaking with friends and family to express my desire to make our school the best it can be and after the speech was over I got compliments from many of the older students. I could see the newfound respect they had for me. If I didn't present my speech to the school I would have missed out on an opportunity to find the key within myself to open a door and achieve what I had thought was impossible before.

The ability to overcome obstacles is what unites us with others in the struggle to make our world what we want it to be. Everyone on this earth has had to face some sort of problem in their life. It could be as life changing as taking a seat on the bus for Rosa Parks. On December 1, 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat in the coloured section of a bus to a white passenger, after the white section was filled. Rosa Parks was not the first person to resist oppression but her actions came to symbolize the civil rights movement in the United States. Through her efforts and those of others, resistance to racial discrimination became strong enough to eventually lead to the recognition of equal rights for all people regardless of their skin colour. If everyone adopted this

outlook on life, this would be the key to opening the door to a world that is a gentler, more “all for one and one for all” kind of place where people are accepted as equals regardless of race or religion.

Obstacles, by their very nature, define who we are as human beings. Some may be joyous events that fill our hearts with warmth and pride, such as graduation from university or time spent volunteering at a soup kitchen. There are others that bring sorrow and regret to mind, like the death of a loved one. Situations that seem to shape us the most are the times when we must overcome obstacles. When we conquer adversity we are shown what we are truly capable of doing. Regardless of what challenges we may face, being able to overcome obstacles is as necessary to our survival as the air we breathe. Take the fictional character, Harry Potter, as an example. Since the time he could walk he had one of the most powerful and dangerous wizards wanting to kill him. Time and time again this wizard, Lord Voldemort, tried to murder Harry, who was only just a boy. Each time Voldemort attempted to kill poor Harry something always seemed to foil Voldemort’s plan. What the Dark Lord couldn’t understand was that each time he battle with Harry, Harry became stronger. Harry Potter had been afraid for his life, but he didn’t hide like a coward when Voldemort tried to kill him. This “never say die” attitude made Harry grow as a person and ultimately helped him defeat Voldemort in the end. Now this is an extreme example of how

perseverance can help one overcome adversity, but it does show what overcoming obstacles can do. It can provide a person with a key that they can use to open doors to new opportunities later on in life.

Ultimately, overcoming obstacles is a fact of life. You may be a student leader, a famous activist, or someone struggling just to survive each day. The ability to overcome obstacles provides us with the key to open doors for ourselves. With this key we can improve ourselves, change our society and ensure our survival as human beings. Overcoming obstacles helps us to shape our world.

Rationale for Student Exemplar – Excellent (Essay)

Title: “Obstacles are a Necessity in Life!”

Score	Reporting Category
E	<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="331 428 1430 716"> <p>E • The student’s exploration of the topic through the connection of Goethe’s tenet (“Nothing upon earth is without its difficulties!”) to the central argument (“Obstacles are an inevitable aspect of everyone’s life”) in the reasoning that “Some may be relatively small and insignificant” while “Others might define one’s life and overcoming them can bring about change in the world,” that “we as human beings need to learn how to overcome them because it is essential to our survival,” and that “once we have the key we can unlock a world where new possibilities await” is insightful.</p> <li data-bbox="331 741 1430 1029"> <p>E • The student’s purpose in extending the analogy of opening an “oyster in order to find the treasure inside” to overcoming “obstacles in our life”—by arguing how “If I didn’t present my speech to the school I would have missed out on an opportunity to find the key within myself to open a door,” how “resistance to racial discrimination” is “the key to opening the door to a world” in which “people are accepted as equals regardless of race or religion,” and how “being able to overcome obstacles is as necessary to our survival as the air we breathe” because it can “open doors to new opportunities later on in life”—is deliberate.</p> <li data-bbox="331 1054 1430 1341"> <p>E • The ideas presented by the student in “If one is faced with a daunting task and immediately turns and runs in the other direction they will not know what they are capable of doing or the new opportunities that could be created,” “The ability to overcome obstacles is what unites us with others in the struggle to make our world what we want it to be. Everyone on this earth has had to face some sort of problem in their life,” and “Situations that seem to shape us the most are the times when we must overcome obstacles. When we conquer adversity we are shown what we are truly capable of doing” are carefully chosen.</p> <li data-bbox="331 1367 1430 1654"> <p>E • Supporting details related to having to “speak in front of all 500 students” (as in “It wasn’t until I had to persuade the students of my school to elect me as president of student council that I realized it wasn’t as terrifying as I had thought”), the example of “taking a seat on the bus for Rosa Parks” (as in “On December 1, 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat in the coloured section of a bus to a white passenger, after the white section was filled”), and “Harry Potter” (as in “Since the time he could walk he had one of the most powerful and dangerous wizards wanting to kill him”) are precise.</p> <li data-bbox="331 1680 1430 1967"> <p>E • The writing is confident—as seen in “Rosa Parks was not the first person to resist oppression but her actions came to symbolize the civil rights movement in the United States” and “Time and time again this wizard, Lord Voldemort, tried to murder Harry, who was only just a boy”—and holds the reader’s interest through the personalization of the discussion (such as in “I was able to use my skill in speaking with friends and family to express my desire to make our school the best it can be and after the speech was over I got compliments from many of the older students”).</p>

Score	Reporting Category
E	<p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 275 1430 653"> <p>E • The opening provided in “‘Nothing upon earth is without its difficulties!’ (Johann Goethe) Obstacles are an inevitable aspect of everyone’s life” in the introduction is engaging, and skillfully establishes a focus—in the overview of ideas in “Some may be relatively small and insignificant, such as a giving a speech at school. Others might define one’s life and overcoming them can bring about change in the world, such as a protest against social injustice. Whatever the obstacle, we as human beings need to learn how to overcome them because it is essential to our survival”—that is consistently sustained in the examination of the contention that “An obstacle is a locked door and once we have the key we can unlock a world where new possibilities await.”</p> <li data-bbox="391 653 1430 1010"> <p>E • As seen in the discussion of how overcoming obstacles may “cause a sinking feeling in our stomachs, and a constant worry in the back of our minds” but can result in the achievement of “newfound respect,” how “resistance to racial discrimination became strong enough to eventually lead to the recognition of equal rights for all people regardless of their skin colour,” and how “Harry Potter had been afraid for his life, but he didn’t hide like a coward when Voldemort tried to kill him. This ‘never say die’ attitude made Harry grow as a person and ultimately helped him defeat Voldemort in the end,” details are developed in a judicious order, and coherence is maintained</p> <li data-bbox="391 1010 1430 1325"> <p>E • Transitions (such as in “For example, I am a person that enjoys talking to my friends, family and my class. I have opinions and ideas that could potentially benefit my school and the lives of others,” “If everyone adopted this outlook on life, this would be the key to opening the door to a world that is a gentler, more ‘all for one and one for all’ kind of place where people are accepted as equals regardless of race or religion,” and “Each time Voldemort attempted to kill poor Harry something always seemed to foil Voldemort’s plan”) fluently connect details within and between sentences and paragraphs</p> <li data-bbox="391 1325 1430 1600"> <p>E • The encapsulation of ideas in the closure—in “Ultimately, overcoming obstacles is a fact of life. You may be a student leader, a famous activist, or someone struggling just to survive each day. The ability to overcome obstacles provides us with the key to open doors for ourselves. With this key we can improve ourselves, change our society and ensure our survival as human beings. Overcoming obstacles helps us to shape our world”—is effective and related to the focus.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
E	<p>Sentence Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="337 279 1421 499">E • Sentence structure—such as in “An oyster is a tough, stubborn little creature that is nearly impossible to open,” “Regardless of what challenges we may face, being able to overcome obstacles is as necessary to our survival as the air we breathe,” and “Now this is an extreme example of how perserverance can help one overcome adversity, but it does show what overcoming obstacles can do”—is effectively and consistently controlled. <li data-bbox="337 520 1421 741">E • Sentence type and sentence length (as in “I could see the newfound respect they had for me,” “Some may be joyous events that fill our hearts with warmth and pride, such as graduation from university or time spent volunteering at a soup kitchen. There are others that bring sorrow and regret to mind, like the death of a loved one,” and “Take the fictional character, Harry Potter, as an example”) are consistently effective and varied. <li data-bbox="337 762 1421 982">E • As illustrated in “However, with the right tool and mindset one can,” “This is also what happens with,” “They cause,” “It wasn’t until,” “On December 1, 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama,” “Through her efforts and those of others,” “Situations that seem to shape us the most,” “Since the time he could walk,” “Time and time again,” “This ‘never say die’ attitude,” and “With this key we can,” sentence beginnings are consistently varied. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>
E	<p>Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="337 1134 1421 1354">E • Words and expressions (such as in “an inevitable aspect,” “a protest against social injustice,” “a daunting task,” “potentially benefit my school and the lives of others,” “what unites us with others in the struggle,” “the coloured section of a bus,” “resist oppression,” “recognition of equal rights for all people,” “a gentler, more ‘all for one and one for all’ kind of place,” and “one of the most powerful and dangerous wizards”) are used accurately and deliberately. <li data-bbox="337 1375 1421 1659">E • Precise words and expressions are used to create vivid images—as in “An obstacle is a locked door,” “a sinking feeling in our stomachs, and a constant worry in the back of our minds,” “find the key within myself,” and “the key to open doors for ourselves”—and to enrich details—as in “relatively small and insignificant,” “bring about change in the world,” “essential to our survival,” “wasn’t as terrifying as I had thought,” “achieve what I had thought was impossible before,” “her actions came to symbolize the civil rights movement,” and “afraid for his life, but he didn’t hide like a coward.” <li data-bbox="337 1680 1421 1858">E • The tone created by the student is convincing, as can be seen in statements such as “However, until about six months ago if a teacher asked me to speak in front of all 500 students in my school, I would have been utterly petrified,” “It could be as life changing as taking a seat on the bus for Rosa Parks,” and “Obstacles, by their very nature, define who we are as human beings.” <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">E</p>	<p>Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 279 1430 499"> <p>E • As demonstrated in “The idea of having the high achieving, ultra cool grade twelve students listening to me speak made me quiver in fear,” “What the Dark Lord couldn’t understand was that each time he battle with Harry, Harry became stronger,” and “It can provide a person with a key that they can use to open doors to new opportunities later on in life,” the quality of the writing is enhanced because it is essentially error-free.</p> <li data-bbox="391 520 1430 632"> <p>E • Any errors that are present—as in “such as a giving a speech,” “our life,” “If one [...] they,” “their life,” “truely,” and “perserverance”—do not reduce clarity and do not interrupt the flow of the response.</p> <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Student Exemplar – Excellent (Narrative)

Assignment I: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

issues:

- it's boring
- it's long
- the language is difficult
- they're just plain reluctant

- they don't get the story

300 word book about someone lost in a desert

James

would rather

- Watch T.V.
- sleep
- surf the internet
- count unimportant things

The Desert

It wasn't my fault I wasn't reading the book. Sure, it was lying there, and I was eyeing it, but it practically radiated boredom. If it had really wanted to be read, you'd think it wouldn't make itself look so darn uninteresting, no? The cover was a dull sandy brown, with no pretty pictures or shining colors. Even the title was dull: "The Desert". I mean, who names their book like that? I'd rather read something called "Galactic Space Pirates" or "Rapid Hamsters from the Ocean Floor". *Those* are good book titles. I might actually read those... that is, if I even liked to read at all.

The teacher had been unrelenting in his determination to force that dusty pile of paper on me. "It's a great story," he'd said, "you'll like it." Sure, I'd thought, like that'd ever happen. I'd have been elated to have tossed it in a trash can the second I set my hands on it, but I couldn't do that or I'd fail my book project. So there it sat, taunting me, reminding me of its presence. Oh well, it wasn't anything the television couldn't tune out.

The television shows passed by, taking hours of the day with them as I watched with dazed eyes. I think I must have nodded off during one or two of them. But hey, they were better than reading. Reading... I glanced over at *The Desert*, sitting dejectedly on the tabletop. I cringed, thoughts of failed book projects swirling in my brain. I was already behind. If I didn't finish reading it this weekend, I'd have no chance of

completing the essay on time. It was Friday though, so I had plenty of time. I could watch television for a bit longer...

I woke up with sunlight in my eyes and a chip bag resting under my head. Was it Saturday already? I must have conked out while watching late night shows.

Grabbing a piece of toast from the kitchen, I noticed the book on my way back into the room. The ray of sun from the window missed where it rested by a hand's length or so, making it look even gloomier. I turn my head away, refusing it acknowledge it. But I twitched, remembering my deadline. Reluctantly, I picked it up. Opening its old, crackling cover, I read the first line.

"The sun beat down heavily on James' forehead as he stumbled across the--"

Oh kill me now. I wasn't even a sentence in and this was already painful. I didn't want to be bored to death first thing in the morning. I'd finish my toast first and then read some after. Biting into it slowly, I stretched the minutes it took to devour my breakfast. No matter how slowly I ate though, the meal couldn't last forever. Sighing, I squinted at the book, willing it to explode. Maybe that would be a good enough excuse to get out of this project, my book exploding. I could claim to be terrified of books ^{from} then on and get out of literary projects... Nah, the teacher would never believe me. As I picked up the book and started off where I left off, I found myself thinking more of possible excuses than what I was reading. What if a squirrel ate it, or I was mugged and it was in the backpack I had stolen? Entranced by imagining

new ideas, I barely got past the third page. Who wants to read about some guy lost in a desert when you could make up stories about criminal squirrels trying to rid the world of literature?

Of course, one thought lead to another, and another, and eventually I had spent well into the afternoon daydreaming. Oops. Well, I couldn't read on an empty stomach. Making myself a sandwich in the kitchen, I remembered my fish needed food too. Shaking some pellets onto my hand, I dropped them into the tank one by one. Plop.....plop..... I kept dropping more food in until eventually the fish just refused to eat any more. Darn, even my pet wouldn't help me escape from my homework. I read a few more pages, then dropped the book onto my face in exasperation. It covered my eyes and I felt the urge to take a nap. No point resisting, it was Saturday, I had plenty of time...

I guess I take long naps. I woke up at around one in the morning, darkness blanketing the room. Switching on a light in the absence of the sun, I spotted the book lying on the floor. I had one day to read this thing. I managed to stick to reading it for about ten minutes, but my patience waned. The story was depressing. It was entirely about a guy fighting to live in the middle of a wasteland of sand. I sure wouldn't want to be stuck in a desert. Fiddling with a clicker pen lying beside me, I considered turning on the television again. Maybe I should just take an F on this project... It'd be a lot easier. I stared at the book cover in contemplation. The color of it really did look like sand. What if I got stuck in a desert? What would I do?

Would I survive? Yeah right, I couldn't even finish reading a book, let alone find food and water out there.

A realization kind of hit me then. What if I DID get stuck in a difficult situation? How would I ever overcome the obstacles? I never tried hard at anything. I was incredibly lazy. Imagine James in that book...working so hard to stay alive. I on the other hand was lazing around deciding to fail my project because it was too difficult. I grabbed the book and flipped it open. I could read a single book. I wasn't so pathetic that I couldn't do that. I mean, if I couldn't do that much, what was I going to do about the rest of my life? If I let an obstacle stop me, I'd be sitting around in front of it forever and never move on to the next thing the world had to throw at me. So starting with this book, I would move past them.

Rationale for Student Exemplar – Excellent (Narrative)

Title: “The Desert”

Score	Reporting Category
E	<p data-bbox="396 373 505 407">Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="334 432 1425 758"> <p data-bbox="334 432 358 464">E</p> <p data-bbox="396 432 1425 758">• The student’s exploration the topic—through the portrayal of how the narrator’s procrastination in completing a “book project” on “The Desert” (as in “So there it sat, taunting me, reminding me of its presence. Oh well, it wasn’t anything the television couldn’t tune out,” “Sighing, I squinted at the book, willing it to explode,” “I read a few more pages, then dropped the book onto my face in exasperation,” and “I spotted the book lying on the floor. I had one day to read this thing”) leads to the narrator’s realization, while staring “at the book cover in contemplation,” that “I couldn’t even finish reading a book, let alone find food and water out there”—is insightful and imaginative.</p> <li data-bbox="334 779 1425 1066"> <p data-bbox="334 779 358 810">E</p> <p data-bbox="396 779 1425 1066">• The student’s purpose (in depicting how the narrator “wasn’t reading the book” because “it practically radiated boredom,” “watched [television shows] with dazed eyes” because “they were better than reading,” decided to “watch television for a bit longer” because “It was Friday” and there was “plenty of time,” “felt the urge to take a nap” because “it was Saturday” and there was “plenty of time,” “managed to stick to reading it for [only] about ten minutes” because “The story was depressing,” and acknowledged that he or she had “never tried hard at anything” because of being “incredibly lazy”) is deliberate.</p> <li data-bbox="334 1087 1425 1375"> <p data-bbox="334 1087 358 1119">E</p> <p data-bbox="396 1087 1425 1375">• As shown in “I was already behind. If I didn’t finish reading it this weekend, I’d have no chance of completing the essay on time,” “I’d finish my toast first and then read some after. Biting into it slowly, I stretched the minutes it took to devour my breakfast,” “What if a squirrel ate it, or I was mugged and it was in the backpack I had stolen? Entranced by imagining new ideas, I barely got past the third page,” and “Imagine James in that book...working so hard to stay alive. I on the other hand was lazing around deciding to fail my project because it was too difficult,” the ideas presented by the student are carefully chosen.</p> <li data-bbox="334 1396 1425 1650"> <p data-bbox="334 1396 358 1428">E</p> <p data-bbox="396 1396 1425 1650">• Supporting details—such as in “I glanced over at The Desert, sitting dejectedly on the tabletop,” “The ray of sun from the window missed where it rested by a hand’s length or so, making it look even gloomier,” “I twitched, remembering my deadline,” “Opening its old, crackling cover, I read the first line,” “The sun beat down heavily on James’ forehead as he stumbled across the--,” and “I woke up at around one in the morning, darkness blanketing the room”—are precise and original.</p> <li data-bbox="334 1671 1425 1955"> <p data-bbox="334 1671 358 1703">E</p> <p data-bbox="396 1671 1425 1955">• The writing is confident (as seen in “I woke up with sunlight in my eyes and a chip bag resting under my head. Was it Saturday already? I must have conked out while watching late night shows”) and creative (as seen in “Plop.....plop..... I kept dropping more food in until eventually the fish just refused to eat any more. Darn, even my pet wouldn’t help me escape from my homework”) and—through the use of humour (such as in “Who wants to read about some guy lost in a desert when you could make up stories about criminal squirrels trying to rid the world of literature?”)—holds the reader’s interest.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
E	<p data-bbox="391 212 1430 268">Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 268 1430 667"> <p data-bbox="391 268 1430 667">E • The excusing of the narrator’s inaction in the introduction—in “It wasn’t my fault I wasn’t reading the book. Sure, it was lying there, and I was eyeing it, but it practically radiated boredom. If it had really wanted to be read, you’d think it wouldn’t make itself look so darn uninteresting, no? The cover was a dull sandy brown, with no pretty pictures or shining colors. Even the title was dull: ‘The Desert’. I mean, who names their book like that?”—is engaging, and skillfully establishes a focus on how the narrator would “rather read something called ‘Galactic Space Pirates’ or ‘Rapid Hamsters from the Ocean Floor’” (as in “<i>Those</i> are good book titles. I might actually read those... that is, if I even liked to read at all”) that is consistently sustained.</p> <li data-bbox="391 667 1430 1045"> <p data-bbox="391 667 1430 1045">E • Events that intensify the dilemma faced by the narrator (such as in “I’d have been elated to have tossed it in a trash can the second I set my hands on it, but I couldn’t do that or I’d fail my book project,” “I cringed, thoughts of failed book projects swirling in my brain,” “I wasn’t even a sentence in and this was already painful,” “I had spent well into the afternoon daydreaming,” and “Fiddling with a clicker pen lying beside me, I considered turning on the television again”) to the point at which the narrator has a personal epiphany (as in “What if I DID get stuck in a difficult situation? How would I ever overcome the obstacles?”) are developed in a judicious order, and coherence is maintained.</p> <li data-bbox="391 1045 1430 1339"> <p data-bbox="391 1045 1430 1339">E • Transitions—as in “The television shows passed by, taking hours of the day with them as I watched with dazed eyes. I think I must have nodded off during one or two of them,” “Grabbing a piece of toast from the kitchen, I noticed the book on my way back into the room,” and “I guess I take long naps. I woke up at around one in the morning, darkness blanketing the room”—fluently connect events within and between sentences and paragraphs.</p> <li data-bbox="391 1339 1430 1566"> <p data-bbox="391 1339 1430 1566">E • The closure provided in “I grabbed the book and flipped it open. I could read a single book. I wasn’t so pathetic that I couldn’t do that. I mean, if I couldn’t do that much, what was I going to do about the rest of my life? If I let an obstacle stop me, I’d be sitting around in front of it forever and never move on to the next thing the world had to throw at me. So starting with this book, I would move past them” is effective and related to the focus.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
E	<p>Sentence Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="337 279 1421 537">E • As shown in “The teacher had been unrelenting in his determination to force that dusty pile of paper on me,” “Reluctantly, I picked it up,” “Making myself a sandwich in the kitchen, I remembered my fish needed food too. Shaking some pellets onto my hand, I dropped them into the tank one by one,” “It was entirely about a guy fighting to live in the middle of a wasteland of sand. I sure wouldn’t want to be stuck in a desert,” and “A realization kind of hit me then,” sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled. <li data-bbox="337 554 1421 768">E • Sentence type and sentence length are consistently effective and varied, as is evident in “Oh kill me now,” “I didn’t want to be bored to death first thing in the morning,” “No matter how slowly I ate though, the meal couldn’t last forever,” and “Maybe I should just take an F on this project... It’d be a lot easier. I stared at the book cover in contemplation. The color of it really did look like sand.” <li data-bbox="337 785 1421 1010">E • Sentence beginnings—as seen in “If it had really wanted to be read,” “I’d rather read something,” “So there it sat, taunting me,” “It was Friday though, so I had,” “Biting into it slowly, I stretched the minutes,” “Who wants to read about some guy,” “Of course, one thought lead to another, and another, and eventually,” “It covered my eyes,” “Switching on a light in the absence of the sun,” and “Imagine James in that book”—are consistently varied. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>
E	<p>Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="337 1167 1421 1392">E • Words and expressions are used accurately and deliberately, as seen in “elated to have tossed it in a trash can the second I set my hands on it,” “I must have nodded off,” “sunlight in my eyes and a chip bag resting under my head,” “conked out while watching,” “devour my breakfast,” “willing it to explode,” “Entranced by imagining new ideas,” “dropped the book onto my face in exasperation,” “felt the urge to take a nap,” and “my patience waned.” <li data-bbox="337 1409 1421 1587">E • Precise words and expressions are used to create vivid images (such as in “sitting dejectedly on the tabletop,” “its old, crackling cover,” and “Fiddling with a clicker pen”) and to enrich details (such as in “it practically radiated boredom,” “The television shows passed by, taking hours of the day with them,” and “thoughts of failed book projects swirling in my brain”). <li data-bbox="337 1604 1421 1860">E • The voice created by the student—as in “‘It’s a great story,’ he’d said, ‘you’ll like it.’ Sure, I’d thought, like that’d ever happen,” “Maybe that would be a good enough excuse to get out of this project, my book exploding. I could claim to be terrified of books from then on and get out of literary projects... Nah, the teacher would never believe me,” “Oops. Well, I couldn’t read on an empty stomach,” and “What if I got stuck in a desert? What would I do? Would I survive? Yeah right”—is convincing. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">E</p>	<p>Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 275 1430 422">• The quality of the writing is enhanced because it is essentially error-free, as is demonstrated in “As I picked up the book and started off where I left off, I found myself thinking more of possible excuses than what I was reading” and “No point resisting, it was Saturday, I had plenty of time.” <li data-bbox="391 443 1430 548">• Any errors that are present (such as in “I glanced over at The Desert,” “I turn my head away, refusing it acknowledge it,” and “I on the other hand was”) do not reduce clarity and do not interrupt the flow of the response. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Appendix: Marker Training Papers

The Marker Training Papers are intended to provide markers with an opportunity to

- apply the standards embedded in the scoring criteria and illustrated in the Exemplars and Rationales
- grapple with some of the more complex decisions that markers face
- read and score the Training Papers according to the scoring criteria
- compare individually awarded scores with those awarded in each scoring category

Reminders for marking:

- When a student’s work exhibits characteristics of two scoring criteria, a marker must use professional judgment to apply the scoring criterion that most accurately and appropriately describes the features of the paper. Usually, the appropriate criterion is the one from which there are **the most descriptors that “fit”** the student’s work.
- Be objective in your marking. Mark according to the **Scoring Guide** and **Exemplars ONLY**.
- Before marking each scoring category, read the **focus information** to help you to focus on the **key words and phrases** of each reporting category that help to distinguish differences among scoring levels.
- Student work must be related to the assignment. An **INSUFFICIENT** paper demonstrates no evidence of an attempt to address the task presented in the assignment, or the student has written so little that it is not possible to assess **Content**. A **NO RESPONSE** paper has absolutely nothing written, drawn, or highlighted.
- Information provided by a student on the **planning page** can be used to inform a marker’s judgments but is **not directly scored**.
- Do not be misled by the physical appearance of a response. Poorly handwritten/word-processed responses are not necessarily poorly constructed, just as neatly handwritten/word-processed responses are not necessarily of quality and substance.
- Score each bullet within each reporting category separately, and then assign an overall score for that category. For example, if two of the three bullets in a scoring category are scored as “Pf” and the third bullet as “S,” assign an overall score of “Pf” in this scoring category. You will encounter papers that, according to the scoring guide, are at the high end or low end of the range of a given scoring level; nonetheless, **a single score must be awarded** for each scoring category.
- Be careful **not to penalize** a student **twice**. If, for example, you have noted inconsistent use of end punctuation and assigned the appropriate mark in **Conventions**, do not mark the paper down in **Sentence Structure** for lack of control.
- A student response **does not have to be perfect** to receive a score of **Excellent** in any one or all of the scoring categories.

Marker Training Paper A (Essay)

Assignment I: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

Obstacles

Introduction

Obstacles, are a part of life

People go through them

Impact us mentally, physically

body - when you go through obstacles

Obstacles

(Title)

Obstacles are a part of life. People go through them most of the time. I will be explaining to you my thoughts on human obstacles. How they impact us mentally and physical, also to explain what they are.

Many obstacles can change you mentally because ^{people} can grow up to living obstacles their whole life. Maybe some family member had died and they couldn't feel the same way they have ever felt. It can really impact many people on future, and many other things.

How human obstacles can impact us physically. Obstacles can impact us physically, say for example if you had a hard time at school or someone was bullying you, you feel different about yourself and everybody can you on a whole new perspective. If you lose a lot of control or take it way too seriously, ~~you can~~ it can lead to many dangerous things. As in getting into fights.. etc.

This is my opinion on human obstacles and how it can not only change us physically, but mentally as well. Obstacles are very normal, but if you go through them and have a really bad experience, people tend to take it a bit too ~~far~~ far! Thank you for your time.

Rationale for Marker Training Paper A (Essay)

Title: “Obstacles”

Score	Reporting Category	
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">L</p>	<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="342 432 1393 541"> <p>L • The student’s exploration of the topic in the analysis of how obstacles “can really Impact many people on futur, and many other things” and “can lead to many dangerous things” is simplistic.</p> <li data-bbox="342 562 1398 709"> <p>S • The student’s purpose—to contend that “Obstacles are a part of life. People go throw them most of the time” and to discuss the ways in which “Many obstacles can change you mentaly” as well as the ways in which “Obstacles can Impact us physically”—is evident.</p> <li data-bbox="342 730 1403 877"> <p>L • The ideas presented by the student (such as in “people can grow up to living obstacles their whole life” and “you feel different about yourself and everybod can you on a whole new perspective”) are superficial and ambiguous.</p> <li data-bbox="342 898 1390 1045"> <p>L • Supporting details related to being unable to “feel the same way” when “some family member had died” and “getting into fights . . etc.” when “you had a hard time at school or someone was bullying you” are imprecise and abbreviated.</p> <li data-bbox="342 1066 1414 1213"> <p>L • As illustrated in “I will be explaining to you my thoughts on human obstacles” and “Obstacles are very normal, but If you go through them and have a really bad expeerience, people tend to take it a bit too far,” the writing is incomplete and does not appeal to the reader’s interest.</p> 	
	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">S</p>	<p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="342 1283 1403 1430"> <p>S • The introduction (provided in “Obstacles are a part of life. People go throw them most of the time”) is functional, and establishes a focus on “How they impact us mentaly and physical, also to explain what they are” that is generally sustained.</p> <li data-bbox="342 1451 1386 1560"> <p>S • Details in the discussion of how “Many obstacles can change you mentaly” and “How human obstacles can impact us physically” are developed in a discernible order.</p> <li data-bbox="342 1581 1411 1728"> <p>S • Transitions—such as in “say for example,” “If you loose alot of control or take it way to seriously,” and “This is my opinion on human obsticles”—tend to be mechanical and are generally used to connect details within and between sentences and paragraphs.</p> <li data-bbox="342 1749 1370 1929"> <p>L • The reiteration of how obstacles “can not only change us physically, but mentaly as well” in the closure is abrupt, and the final statements (“Obstacles are very normal, but If you go through them and have a really bad expeerience, people tend to take it a bit too far! Thank you for your time”) are contrived.</p>

Score	Reporting Category	
S	S	<p>Sentence Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure is generally controlled (as seen in “I will be explaining to you my thoughts on human obstacles” and “If you loose alot of control or take it way to seriously, it can lead to many dangerous things”), but lapses (such as in “How they impact us mentaly and physical, also to explain what they are”) may occasionally impede meaning.
	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As demonstrated in “Maybe some family member had died and they couldn’t feel the same way they have ever felt” and “This is my opinion on human obstacles and how it can not only change us physically, but mentaly as well,” sentence type and sentence length are sometimes effective and varied.
	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little variety of sentence beginnings—evident in “Obstacles are,” “Many obstacles can,” “It can really,” “Obstacles can Impact us,” “If you had,” “Obstacles are very normal,” and “People tend to.” <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>
S	S	<p>Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions such as “a part of life,” “most of the time,” “my thoughts on human obstacles,” “explain what they are,” and “human obstacles can impact us physically” are generally used appropriately.
	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As seen in “many other things,” “take it way to seriously,” “many dangerous things,” “a really bad expeerience,” and “take it a bit too far,” imprecise words and expressions predominate.
	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tone created by the student (as in “Many obstacles can change you mentaly because people can grow up to living obstacles their whole life” and “If you had a hard time at school or someone was bullying you, you feel different about yourself and everybod can you on a whole new perspective”) is discernible. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>
L	L	<p>Conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the writing is weakened by the frequently incorrect use of conventions, as illustrated in “It can really Impact many people on futur, and many other things” and “As in getting into fights . . etc.”
	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors (such as in “go throw them,” “explaning,” “mentaly and physical,” “everybod can you,” “loose alot,” “way to seriously,” “obsticles,” and “but If you”) blur clarity and interrupt the flow of the response. <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Marker Training Paper B (Narrative)

Assignment I: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

Plot

Character

Conflict

Theme

Setting

Instrumental Success

I walked downstairs to my bedroom, dreading the homework that awaited me on my desk. Walking in, I flipped on the light and threw myself onto my bed, screaming into my pillow, I had just gotten through another pep talk from my mother. These talks happened often, especially during the rides home from my piano teacher's house. Every time I went to my lesson, my mom would come with me and sit at the back of the classroom, taking notes, taking extra care to notice my flaws so that she could write them down in her notebook.

Just now I had been sitting at the piano stool trying to figure out the hard part of one of my songs, but I lost my temper and slammed my fists down on the keys, making a shriek of notes as the tones all shot out of the raised top of the piano. My mom came in trying to help me get through, but I started to get angry and I said I didn't want piano, after I left this house I would never use it again. I was shouting and complaining with tears running down my cheeks from the strain and frustration of the last half hour. That's when my mom shot into the lengthy pep talk that mothers do so well, telling me that piano is a worthwhile skill and it may just help me and others in the future and I am not leaving this house without knowing how to play an instrument. Yet again I lost my cool and stormed out of the room, leaving my mom midsentence.

Now I spread out my muscles and limbs, lying on the bed with my tears running down my face. I picture myself walking up to the piano with a shining ax in my hand and bringing it down with a satisfying thud. My weapon came down again and again on the gleaming brown wood of our open top piano.

I shot out of my daydream at the sound of my name being called down the stairs.

"Ella? Are you down there? Answer me please. I think I've got the answer to our little problem." My mom's voice was getting closer; she was coming down the stairs.

"Yeah?" I answer, letting my anger slip into my voice. "You're letting me quit piano? Finally, you're only good idea since I was born." I sit up and cross my arms, not wanting to meet my mother's gaze.

"Don't give me that sass young lady, you're in my house and you have no right to treat me that way. No, you have to continue with your piano, but if you want you can choose to learn what ever instrument you want."

I considered the proposition and concluded to try it. Secretly, I'd always wanted to play the cello.

"Okay, I want to play the cello." My mom turned to look at me in surprise.

"Wow, that was fast, are you sure?" I nodded my head vigorously, warming up to the idea of learning how to play the deep, satisfying sound of the cello. "I'll do some research, get you a teacher and find a fitting cello."

She started walking towards the door, hesitated and then turned back to me.

"Are you sure? There's no going back." Again I nodded, thinking about apologizing and expressing my gratitude, but I reconsidered, a girl has a reputation to uphold.

About three weeks later I had a cello and a date for my first lesson. Almost jumping with excitement, I sat down to try it out. I thought that it would make a beautiful sound, but instead it came out as a screechy yelp, as if I was scratching it against a cheese grater. I looked at it puzzled. When I got to my cello lesson, we exchanged pleasantries and names and then I asked her about the sound. She explained that it took weeks to get a satisfying sound out.

Every week I went back for another lesson, and every week I got better. I continued playing my piano, but not as efficiently as I did my cello. They were both hard instruments and years later I was so proud of how much better I had gotten and after about 5 years of lessons and learning, I learned Christmas songs and I went out and played in the train station. I played for about three hours and came back with over 100 dollars.

I continued playing, struggling and working, sweating and getting frustrated. I even cried over the anger of both instruments a couple times over the years. I went to school and got my music degree, staying up late and studying and working really hard. I got my music degree and continued to teach both cello and piano. If it wasn't for my mom I never would have gotten this far, hard work pays off. But oh boy it's hard work. Now I stand on a stage performing with my students, proud of how far I've come. I'm so proud of me, proud of them, and proud of my mom. The work was a giant obstacle in my road to success, and she helped me all the way.

Rationale for Marker Training Paper B (Narrative)

Title: “Instrumental Success”

Score	Reporting Category
E	<p data-bbox="402 373 516 407">Content</p> <p data-bbox="337 428 375 462">Pf</p> <ul data-bbox="402 428 1453 688" style="list-style-type: none"> • The student’s exploration of the topic through the account of the experiences of a girl named “Ella”—who loses her temper while “sitting at the piano stool trying the figure out the hard part” of a song, argues with her mother and says that she “didn’t want piano” because she “would never use it again,” agrees to “continue with [...] piano” while learning “to play the cello,” discovers that “it took weeks to get a satisfying sound out,” and ultimately earns a “music degree, staying up late and studying and working really hard”—is adept and plausible. <p data-bbox="337 709 375 743">Pf</p> <ul data-bbox="402 709 1453 970" style="list-style-type: none"> • The student’s purpose is intentional in terms of how Ella’s anger (“from the strain and frustration of the last half hour” playing piano) leads to her “shouting and complaining” (that she wishes to “quit piano”) and her decision to “choose to learn” another “instrument” (by “warming up to the idea of learning how to play the deep, satisfying sound of the cello”) and results in her being “proud of how much better” she becomes “after about 5 years of lessons and learning” (“playing, struggling and working, sweating and getting frustrated”). <p data-bbox="337 991 375 1024">E</p> <ul data-bbox="402 991 1453 1285" style="list-style-type: none"> • The ideas presented by the student through the eyes of the narrator—such as in “I pictures myself walking up to the piano with a shining ax in my hand and bringing it down with a satisfying thud. My weapon came down again and again on the gleaming brown wood of our open top piano,” “I considered the proposition and concluded to try it. Secretly, I’d always wanted to play the cello,” and “Every week I went back for another lesson, and every week I got better. I continued playing my piano, but not as efficiently as I did my cello”—are carefully chosen. <p data-bbox="337 1306 375 1339">E</p> <ul data-bbox="402 1306 1453 1566" style="list-style-type: none"> • As is evident in “I lost my temper and slammed my fists down on the keys, making a shriek of notes as the tones all shot out of the raised top of the piano,” “I shot out of my daydream at the sound of my name being called down the stairs,” “it came out as a screechy yelp, as if I was scratching it against a cheese grater,” and “I learned Christmas songs and I went out and played in the train station. I played for about three hours and came back with over 100 dollars,” supporting details are precise. <p data-bbox="337 1587 375 1621">E</p> <ul data-bbox="402 1587 1453 1873" style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing is confident (as seen in “‘Ella? Are you down there? Answer me please. I think I’ve got the answer to our little problem.’ My mom’s voice was getting closer; she was coming down the stairs”) and holds the reader’s interest through the incorporation of the omniscient reflections of the narrator (as in “That’s when my mom shot into the lengthy pep talk that mothers do so well, telling me that piano is a worth while skill and it may just help me and others in the future and I am not leaving this house without knowing how to play an instrument”).

Score	Reporting Category
Pf	<p>Organization</p> <p>E • The introduction—wherein Ella expresses her personal frustration (in “I walked downstairs to my bedroom, dreading the homework that awaited me on my desk. Walking in, I flipped on the light and threw myself onto my bed, screaming into my pillow, I had just gotten through another pep talk from my mother”)—is engaging, and skillfully establishes a focus—on the source of her frustration (in “These talks happened often, especially during the rides home from my piano teacher’s house. Every time I went to my lesson, my mom would come with me and sit at the back of the classroom, taking notes, taking extra care to notice my flaws so that she could write them down in her notebook”)—that is consistently sustained.</p> <p>Pf • Events are developed in a sensible order—from when Ella “started to get angry” and “didn’t want [to play] piano” to when she “wanted to play the cello” and realized that “They were both hard instruments” to when she “cried over the anger of both instruments a couple times over the years” but “went to school and got” a “music degree”—and coherence is generally maintained.</p> <p>Pf • As demonstrated in “Yet again I lost my cool and stormed out of the room, leaving my mom midsentence. / Now I spread out my muscles and limbs, lying on the bed with my tears running down my face” and “About three weeks later I had a cello and a date for my first lesson. Almost jumping with excitement, I sat down to try it out. I thought that it would make a beautiful sound, but instead it came out as a screechy yelp,” transitions clearly connect events within and between sentences and paragraphs.</p> <p>Pf • The closure provided in “I got my music degree and continued to teach both cello and piano. If it wasn’t for my mom I never would have gotten this far, hard work pays off. But oh boy it’s hard work. Now I stand on a stage performing with my students, proud of how far I’ve come. I’m so proud of me, proud of them, and proud of my mom. The work was a giant obstacle in my road to success, and she helped me all the way” is appropriate and related to the focus.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
Pf	<p>Sentence Structure</p> <p>Pf • Sentence structure is consistently controlled, as in “My mom came in trying to help me get through, but I started to get angry and I said I didn’t want piano,” “No, you have to continue with your piano, but if you want you can choose to learn what ever instrument you want,” and “I nodded my head vigorously, warming up to the idea of learning how to play the deep, satisfying sound of the cello. ‘I’ll do some research, get you a teacher and find a fitting cello.’”</p> <p>Pf • Sentence type and sentence length—such as in “I was shouting and complaining with tears running down my cheeks from the strain and frustration of the last half hour,” “‘Okay, I want to play the cello.’ My mom turned to look at me in surprise,” and “I looked at it puzzled. When I got to my cello lesson, we exchanged pleasantries and names and then I asked her about the sound”—are usually effective and varied.</p> <p>Pf • Sentence beginnings (as is evident in “I walked downstairs to my bedroom, dreading,” “These talks happened often,” “Just now I had been,” “That’s when my mom shot into the lengthy pep talk,” “Yet again,” “I considered the proposition,” “About three weeks later,” “She explained that it took,” “Every week I went back,” and “I continued playing”) are often varied.</p> <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>
E	<p>Vocabulary</p> <p>E • As shown in “dreading the homework that awaited me,” “threw myself onto my bed, screaming into my pillow,” “I had just gotten through,” “lost my cool and stormed out of the room, leaving my mom midsentence,” “My weapon came down again and again,” “the gleaming brown wood of our open top piano,” and “but not as efficiently,” words and expressions are used accurately and deliberately.</p> <p>E • Precise words and expressions are used to create vivid images—as in “slammed my fists down on the keys, making a shriek of notes,” “a shining ax in my hand and bringing it down with a satisfying thud,” and “a screechy yelp, as if I was scratching it against a cheese grater”—and to enrich details—as in “taking notes, taking extra care to notice,” “playing, struggling and working, sweating and getting frustrated,” and “proud of me, proud of them, and proud of my mom.”</p> <p>E • The voice created by the student through the viewpoint of the narrator (such as in “‘Yeah?’ I answer, letting my anger slip into my voice. ‘You’re letting me quit piano? Finally, you’re only good idea since I was born.’ I sit up and cross my arms, not wanting to meet my mothers gaze” and “‘Are you sure? There’s no going back.’ Again I nodded, thinking about apologizing and expressing my gratitude, but I reconsidered, a girl has a reputation to uphold”) is convincing.</p> <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>

Score	Reporting Category
<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Pf</p>	<p data-bbox="391 212 1430 268">Conventions</p> <ul data-bbox="391 268 1430 630" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 268 1430 462">• The quality of the writing is sustained—as seen in “Don’t give me that sass young lady, you’re in my house and you have no right to treat me that way,” “Wow, that was fast, are you sure?,” and “She started walking towards the door, hesitated and the turned back to me”—because it contains only minor convention errors. <li data-bbox="391 462 1430 630">• Any errors that are present (such as in “a flipped on the light,” “trying the figure out the,” “worth while,” “I pictures myself,” “you’re only good idea,” “mothers gaze,” “what ever,” and “If it wasn’t”) rarely reduce clarity and seldom interrupt the flow of the response. <p data-bbox="391 630 1430 726">Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</p>