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ABSTRACT

Intended to help teachers prepare students for the Alberta (Canada) Grade 12 diploma examinations, this bulletin updates information about the design, sections, and scoring of the examinations in English 30 and 33 for the 1987-88 school year. Following a summary of the substantial revisions the examinations have undergone for this current edition, the bulletin presents blueprints illustrating the relationship between content and scoring of writing and reading test assignments and curriculum concepts, as well as the amount that each section of the examination contributes to the total grade. The bulletin also provides sample assignments and scoring guides, and describes the test in detail: the skills required, the concepts to be mastered, the amount of time allowed for each assignment, the length of the written compositions, the proportion of the total score allotted to each assignment, and other scoring information. (NKA)

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ED286199

Grade 12 Diploma Examinations Program Bulletin

# English 30 & English 33

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1987-88 School Year

**Alberta**  
EDUCATION

Student Evaluation and Records Branch

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## SUMMARY OF CHANGES

There have been significant changes made to the English 30 and English 33 Diploma Examinations for 1987-88. Changes to the design of the English 30 and English 33 Parts A and to the weighting of some reporting categories in the Parts A have been made. Also, changes have been made to the wording of the writing assignments and scoring guides. The changes made to the scoring guides do NOT represent a change of standards, but rather a clarification of reporting categories and scale points.

CHANGES TO THE ENGLISH 30 DIPLOMA EXAMINATION FOR 1987-88 ARE AS FOLLOWS:

### Part A: Written Response

- One reading selection is provided as a thematic focus and stimulus for the written assignments.
- Two writing assignments are required: Minor Assignment: Personal Response; and Major Assignment: Literature Composition.
- Minor Assignment: Personal Response: This assignment provides opportunity for creative, imaginative, or reflective responses to the theme established by the reading selection. This assignment will be marked on TWO reporting categories -- Thought and Detail, and Writing Skills. Weightings for these reporting categories are as follows:

Thought and Detail	--	7.5%
Writing Skills	--	<u>7.5%</u>
TOTAL		15.0%

- Major Assignment: Literature Composition: This assignment focuses on theme. Students are required to establish a controlling idea related to the given theme and to support that controlling idea through a discussion of the elements that reinforce it. Students will be required to discuss ONE or TWO selections from those they have studied. This assignment allows for, but does not require, a comparison. Percentage weightings by reporting categories are as follows:

Total Impression	--	5.0%
Thought and Detail	--	12.5%
Organization	--	7.5%
Matters of Choice	--	5.0%
Matters of Convention	--	<u>5.0%</u>
		35.0%

*Continued*

- The first and second Guidelines for Writing have been changed to clarify concerns regarding the focus and selection of materials.
- All scoring guides have been revised.

NOTE: Teachers are cautioned to keep these changes in mind when discussing the exam with students. Previously administered Part A examinations are NOT appropriate models for 1988. Sample assignments and revised scoring guides for classroom use are provided on pages 9 to 18.

Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice)

- No changes have been made.

CHANGES TO THE ENGLISH 33 DIPLOMA EXAMINATION FOR 1987-88 ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Part A: Written Response

- Section I: Personal Response to Literature: To complete the assignment in this section, students will be required to respond directly to the situations, attitudes, and/or characters present in one or more reading selections. As support, students may include details from their own experience and/or from vicarious experience including details from literature that they have studied.
- Section III: Response to Visual Communication: Only ONE assignment dealing with the content and/or the technical elements of photographs and/or cartoons will be presented. Students will be expected to create a sustained response to the assignment. The assignment will be marked on THREE reporting categories -- Thought and Detail, Organization, and Writing Skills. Weightings for these reporting categories are as follows:

Thought and Detail	--	5.0%
Organization	--	2.5%
Writing Skills	--	<u>2.5%</u>
TOTAL		10.0%

- All scoring guides have been revised.

NOTE: Teachers are cautioned to keep these changes in mind when discussing the exam with students. Previously administered Part A examinations are NOT appropriate models for 1988. Sample assignments and revised scoring guides for classroom use are provided on pages 32 to 42.

Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice)

- No changes have been made.

## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose of the Bulletin

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide teachers and students with complete and useful information about the diploma examinations in English 30 and English 33 for the 1987-88 school year. The bulletin presents updated information about the design, the parts, and the scoring of the examinations. Revised scoring guides are also included.

It is recommended that students have access to this bulletin, particularly to the examination scoring information. Copies of previously administered examinations should be on file at each school. Additional copies are available at nominal cost from the Learning Resources Distributing Centre of Alberta Education. Teachers are reminded that Part A: Written Response examinations for English 30 and English 33 are significantly changed for 1988. Previously administered Part A examinations are NOT appropriate models for 1988. Sample assignments and scoring guides are in this bulletin on pages 9 to 18, and 32 to 42.

Teachers may also wish to refer to the diploma examination bulletin entitled *General Information Bulletin*, which provides more information about the administration of the diploma examinations. This publication will be distributed to all senior high school administrators.

If you have questions or comments regarding the contents of this bulletin, please contact:

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Examination Administration and Scoring

The English 30 and English 33 Diploma Examinations will be administered on the following dates and times in 1988:

Date	Time	Examination
Wednesday, January 13	9:00-11:30 a.m.	Part A: Written Response
Wednesday, January 27	9:00-11:00 a.m.	Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice)
Tuesday, June 14	9:00-11:30 a.m.	Part A: Written Response
Thursday, June 23	9:00-11:00 a.m.	Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice)
Monday, August 15	9:00-11:30 a.m.	Part A: Written Response
	1:00- 3:00 p.m.	Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice)

Scoring and Marker Selection

English 30 Part A: Written Response and English 33 Part A: Written Response will be scored on the following dates:

Examination Administration	Scoring Dates	
	English 30	English 33
January 1988	January 23, 1988* January 25, 1988 - January 30, 1988	January 23, 1988* January 25, 1988 - January 30, 1988
June 1988	July 2, 1988* July 4, 1988 - July 13, 1988	July 2, 1988* July 4, 1988 - July 11, 1988
August 1988	August 18-20, 1988	August 19-20, 1988

\*Group Leaders only

English 30 Part A: Written Response and English 33 Part A: Written Response will be scored respectively by English 30 and English 33 teachers selected from those who have been recommended as markers to the Student Evaluation and Records Branch by their superintendents. To qualify for recommendation by a superintendent, a teacher must have taught the respective course for two or more years, currently be teaching the course, and have a Permanent Professional Certificate. *Teachers who wish to be recommended as markers should contact their superintendents before September 30, 1987.*

Many more teachers are recommended as markers by superintendents than are required by the Student Evaluation and Records Branch for any one marking session. The following criteria are considered when markers are selected for a particular marking session:

- Experience as a Marker (generally, "first time" markers are given priority)
- Regional Representation (by zone, jurisdiction, and school)
- Student Population



ENGLISH 30

## ENGLISH 30

### Part A: Written Response

#### Description of Part A: Written Response

Part A: Written Response, worth 50% of the total diploma examination score, is a 2-1/2 hour examination consisting of the two related assignments described below.

Students may use an English language dictionary and a thesaurus while writing Part A.

#### *Minor Assignment: Personal Response*

In this assignment the student will be required to respond from personal experience to a theme suggested in the short selection. In supporting an opinion, the student may choose a creative, imaginative, or reflective mode of writing. The new design reflects the expectation that student responses will be widely varied. Some students may choose to support the theme with specific examples from personal experience, while others may choose to offer more analytical reflections on the theme.

Recommended time: 30-40 minutes

Length: Students are expected to respond in an appropriate form. Extremely brief responses that do not have adequate support and development will probably be deemed "insufficient" (see pages 10 and 15).

Value: 15% of the total examination score

Scoring: The Minor Assignment is scored for thought and detail, and for effectiveness, clarity, and accuracy of expression. Scores contribute to the total examination score in the following proportions:

Thought and Detail	7.5%
Writing Skills	7.5%

NOTE: In the personal response assignment, students' ideas and language may be exploratory and/or digressive. Although organization has not been included as a factor in the evaluation of this assignment, writing must be clear, logical, and purposeful.

*Major Assignment: Literature Composition*

This section requires students to complete a composition on a topic that is connected thematically to the selection on the examination. A critical focus is emphasized on the major assignment. Students will be expected to demonstrate their understanding of what methods/techniques an author uses to reveal theme, (for example, setting, character, conflict, contrast, symbolism.) In developing their theses, students are required to refer to one OR two works of literature studied in their grade 12 English program.

Students should carefully consider the expectations defined in the scoring guides before they write. The increased weighting for Organization means that, although students may choose any appropriate organization for their compositions, they must sustain a clear focus, and develop a controlling idea. To emphasize the importance of a focused composition, space is provided for students to state the thesis or controlling idea.

Recommended time: 90 to 100 minutes for planning and writing  
10 to 20 minutes for revision and editing

Length: Students are expected to write thoughtful and well-developed compositions. Extremely short compositions will probably be deemed "insufficient" (see page 15).

Value: 35% of the total examination score

Scoring: The major assignment is scored for total impression, thought and detail, organization, matters of choice, and matters of convention. Scores contribute to the total examination score in the following proportions:

Total Impression	5.0%
Thought and Detail	12.5%
Organization	7.5%
Matters of Choice	5.0%
Matters of Convention	5.0%

The blueprint that follows on page 8 outlines the design of Part A, and illustrates the relationship between the content and scoring of assignments and curriculum concepts from the *Program of Studies for Senior High Schools*. As well, the blueprint delineates the categories under which summary data will be reported to school jurisdictions and the percentage that each section of the examination contributes to the total examination mark.

ENGLISH 30 DIPLOMA EXAMINATION  
PART A: WRITTEN-RESPONSE BLUEPRINT

TEST SECTION	REPORTING CATEGORY (Scoring Guide)	CROSS-REFERENCE TO ENGLISH 30 STATEMENT OF CONTENT*	DESCRIPTION OF WRITING ASSIGNMENT(S)	PROPORTION OF TOTAL MARK	
				BY REPORTING CATEGORY	BY TEST SECTION
MINOR ASSIGNMENT	<u>THOUGHT AND DETAIL**</u> The student should be able to respond personally to literature, and to demonstrate this ability in writing.	Concepts 1,3,4,5,6, 7,8,9,10, 12,13	The Minor Assignment is connected to the reading of a literary selection. This assignment requires the student to respond to the selection in a personal context.	7.5%	15.0%
	<u>WRITING SKILLS</u> The student should be able to communicate clearly and effectively in writing.	Concepts 2,3,4,5		7.5%	
MAJOR ASSIGNMENT	<u>TOTAL IMPRESSION</u> The student should be able to create a coherent, unified composition that demonstrates maturity of expression.	Concepts 1,2,3, 4,5,6,7,8,9,10, 11,12,13		2.5%	
	<u>THOUGHT AND DETAIL**</u> The student should be able to identify meanings presented in literature; respond critically to literary form, structure, and style; and interpret experiences and values presented through literature. The student should also be able to select supporting details from literature studied in order to develop a thesis or theme.	Concepts 1,3,4, 5,6,7,8,9,10, 11,12,13	The writing assignment sets a specific writing task, but allows the student to choose a method of development and to select supporting details (examples, illustrations) from literature studied. The writing assignment is generated from a literary selection and requires the student to understand literal and implied meanings, and to synthesize thoughts clearly and correctly in writing.	15.0%	35.0%
	<u>ORGANIZATION</u> The student should be able to develop a coherent, unified theme or thesis by choosing an appropriate method of organization.	Concepts 2,3, 4,5		7.5%	
	<u>MATTERS OF CHOICE</u> The student should be able to use words and syntactic structures in a deliberate and controlled manner.	Concept 3		5.0%	
	<u>MATTERS OF CONVENTION</u> The student should be able to communicate clearly by adhering to language conventions appropriate to writing.	Concept 3		5.0%	
PROPORTION OF TOTAL MARK				50%	

\*Program of Studies for Senior High Schools, p. 152(v1)-152(x1), and Senior High School Language Arts 1982 Curriculum Guide, pp. 21-31

\*\*Many reading concepts presented in the English 30 Statement of Content are reflected in the reporting category headed THOUGHT AND DETAIL. Since writing assignments are generated from literary selections, the student has the opportunity, while writing Part A: Written Response, to construct his or her own response to a reading passage and to deal with concepts also tested in Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice).

## Sample Assignments and Scoring Guides

### Instructions

1. Read "The Wall" carefully and thoughtfully before you start the writing assignments.
2. Read the two assignments before you start writing.

### THE WALL

A former mason, sentenced to twenty years' hard labour, was repairing with surprising care the exterior wall of his prison. He was of course closely guarded, and although the work was compulsory and under scrupulous surveillance, the taste for perfection he exhibited at it was a source of amazement to passers-by and even to his two guards. Someone expressed his surprise and the former mason, without lifting his eyes from his work, replied as if he had expected the question all along. "What pleasure would there be in escaping from a prison that was poorly built?"

Then, before the anxious prison guards who had become more watchful than ever, he went on as though talking to himself: "When you've put your own hand to the making of a wall, it tells you more about human freedom than all the philosophers put together."

This saying spread far and wide until it reached the ears of a monk. The monk came to visit the mason. They talked together at length. And the mason, without disturbing a soul, left the prison by the main gate wearing a habit and a rope belt.

The prison director, a subtle man though he didn't show it, recently asked a professional burglar to repair a window sash. The work was so well done that one feels something is bound to happen, despite the formal order issued that day forbidding anyone to speak to a prisoner at work.

*Gilles Vigneault*

### *Minor Assignment: Personal Response -- Sample Assignment*

Although the stonemason in Gilles Vigneault's "The Wall" is a prisoner, he does not fit the typical image of a trapped person. Perceiving that his situation offers him a means of self-expression, he consciously and methodically proceeds to use the wall, the very thing that restricts him, to exercise his personal freedom.

The author of "The Wall" seems to be suggesting that physical barriers have little to do with real freedom. What do you think about this idea? Support your opinion.

*Minor Assignment: Personal Response -- Scoring Guide*

Thought and Detail (Curriculum Concepts 1, and 3 to 13 inclusive)

When marking Thought and Detail the marker should consider

- the quality of the unifying ideas
- how effectively the response addresses the question
- how clearly the response is developed (by examples, specific details, analogies, etc.)

- 5 **EXCELLENT:** Ideas expressed are insightful, carefully considered, and confident. Support is precise, thoughtfully selected, and/or imaginative. A perceptive understanding of the experience presented in the selection and of its relationship to the task is demonstrated implicitly or explicitly. Such writing is often lively and/or imaginative.
  - 4 **PROFICIENT:** Ideas expressed are thoughtful. Support is relevant, purposeful, and, where appropriate, concrete. A thoughtful understanding of the experience presented in the selection and of its relationship to the task is demonstrated implicitly or explicitly. Such writing demonstrates an attempt to go beyond the bare requirements of the task.
  - 3 **SATISFACTORY:** Ideas expressed are appropriate but predictable. Support is general or details are commonplace. A conventional understanding of the experience presented in the selection and of its relationship to the task is demonstrated implicitly or explicitly. Such writing fulfils the task but does so matter-of-factly.
  - 2 **LIMITED:** Ideas expressed are superficial and underdeveloped. Support is generalized, vague, and/or repetitive. An incomplete understanding of the experience presented in the selection and of its relationship to the task is demonstrated. Such writing may not fulfil the task completely.
  - 1 **POOR:** Ideas are only marginally relevant and are largely underdeveloped. Support is inappropriate or lacking. Such writing suggests a confused notion of the experience presented in the selection and of its relationship to the task. Such writing may be frustrating for the reader.
- INS **INSUFFICIENT:** The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfil the assignment as stated, OR the assignment is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess thought and detail.

*Continued*

*Minor Assignment: Personal Response -- Scoring Guide (continued)*

Writing Skills (Curriculum Concepts 2, 3, 4, 5)

When marking Writing Skills the marker should consider the effectiveness of the total impression created by the writer's voice and the extent to which the writing demonstrates control of

- diction
- syntax
- mechanics
- grammar

- 5 EXCELLENT: The writing is skilfully structured and fluent. Diction is appropriate and effective. Syntax is controlled and varied. The relative absence of error is impressive under the circumstances, and minor errors do not detract from the clarity or effectiveness of communication.
- 4 PROFICIENT: The writing is clear and generally fluent. Diction is appropriate and specific. Syntax is controlled. Minor errors do not reduce the clarity of communication.
- 3 SATISFACTORY: The writing is clear. Diction is adequate but tends to be general rather than specific. Syntax is generally straightforward but occasionally awkward. Errors may reduce but seldom impede communication.
- 2 LIMITED: The writing may be unclear and/or ineffective. Diction is inappropriate and/or imprecise. Syntax is immature and/or frequently awkward. Errors impede communication.
- 1 POOR: The writing is frequently unclear and not fluent. Diction is frequently inaccurate. Syntax is confused and uncontrolled. Errors severely impede communication.

NOTE: *Student responses to the Personal Response Assignment will vary from writing that treats personal views and ideas analytically and rather formally to writing that explores ideas experimentally and informally. Consequently, evaluation of the personal response on the diploma examination will be in the context of Louise Rosenblatt's suggestions:*

The evaluation of the answer would be in terms of the amount of evidence that the [student] has actually read something and thought about it, not a question of whether necessarily he has thought about it in the way an adult would, or given an adult's "correct" answer.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Rosenblatt, Louise. "The Reader's Contribution in the Literary Experience." An interview with Lionel Wilson in *The English Quarterly* 1 (Spring, 1981): 3-12.

*Major Assignment: Literature Composition -- Sample Assignment*

Restrictions of personal freedom are both necessary and inevitable in our lives. The "walls" that limit our freedom may be imposed upon us by external forces or they may arise from attitudes and perceptions that we have developed within ourselves. THE UNIVERSAL STRUGGLE TO ACHIEVE THE DEGREE OF FREEDOM THAT IS SUITED TO OUR NEEDS IS A COMMON THEME IN LITERATURE. Gilles Vigneault's "The Wall" presents one example of this theme.

FROM OTHER LITERATURE YOU HAVE STUDIED, CHOOSE ONE OR TWO SELECTIONS IN WHICH THE AUTHOR(S) EXAMINE(S) THE STRUGGLE TO ACHIEVE PERSONAL FREEDOM. WHAT MEANS HAS THE AUTHOR USED TO DEVELOP THIS THEME? CONSIDER HOW SUCH ELEMENTS AS CHARACTER, SETTING, CONFLICT, CONTRAST, SYMBOLISM, ETC. REINFORCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEME. SUPPORT YOUR IDEAS WITH SPECIFIC EXAMPLES FROM THE LITERATURE YOU HAVE CHOSEN.

Before planning your composition, read the guidelines below.

Guidelines for Writing

- CHOOSE ONE OR TWO SELECTIONS FROM THOSE YOU HAVE STUDIED IN YOUR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH CLASSES. The selections you choose may be novels, plays, short stories, poems, other literature, or films.
- FOCUS YOUR COMPOSITION ON THE TOPIC. Although the above topic is stated broadly, you should attempt to focus your discussion on your controlling idea.
- PLAN YOUR COMPOSITION CAREFULLY. Decide on an appropriate method of introducing, developing, and concluding your composition. Develop your ideas fully by using details from literature you have studied to support your position. DO NOT present a plot summary.
- REVISE AND PROOFREAD YOUR COMPOSITION CAREFULLY.



Major Assignment: Literature Composition -- Sample Assignment (continued)

PLANNING

In the space below, write the name of the author and title of the literary selection(s) you plan to use in your composition, and write your thesis statement or controlling idea.

Identify the Author and Title (or Source)

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Thesis statement or controlling idea

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*Major Assignment: Literature Composition -- Scoring Guide*

Total Impression (Curriculum Concepts 1 to 13 inclusive)

When marking Total Impression the marker should consider the extent to which the writing demonstrates

- coherence and unity
- fluent expression of ideas
- thoroughness of discussion
- thoughtful and confident presentation of ideas

- 5 EXCELLENT: Perceptive, well-supported ideas are presented in a coherent and unified discussion. This writing communicates thoughtfully and fluently. Such writing deserves respect.
- 4 PROFICIENT: Appropriate, well-supported ideas are presented in a coherent and unified discussion. This writing has something to say and does so clearly. Such writing prompts attention.
- 3 SATISFACTORY: Conventional ideas are developed in a coherent and unified discussion. This writing communicates adequately. Such writing is acceptable.
- 2 LIMITED: Superficial and/or poorly-developed ideas are presented in a discussion that may have significant or repeated lapses in coherence and unity. This writing communicates little and does so ineffectively or incompletely. Such writing does not satisfy the reader.
- 1 POOR: Confused ideas are presented in a discussion that may lack a central focus, coherence, and unity. This writing says very little or leaves the reader to guess at the writer's intentions. Such writing frustrates the reader.

Major Assignment: Literature Composition -- Scoring Guide (continued)

Thought and Detail (Curriculum Concepts 1, and 3 to 13 inclusive)

When marking Thought and Detail the marker should consider

- how effectively the writer's ideas relate to the assignment
- what thesis or unifying idea(s) is (are) developed in the writing
- what details have been selected to support and develop the thesis
- the quality of the unifying idea(s)

- 5 **EXCELLENT:** Insightful ideas are supported by carefully chosen details. Literary interpretations are perceptive and defensible. The selection of literature to be discussed is appropriate for the topic and the level of discussion.
- 4 **PROFICIENT:** Insightful ideas are supported by appropriate details, OR conventional ideas are supported by carefully chosen details. Literary interpretations are thoughtful and defensible. The selection of literature to be discussed is appropriate for the topic and the level of discussion.
- 3 **SATISFACTORY:** Conventional ideas are supported by appropriate details. Literary interpretations are defensible. The selection of literature to be discussed is appropriate for the topic and the level of discussion.
- 2 **LIMITED:** Conventional ideas are weakly supported, or are accompanied by inappropriate details. Literary interpretations are incomplete or superficial. The selection of literature to be discussed is questionable in that it may not supply significant supporting details; OR the selection of literature is appropriate but significant supporting details have not been selected.
- 1 **POOR:** Scant ideas or unsupported generalities and details do not develop the topic. Literary interpretations may not be defensible. The selection of literature to be discussed is inappropriate; OR the selection of literature to be discussed is appropriate, but the writer exhibits little understanding of the literature or of the topic. The details from literature obscure the ideas, or are irrelevant to the discussion.

**INS INSUFFICIENT:**

- The student has written so little that it is not possible to assess thought and detail  
OR
- No reference has been made to literature studied  
OR
- The only literary reference present is to the selection on the exam  
OR
- The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfil the assignment as stated

Major Assignment: Literature Composition -- Scoring Guide (continued)

Organization (Curriculum Concepts 2, 3, 4, 5)

When marking Organization the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- a focused and ordered discussion
- establishment and maintenance of a controlling idea
- a developed and concluded discussion of ideas

- 5 EXCELLENT: The introduction is successfully constructed to provide direction for the reader and/or to provoke further reading. A personal focus is established. The controlling idea is successfully sustained and developed in a clear and coherent manner. The conclusion is related thoughtfully to the controlling idea.
- 4 PROFICIENT: The introduction is constructed to provide direction for the reader. The controlling idea is focused and is generally sustained. The development of the controlling idea is clear and generally coherent. The conclusion is related appropriately to the controlling idea.
- 3 SATISFACTORY: The introduction is constructed to provide a general direction for the reader. The controlling idea provides a focus at the beginning that is mechanically maintained. The development of the controlling idea is clear, but coherence occasionally falters. The conclusion is functionally related to the main idea.
- 2 LIMITED: The introduction, if present, is perfunctory, ie. related in a minimal or limited way to the rest of the essay. A focused controlling idea is lacking OR is not maintained in the development of the composition. The ideas are not clearly developed. The conclusion, if present, is not functional.
- 1 POOR: The introduction, if present, is not functional, ie. does not control or relate to the rest of the essay. A controlling idea is lacking. The topic is not developed or is developed incoherently. The conclusion, if present, is obscure.

Major Assignment -- Scoring Guide (continued)

Matters of Choice (Curriculum Concept 3)

When marking Matters of Choice the marker should consider the extent to which the writing exhibits effective control of

- tone, including the total impression of stylistic control
- diction, including any connotative language, imagery, and/or idiomatic expressions
- syntax, including such choices as parallelism, balance, inversion, and sentence length and variety

- 5 EXCELLENT: Choices appear to have been made deliberately to achieve a particular purpose. The selection and use of words and sentence structures is effective and sometimes polished. Diction is effective and specific. Syntax is controlled and varied. The writing is precise and fluent.
- 4 PROFICIENT: Choices frequently appear to have been made deliberately to achieve a particular purpose. The selection and use of words and sentence structures is generally effective. Diction is appropriate. Syntax is controlled. The writing is clear and generally fluent.
- 3 SATISFACTORY: Choices occasionally appear to have been made deliberately to achieve a particular purpose. The selection and use of words and sentence structures is generally clear. Diction is adequate but may be lacking in specificity. Syntax is generally straightforward but may be occasionally awkward. The writing is clear.
- 2 LIMITED: Choices seldom appear to have been made deliberately to achieve a particular purpose. The selection and use of words and sentence structures is frequently ineffective. Diction is imprecise and/or inappropriate. Syntax is frequently awkward and/or immature. The writing is often vague, redundant, and/or confusing.
- 1 POOR: Choices do not appear to have been made deliberately to achieve a particular purpose. The selection and use of words and sentence structures is frequently inaccurate and ineffective. Diction is frequently inaccurate and/or over-generalized. Syntax is confused and uncontrolled. The writing is frequently unclear and not fluent.

*Major Assignment -- Scoring Guide (continued)*

Matters of Convention (Curriculum Concept 3)

When marking Matters of Convention the marker should consider the correctness of

- mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.)
- grammar (agreement of subject-verb/pronoun-antecedent, pronoun reference, etc.)

Proportion of error to complexity and length of response should also be considered.

- 5 EXCELLENT: This writing is essentially free from errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. The relative absence of error is impressive under the circumstances.
- 4 PROFICIENT: This writing is essentially free from errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Errors that are present do not reduce the clarity of communication.
- 3 SATISFACTORY: This writing has occasional errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. These errors may reduce clarity but seldom impede communication.
- 2 LIMITED: This writing has frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. These errors often impede communication.
- 1 POOR: This writing has errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar that are both noticeable and jarring. These errors severely impede communication.

### Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice)

Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice), worth 50% of the total diploma examination score, is a 2-hour test consisting of 80 multiple-choice questions based on readings from fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and modern and Shakespearean drama. For the convenience of students, readings and questions are in separate booklets. Students may NOT use a dictionary or a thesaurus while writing Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice).

The questions examine the students' skills in the following reporting categories:

- understanding meanings
- understanding and interpreting the relationship between form and content
- understanding and interpreting human experience and values as expressed through literature.

The questions are developed to assess the following cognitive levels:

- understanding literal meaning
- drawing inferences and applying knowledge
- evaluating the ideas, techniques, and values presented in the reading selections

The blueprint for Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) is on page 20. It is based on the curriculum specifications developed from *The Program of Studies for Senior High Schools*. Questions are classified according to the reporting categories of meanings, critical response, and human experience and values, and the cognitive levels of literal understanding, inference and application, and evaluation.

ENGLISH 30 DIPLOMA EXAMINATION  
PART B: READING (MULTIPLE CHOICE) BLUEPRINT

REPORTING CATEGORY	CROSS-REFERENCE TO ENGLISH 30 STATEMENT OF CONTENT**	COGNITIVE LEVEL			PROPORTION OF TOTAL MARK***
		LITERAL UNDERSTANDING	INFERENCE AND APPLICATION	EVALUATION	
1. <u>MEANINGS</u> The student should be able to understand, interpret, and evaluate purpose, theme, thesis, literal and figurative statements, and supporting details as presented in literary and non-literary materials.*	Concepts 6,7,8,10,15,16,19				22%
2. <u>CRITICAL RESPONSE</u> The student should be able to understand, interpret, and evaluate literary and non-literary form, structure, and style as well as the relationships between form and content.	Concepts 6,7,8,11,12,15,17,19,20				18%
3. <u>HUMAN EXPERIENCE AND VALUES</u> The student should be able to understand and interpret values expressed through literature. The student should understand and interpret personalities and motives of characters, and the effect of setting on character, mood, tone, and action.	Concepts 6,7,8,9,12,13,15				10%
PROPORTION OF TOTAL MARK***		5%	30%	15%	50% (80 questions)

\*The examination presents selections from fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and Shakespearean and modern drama. Visual materials may also be used.

\*\*Program of Studies for Senior High Schools, p. 152(vi)-152(xi), and Senior High School Language Arts 1982 Curriculum Guide, pp. 21-31.

\*\*\*Percentages are approximate and vary depending upon the selection chosen.



## Sample Reading Selection and Questions

Sample questions 1 to 6 on page 22 are based on the poem below. Answers for questions 1 to 6, and a discussion of the questions follow on pages 23 to 26.

### CHOCKECHERRY PITS

The contour lines follow the old humus.  
Trowel and brush work easily down  
through the shallow droppings of time.  
Stone grates -- maybe a flake<sup>1</sup> --  
5 or is it a tool emerging?  
"How can you tell!" people wonder.  
Tools fit themselves into the function.  
Hands and fingers, it seems, were always the same.  
The brush comes out, and, suddenly, "Hey! Beads!" --  
10 little black spheres in the ashes --  
They are not beads, we discover --  
chokecherry pits,  
tossed or spat into the fire.

It was August, then, when this hearth was burning!  
15 I picture chokecherries spread in the sun,  
lustrous, crimson -- rolled, and shifted, and sampled --  
pemmican.  
Suddenly I remember  
pulling the branches down for someone,  
20 watching the drops of blood  
trickle through curled fingers --  
With us it was jelly or wine.

I pause for a moment, cupping the charred pits  
kneeling by a rekindled hearth,  
25 a patch of chickweed spread like a white table,  
wine, pemmican,  
prairie sun,  
wind sliding over the great erosion,  
old brown river cutting a way to the sea.

*R.E. Rashley*

<sup>1</sup>flake -- piece of hard stone chipped off and used as a tool

1. What is the speaker's occupation?
  - A. Environmentalist
  - B. Archeologist
  - C. Agriculturist
  - D. Geologist
  
2. The words that BEST indicate how to identify a tool are
  - A. "Trowel and brush work easily down" (line 2)
  - B. "Stone grates -- maybe a flake" (line 4)
  - C. "fit themselves into the function" (line 7)
  - D. "fingers, it seems, were always the same" (line 8)
  
3. In line 18 the speaker's perspective changes from professional speculation to consideration of
  - A. present civilization
  - B. personal past experience
  - C. contemporary Native culture
  - D. details of his arduous task
  
4. By using the words "rekindled hearth" (line 24) the speaker suggests
  - A. that the fire has been relighted
  - B. a joining of the past and present
  - C. that the culture has been renewed
  - D. a restoration of the old meeting place
  
5. The reaction of the speaker to the discovery (lines 23-29) is one of
  - A. curiosity
  - B. reverence
  - C. excitement
  - D. astonishment
  
6. Which statement BEST reflects the theme of this poem?
  - A. Over the years, tools have remained functional.
  - B. Over the years, nature has provided sources of nourishment.
  - C. In the past, people were concerned mainly with basic survival.
  - D. Throughout history, human nature and experience are unchanging.

## Sample Questions - Key and Discussion

The sample set of questions on page 22 illustrates the format and characteristics of questions on Part B of all English 30 Diploma Examinations.

Two reporting categories are represented in this sample: Meanings (questions 1, 2, 3, and 6) and Critical Response (questions 4 and 5). Also, two cognitive levels are represented: Inference and Application (questions 1, 3, 4, and 5) and Evaluation (questions 2 and 6).

The following table presents the key and the distribution of student responses by alternative (A, B, C, and D) as a percentage for each of the sample questions.

Question Number	Key	Distribution of Responses by Alternative*			
		A	B	C	D
1	B	12.3%	72.5%	9.3%	5.8%
2	C	10.4%	18.9%	63.6%	7.0%
3	B	5.5%	82.7%	3.4%	7.3%
4	B	10.1%	59.2%	16.8%	13.9%
5	B	11.9%	61.5%	11.9%	14.6%
6	D	4.2%	10.7%	13.7%	71.3%

N = 4357 (January 1986)

\*The sum of the percentages for each question is 99.9%; approximately 0.1% of the students did not respond to each question.

1. What is the speaker's occupation?
  - A. Environmentalist
  - B. Archeologist
  - C. Agriculturist
  - D. Geologist

In this poem, the poet appeals to the readers' personal associations with chokecherries to establish a metaphor linking present to past. The first question requires the student to infer the speaker's occupation (archeologist) from the specific details "contour lines . . . trowel and brush." By directing the student to consider the speaker's occupation, the first question assists the student in identifying the subject dealt with in the poem, and in establishing the metaphor that defines the poem. The student must have at least a general understanding of the vocabulary presented in the alternatives, a reasonable expectation for the English 30 student.

Alternatives A, C, and D each drew more than the required minimum 5% (12.3%, 9.3%, 5.8% respectively). Alternative B, the correct answer, drew 72.5%. Of the 72.5% who chose the correct answer, 92.5% were from the group of students who scored highest on the test as a whole, and 48.7% from the group of students who scored low on the test as a whole.

2. The words that BEST indicate how to identify a tool are

- A. "Trowel and brush work easily down" (line 2)
- B. "Stone grates -- maybe a flake" (line 4)
- C. "fit themselves into the function" (line 7)
- D. "fingers, it seems, were always the same" (line 8)

Question 2 requires the student to evaluate responses in terms of the specific problem presented in the stem, "how to identify" a tool. As with question 1, the details focused on in question 2 serve to draw students' attention to one of the key ideas developed through the metaphor of archeology linking present to past. The student must choose the BEST response from alternatives which all have a measure of correctness.

The careless reader may focus on "identify a tool," as is indicated by the 32.1% and 16.2% of lower achieving students who chose B and A respectively. The keyed response C states clearly that function depends on need, and 63.6% of the students answered correctly. Of this group of students 84.5% were those who achieved high scores on the test as a whole, and 43.6% were those who achieved low scores on the test as a whole. Only 7% of all students chose alternative D, which identifies fingers as tools.

3. In line 18 the speaker's perspective changes from professional speculation to consideration of

- A. present civilization
- B. personal past experience
- C. contemporary Native culture
- D. details of his arduous task

Question 3 introduces the student to the shift from the literal to the abstract. The question can be correctly responded to without reference to the alternatives.

This question was the least difficult of the questions on "Chokecherry Pits" with 82.7% of students choosing the keyed response, B, (90.6% of these students were from the high achieving group). The usual upper limit of difficulty is 85%, and Question 3 came very close to being "too easy" and therefore not discriminating. However, the question provides helpful information for students in answering questions 4, 5, and 6.

4. By using the words "rekindled hearth" (line 24) the speaker suggests
- A. that the fire has been relighted
  - B. a joining of the past and present
  - C. that the culture has been renewed
  - D. a restoration of the old meeting place

The focus on "rekindled hearth" in question 4 requires an interpretation of the poet's imaginative process that is summed up in the final stanza. It is a hearth of the past that the speaker has been unearthing, and in that process has discovered a kinship with the past; thus, "rekindling" the old with his or her imaginative associations with the present.

Question 4 proved to be the most difficult in the set, with 59.2% of students choosing the correct answer, B. (74.9% were from the high achieving group and 43.2% were from the low achieving group.) That the "fire has been relighted" (alternative A) suggests a literal interpretation of "rekindled hearth" which cannot be critically substantiated. "That the culture has been renewed" (alternative C) does not refer to a specific culture, and the references in the poem to wine, pemmican, sun, wind, and river suggest a continuum more than a renewal. There is no evidence of "restoration of the old meeting place" (alternative D) in the poem.

5. The reaction of the speaker to the discovery (lines 23-29) is one of
- A. curiosity
  - B. reverence
  - C. excitement
  - D. astonishment

Question 5 is the second critical response question requiring inference. To determine the speaker's reaction to the discovery, the student must consider which aspects of the final stanza suggest a personal attitude. In describing himself or herself "kneeling" at the centre of his or her reflection on the past, and by referring to the continuing present, the speaker suggests an attitude of reverence, (keyed response B). Alternatives A, C, and D are all plausible inferences in themselves but are not substantiated in lines 23 to 29 of the poem.

This question resulted in a particularly high discrimination between high and low achieving students -- 85.4% of the high achieving students chose B, but only 36.2% of the low achieving students chose B.

6. Which statement BEST reflects the theme of this poem?

- A. Over the years, tools have remained functional.
- B. Over the years, nature has provided sources of nourishment.
- C. In the past, people were concerned mainly with basic survival.
- D. Throughout history, human nature and experience are unchanging.

Question 6 requires the student to establish the theme of the poem and to select the BEST of the available responses, all of which contain a measure of correctness. The keyed response, D, was chosen by 89.0% of the high achieving students (51.3% of low achieving students) and is consistent with question 4 though not dependent upon it.

Alternatives A, B, and C each deal more closely with a specific idea than a general theme, and do not conclusively express the speaker's process of reflection that uses chokecherry pits to connect the past with the present. Alternatives A, B, and C drew 8.1%, 19.9%, and 20.7% respectively of the low achieving students, and 0%, 4.5%, and 5.4% respectively of the high achieving students.

The ordering of the questions is intended to lead the students progressively through the poem from the specific and literal to the general and more abstract.

ENGLISH 33

Part A: Written Response

Description of Part A: Written Response

Part A: Written Response, worth 50% of the total diploma examination score, is a 2 1/2 hour test consisting of the three sections discussed below.

Students may use an English language dictionary and thesaurus while writing Part A: Written Response.

*Section I: Personal Response to Literature*

Students will be expected to read one or more short literary selections and to respond in a personal manner. The new design of the assignment in this section reflects the expectation that the student will consider, more directly, the situations, attitudes, and/or characters present in the reading selection(s).

Recommended time: 75 minutes

Length: Students are expected to write thoughtful, carefully developed and supported compositions. Extremely short compositions that lack developed and supported ideas will probably be deemed "insufficient" according to the scoring guide (see page 34).

Value: 25% of the total examination score

Scoring: Scores contribute to the total examination score in the following proportions:

Thought and Detail	10%
Organization	5%
Matters of Choice	5%
Matters of Convention	5%

*Section II: Functional Writing*

Students will be given a specific purpose or function for writing and a specific audience to address. Possible assignments may include such tasks as responding to an employment advertisement, writing a business letter in response to a particular situation, nominating someone for an award, or writing a letter of reference.

Recommended time: 45 minutes

Length: Students are expected to address a particular audience clearly, and to present enough material to achieve their purpose. Scoring will, in part, depend upon the student's consideration of audience (appropriate tone, form, and content), and fulfilment of the writing purpose. Short presentations that lack detail and essential information will lose marks for



Thought and Detail. Extremely short presentations will probably be deemed "insufficient" according to the scoring guide (see page 37).

Value: 15% of the total examination score

Scoring: Scores contribute to the total examination score in the following proportions:

Thought and Detail	10.0%
Organization	2.5%
Writing Skills	2.5%

### Section III: Response to Visual Communication

Students will respond to ONE assignment based on one or more photographs and/or cartoons. The new design of the assignment in this section reflects the expectation that the student's response will be in the form of a well-considered and sustained piece of writing. In responding to the assignment, students must analyze the ideas suggested by the photograph(s) and/or cartoon(s), the details that are present, and/or the techniques that have been used by the photographer(s) and/or cartoonist(s). Students should be prepared to write responses supported by specific details.

Recommended time: 30 minutes

Length: Students are expected to write their responses as unified and coherent compositions. Short, disorganized responses will lose marks for Thought and Detail and for Organization (see page 41).

Value: 10% of the total examination score

Scoring: Scores contribute to the total examination score in the following proportions:

Thought and Detail	5.0%
Organization	2.5%
Writing Skills	2.5%

The blueprint that follows on page 31 outlines the design of Part A: Written Response and illustrates the relationship between the content and scoring of assignments and the curriculum concepts from the *Program of Studies for Senior High Schools*.

ENGLISH 33 DIPLOMA EXAMINATION  
PART A: WRITTEN-RESPONSE BLUEPRINT

TEST SECTION	REPORTING CATEGORY (Scoring Guide)	CROSS-REFERENCE TO ENGLISH 33 STATEMENT OF CONTENT*	DESCRIPTION OF WRITING ASSIGNMENT(S)	PROPORTION OF TOTAL MARK	
				BY REPORTING CATEGORY	BY TEST SECTION
PERSONAL RESPONSE TO LITERATURE	<b>THOUGHT AND DETAIL**</b> The student should be able to understand and evaluate literature and demonstrate this understanding in writing.	Concepts 1,3,4,6, 7,8,9,12		10%	
	<b>ORGANIZATION</b> The student should be able to develop coherently a unified theme or thesis through an appropriate method of organization.	Concepts 2,3,4	The writing assignment requires the student to discuss an aspect of literature from a personal perspective.	5%	25%
	<b>MATTERS OF CHOICE</b> The student should be able to use words and syntactic structures effectively, and should be able to adjust language and syntax to suit purpose, subject, and audience.	Concepts 3,4		5%	
	<b>MATTERS OF CONVENTION</b> The student should be able to communicate clearly by adhering to conventions that are appropriate to written expression.	Concepts 3,4		5%	
FUNCTIONAL WRITING	<b>THOUGHT AND DETAIL</b> The student should be able to identify audience and purpose for writing, and select details appropriate to audience and purpose.	Concepts 1,3,4,5		10%	
	<b>ORGANIZATION</b> The student should be able to organize details into a coherent unit appropriate to audience and purpose.	Concepts 2,3,4	The assignment is functional in nature, and requires the student to write within a given situation or context.	2.5%	15%
	<b>WRITING SKILLS</b> The student should be able to communicate clearly, effectively, and correctly in writing.	Concepts 2,3,4,5		2.5%	
RESPONSE TO VISUAL COMMUNI- CATION	<b>THOUGHT AND DETAIL</b> The student should be able to understand and evaluate the form and content of visual communication and demonstrate this understanding in writing.	Concepts 1,3,4,5,13, 14,16,17	The writing assignment is connected to one or more photographs and/or cartoons. Students are required to write about main ideas, and techniques of visual communication.	5%	10%
	<b>ORGANIZATION</b> The student should be able to organize details into a coherent unit.	Concepts 2,3,4		2.5%	
	<b>WRITING SKILLS</b> The student should be able to communicate clearly, effectively, and correctly in writing.	Concepts 2,3,4,5		2.5%	
<b>PROPORTION OF TOTAL MARK</b>				<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>

\*Program of Studies for Senior High Schools, p. 152(i)-152(v) and the Senior High School Language Arts 1982 Curriculum Guide, pp. 12-20.

\*\*Many of the reading concepts in the English 33 Statement of Content are included in Thought and Detail. The student has the opportunity, while writing Part A: Written Response, to present his or her own response to literature and to deal with concepts that are also tested in Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice).

Sample Assignments and Scoring Guides

Section I: Personal Response to Literature -- Sample Assignment

Read "The Bull Moose" and complete the assignment that follows.

THE BULL MOOSE

Down from the purple mist of trees on the mountain,  
lurching through forests of white spruce and cedar,  
stumbling through tamarack swamps,  
came the bull moose  
to be stopped at last by a pole-fenced pasture.

Too tired to turn or, perhaps, aware  
there was no place left to go, he stood with the cattle.  
They, scenting the musk of death, seeing his great head  
like the ritual mask of a blood god, moved to the other end  
of the field, and waited.

The neighbours heard of it, and by afternoon  
cars lined the road. The children teased him  
with alder switches and he gazed at them  
like an old, tolerant collie. The women asked  
if he could have escaped from a Fair.

The oldest man in the parish remembered seeing  
a gelded moose yoked with an ox for plowing.  
The young men snickered and tried to pour beer  
down his throat, while their girl friends took their pictures.

And the bull moose let them stroke his tick-ravaged flanks,  
let them pry open his jaws with bottles, let a giggling girl  
plant a purple cap  
of thistles on his head.

When the wardens came, everyone agreed it was a shame  
to shoot anything so shaggy and cuddlesome.  
He looked like the kind of pet  
women put to bed with their sons.

So they held their fire. But just as the sun dropped in the river  
the bull moose gathered his strength  
like a scaffolded king, straightened and litted his horns  
so that even the wardens backed away as they raised their rifles.  
When he roared, people ran to their cars. All the young men  
leaned on their automobile horns as he toppled.

Alden Nowlan

*Section I: Personal Response to Literature -- Sample Assignment (continued)*

The poem "The Bull Moose" describes how several people respond to the presence of a weak and dying bull moose in a pasture.

WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL OPINION OF THESE RESPONSES TO THE BULL MOOSE IN THIS SITUATION?

In your writing BE SURE to:

- describe the responses to the bull moose
- examine why these people acted as they did
- EXPRESS YOUR PERSONAL OPINION ABOUT THE TYPE OF BEHAVIOR DEMONSTRATED BY THESE PEOPLE

BE SURE TO SUPPORT YOUR OPINION. You may support your thoughts by referring to the poem itself, to your own experiences and knowledge, and/or to other literature you have studied.

Present your ideas in any PROSE form that will make your writing interesting.

*Section I: Personal Response to Literature -- Scoring Guide*

Thought and Detail (Curriculum Concepts 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12)

When marking Thought and Detail the marker should consider how effectively

- the assignment is addressed
- the detail supports and/or clarifies the response

- 5 **PROFICIENT:** An insightful understanding of the situation and characters present in the reading selection(s) is effectively established. The student's opinion, whether directly stated or implied, is perceptive and is appropriately supported by specific details. Support is precise and thoughtfully selected.
  - 4 **CAPABLE:** A well-considered understanding of the situation and characters present in the reading selection(s) is appropriately established. The student's opinion, whether directly stated or implied, is thoughtful and is supported by details. Support is well-defined and appropriate.
  - 3 **ADEQUATE:** A plausible understanding of the situation and characters present in the reading selection(s) is clearly established and sustained. The student's opinion, whether directly stated or implied, is conventional but is plausibly supported. Support is general but functional.
  - 2 **LIMITED:** Some understanding of the situation and characters present in the reading selection(s) is evident, but the understanding is not always defensible or sustained. The student's opinion may be superficial, and support is scant and/or vague, and/or redundant.
  - 1 **POOR:** An implausible conjecture concerning the situation and characters present in the reading selection(s) is indicated. The student's opinion, if present, is inappropriate or incomprehensible. Support is inappropriate or absent.
- INS **INSUFFICIENT:** The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfil the assignment, or the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess thought and detail.

Organization (Curriculum Concepts 2, 3, 4)

When marking Organization the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- unified and consistent development
- clear and coherent order

- 5 **PROFICIENT:** The beginning creates interest and/or promotes further reading. The ideas and situations are developed by sentences and paragraphs that flow smoothly and coherently to an appropriate and effective conclusion.
- 4 **CAPABLE:** An effective beginning has been presented. The ideas and situations are developed by sentences and paragraphs that are coherently related. The conclusion is appropriate.
- 3 **ADEQUATE:** The beginning, development, and conclusion are functional. Sentences and paragraphs are generally related, but coherence may falter on occasion.
- 2 **LIMITED:** The beginning and/or conclusion are nonfunctional. Relationships between sentences and between paragraphs are frequently unclear.
- 1 **POOR:** The introduction and/or conclusion, if present, are obscure. Sentences and paragraphs are not coherently related.

*Section I: Personal Response to Literature -- Scoring Guide  
(continued)*

Matters of Choice (Curriculum Concepts 3, 4)

When marking Matters of Choice the marker should consider the extent to which the writing demonstrates effectiveness of

- diction, including connotative language, imagery, idiomatic expressions, dialect
- syntax, including such choices as parallelism, balance, inversion, sentence length and variety

- 5 **PROFICIENT:** Choices evident in the writing are usually effective. In many instances words are chosen for effect. Many sentences are purposefully structured for effect.
- 4 **CAPABLE:** Choices evident in the writing are often effective. Frequently words are chosen for effect. Some sentences are purposefully structured for effect.
- 3 **ADEQUATE:** Choices evident in the writing are occasionally effective. Now and then words appear to be chosen for effect. Attempts are made to structure sentences for effect.
- 2 **LIMITED:** Choices evident in the writing are often ineffective. The writer demonstrates a lack of awareness of the choices that are available.
- 1 **POOR:** Choices evident in the writing are usually ineffective. Words and structures are misused to such an extent that clarity suffers.

Matters of Convention (Curriculum Concepts 3, 4)

When marking Matters of Convention the marker should examine the writing for correctness of

- mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.)
- grammar (agreement of subject-verb/pronoun-antecedent, pronoun reference, etc.)

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response should also be considered.

- 5 **PROFICIENT:** The writing is essentially free from errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Errors that are present do not reduce the clarity of communication.
- 4 **CAPABLE:** Few errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar are present. These errors seldom reduce the clarity of communication.
- 3 **ADEQUATE:** Occasional errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar are present. Some of these errors may impede the clarity of communication.
- 2 **LIMITED:** Frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar are present. Many of these errors impede the clarity of communication.
- 1 **POOR:** Numerous errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar are both noticeable and jarring. Most of these errors severely impede the clarity of communication.

Section II: Functional Writing -- Sample Assignment

Read the hypothetical situation described below and complete the assignment that follows.

THE SITUATION

Your school is organizing a "Careers Day." You have been given the task of inviting a speaker to your school to represent the career or occupation that most interests you. Posters such as the one below have been put up at various places throughout your school.

*Plan **NOW** For Your Future Occupation!*

**CAREERS DAY**

June 21, 1987  
9 00 AM - 4 00 PM

*Nalwen Composite High School*

MAIN GYMNASIUM

**LECTURES**  
**DEMONSTRATIONS**  
**WORKSHOPS**  
**PAMPHLETS**

**DON'T MISS THIS IMPORTANT EVENT**

THE ASSIGNMENT

IN THE SPACE PROVIDED, WRITE A LETTER INVITING YOUR SPEAKER TO NALWEN COMPOSITE HIGH SCHOOL.

Be sure that your letter

- demonstrates your interest in the career or occupation that your speaker will represent
- includes all of the information that your speaker will need to make his or her participation successful

Use an appropriate tone in your writing.

PLEASE NOTE: Correct letter format has been provided.  
Please give your speaker a name. SIGN YOUR LETTER "Pat Jones."  
DO NOT USE THE NAME OF YOUR OWN SCHOOL ANYWHERE IN YOUR WRITING.

## Section II: Functional Writing -- Scoring Guide

### Thought and Detail (Curriculum Concepts 1, 3, 4, 5)

When marking Thought and Detail the marker should consider

- how well the assignment is addressed and whether the purpose specified in the assignment is fulfilled
- awareness of audience/appropriateness of tone (in terms of purpose)

- 5 **PROFICIENT:** A precise awareness of audience is demonstrated. Tone is appropriate. Significant information is presented, and this information is enhanced by precise and appropriate details that effectively fulfill the purpose.
  - 4 **CAPABLE:** A clear awareness of audience is demonstrated. Tone is appropriate. Significant information is presented, and this information is substantiated by appropriate details that efficiently fulfill the purpose.
  - 3 **ADEQUATE:** A general awareness of audience is demonstrated. Tone is appropriate. Sufficient information is presented, and this information is supported by enough detail to fulfill the purpose.
  - 2 **LIMITED:** Recognition of audience is demonstrated but is not sustained. Tone may be inappropriate. Essential information may be missing. Supporting details are scant, insignificant, and/or irrelevant. The purpose is only partially fulfilled.
  - 1 **POOR:** Only a vague recognition of audience is demonstrated. Tone may be inappropriate. Essential information and supporting details are lacking. The purpose is not fulfilled.
- INS **INSUFFICIENT:** The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment, or the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess thought and detail.

### Organization (Curriculum Concepts 2, 3, 4)

When marking Organization the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- clear and logical ordering of information
- unified ideas
- sustained coherence

- 5 **PROFICIENT:** A clearly focused statement of topic or function is presented. Details are coherently related and are developed in sentences and paragraphs that flow smoothly to an effective and appropriate request, statement of expectation, or other conclusion.
- 4 **CAPABLE:** A well-defined statement of topic or function is presented. Details are clearly related. The request, statement of expectation, or other conclusion is appropriate.
- 3 **ADEQUATE:** A general statement of topic or function is presented. Details are generally related, but coherence may falter on occasion. The request, statement of expectation, or other conclusion is functional.
- 2 **LIMITED:** A vaguely focused statement of topic or function is presented. Details are vaguely related. The request, statement of expectation, or other conclusion is unclear.
- 1 **POOR:** An obscure statement of topic or function is presented. The relationships among chosen details are obscure. The request, statement of expectation, or other conclusion is absent or inappropriate.



*Section II: Functional Writing -- Scoring Guide (continued)*

Writing Skills (Curriculum Concepts 2, 3, 4, 5)

When marking Writing Skills the marker should consider Matters of Choice AND Matters of Convention. (See Section I for clarification.)

- 5 PROFICIENT: The selection and use of words and structures is usually effective. Errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar that are present do not reduce the clarity of communication.
- 4 CAPABLE: The selection and use of words and structures is often effective. Errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar sometimes reduce the clarity of communication.
- 3 ADEQUATE: The selection and use of words and structures is occasionally effective. Errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar occasionally impede the clarity of communication.
- 2 LIMITED: The selection and use of words and structures is often ineffective. Errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar often impede the clarity of communication.
- 1 POOR: The selection and use of words and structures is usually ineffective. Errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar severely impede the clarity of communication.

*Section III: Response to Visual Communication -- Sample*

Examine the photograph and complete the assignment that follows. Your response MUST be in the form of a unified and coherent composition.



*Continued*



*Scoring Guide for Section III: Response to Visual Communication*

Thought and Detail (Curriculum Concepts 1, 3, 4, 5, 13, 14, 16, 17)

When marking Thought and Detail the marker should consider how effectively the details selected from the photograph, and the discussion of these details, contribute to plausible and consistent interpretation of the cartoon or photograph.

- 5 **PROFICIENT:** Interpretation of the photograph is insightful and is in the form of an effective generalized idea or theme. Specific details used for support are purposefully chosen and add clarity.
  - 4 **CAPABLE:** Interpretation of the photograph is well-considered and is in the form of a generalized idea or theme. Specific details used for support are well-defined and accurate.
  - 3 **ADEQUATE:** Interpretation of the photograph is conventional and may be in the form of a maxim or moral. Details used for support are clear but tend to be generalized.
  - 2 **LIMITED:** Interpretation of the photograph is vague and uncertain and/or concentrated on a particular detail rather than on the photograph as a whole. Details used for support are inappropriate and/or unclear.
  - 1 **POOR:** Interpretation of the photograph is inappropriate, or incomprehensible. Details are irrelevant, inaccurate, or absent.
- INS **INSUFFICIENT:** The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment, or the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess thought and detail.

Organization (Curriculum Concepts 2,3,4)

When marking Organization the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- unified and consistent development
- clear and coherent order

- 5 **PROFICIENT:** The beginning creates interest and/or promotes further reading. Ideas are developed by sentences and paragraphs that flow smoothly and coherently to an appropriate and effective conclusion.
- 4 **CAPABLE:** An effective beginning has been presented. Ideas are developed by sentences and paragraphs that are coherently related. The conclusion is appropriate.
- 3 **ADEQUATE:** The beginning, development, and conclusion are functional. Sentences and paragraphs are generally related, but coherence may falter on occasion.
- 2 **LIMITED:** The beginning and/or conclusion are nonfunctional. Relationships between sentences and between paragraphs are frequently unclear.
- 1 **POOR:** The introduction and/or conclusion, if present, are obscure. Sentences and paragraphs are not coherently related.

*Scoring Guide for Section III: Response to Visual Communication (continued)*

Writing Skills (Curriculum Concepts 2, 3, 4, 5)

When marking Writing Skills the marker should consider Matters of Choice AND Matters of Convention. (See Section I for clarification.)

- 5 **PROFICIENT:** The selection and use of words and structures is usually effective. Errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar do not reduce the clarity of communication.
- 4 **CAPABLE:** The selection and use of words and structures is often effective. Errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar sometime reduce the clarity of communication.
- 3 **ADEQUATE:** The selection and use of words and structures is occasionally effective. Errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar occasionally impede the clarity of communication.
- 2 **LIMITED:** The selection and use of words and structures is often ineffective. Errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar often impede the clarity of communication.
- 1 **POOR:** The selection and use of words and structures is usually ineffective. Errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar severely impede the clarity of communication.

Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice)

Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice), worth 50% of the total diploma examination score, is a 2-hour test consisting of 70 multiple-choice questions based on readings from fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and modern drama.

For the convenience of students, readings and questions are in separate booklets. The student may NOT use a dictionary or thesaurus while writing Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice).

The questions examine the student's skills in the following reporting categories:

- understanding meanings
- understanding and interpreting the relationships between form and content
- understanding and interpreting human experience and values as expressed through literature
- finding and using information for a particular purpose

The questions are developed to assess the following cognitive levels:

- understanding literal meaning
- drawing inferences and applying knowledge
- evaluating the ideas, techniques, and values presented in the reading selections

The blueprint that follows on page 44 outlines, in tabular form, the design of Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice). It delineates the relationship between test content and curriculum concepts, shows the reporting categories and cognitive levels under which questions are classified and data are reported. The blueprint shows the approximate proportion of the total diploma examination score for each reporting category and cognitive level.

ENGLISH 33 DIPLOMA EXAMINATION  
PART B: READING (MULTIPLE-CHOICE) BLUEPRINT

REPORTING CATEGORY	CROSS-REFERENCE TO ENGLISH 33 STATEMENT OF CONTENT**	COGNITIVE LEVEL			PROPORTION OF TOTAL MARK***
		LITERAL UNDERSTANDING	INFERENCE AND APPLICATION	EVALUATION	
1. <u>MEANINGS</u> The student should be able to distinguish between major and minor events and ideas and to understand and interpret subject, purpose, theme, thesis, and supporting details of selections.*	Concepts 6,7,8,10,12,13,16				20%
2. <u>RELATIONSHIPS OF FORM AND CONTENT</u> The student should be able to understand and interpret the organization, writer's technique, point of view, and mood of literary and non-literary materials. The student should be able to evaluate how the impact of a work is affected by its organization, technique, point of view, and mood.	Concepts 6,8,10,13,14,16,17				10%
3. <u>HUMAN EXPERIENCE AND VALUES</u> The student should be able to understand and interpret a character's relationships, personality traits, and motivation. The student should be able to determine the writer's tone. Through literature, the student should be able to understand and interpret human experience and values.	Concepts 6,7,8,9,13,14,16,17				10%
4. <u>LIFE SKILLS</u> The student should be able to find and organize information for a specified purpose. The student should be able to evaluate information in terms of purpose.	Concepts 6,7,11,12,13,16				10%
PROPORTION OF TOTAL MARK***		5%	35%	10%	50% (70 questions)

Percentages within individual parts of the blueprint will vary depending upon the nature of the selections.

\*The examination uses selections from fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and modern drama. Visual materials may also be used.

\*\*Program of Studies for Senior High Schools, p. 152(11)-153(1), and Senior High School Language Arts 1982 Curriculum Guide, pp. 13-16.

\*\*\*Percentages are approximate, and will vary depending on the selections chosen.

## Sample Reading Selection and Questions

Sample questions 1 to 5 on pages 46 and 47 are based on the article below. Answers to the questions, and a discussion of the questions follow on pages 47 to 50.

### A FAILURE OF FAITH IN MAN-MADE THINGS

There are those who have faith in man-made things and those who do not.

I do not.

5 I do not have faith in elevators. I do not have faith in planes, subways, bridges or tunnels.

I do use them. Of which fact I am very proud.

10 I have, for example, a friend who chose his dentist because the dentist's office was on the first floor. I know a journalist who became a national expert on trains because he can't bear flying. I have another friend who sold his island house after living there only weeks because he had dizzy spells on the bridge. (The alternative route -- a tunnel -- was completely out of the question.)

15 I don't think these people are neurotic. Rather, it's a question of degree. How many of the rest of us travel on, over and through man-made things comforted only by our private escape plans?

That's the dividing point. People who have faith in man-made things do not have escape plans. I do.

20 I have an escape plan for the elevator. I will escape Certain Death if the elevator drops twenty floors suddenly -- which I fully expect -- because I will be jumping up and down. I read once that if you jump up and down while the elevator is crashing you have a 50 percent chance of being up while it's down and softening the impact.

Don't tell me if it's not true.

25 I have an escape plan for the final subway stall. If somewhere between stops, the transit line dies and there are four hundred of us squeezed into one car so tightly that no one can move an arm to break a window, I will escape. I will be at my usual post, nose in the door, gasping the one thin stream of air as it comes through a crack.

30 On the whole, I am more philosophical about airplanes. I look quite relaxed: seated, belted (no, I never take off my seatbelt, not even between here and Paris) and reading a paper before take-off. I repeat ten times, "Well, it's out of my hands now." But look closer. I am in the last row, because I remember from a Jimmy Stewart movie, *The Phoenix*, that you've got the best chance of surviving near the tail. I will escape. If I weren't so concerned about looking cool, I would ride  
35 on the plane's rear lavatory floor.

40 As for bridges, I remember the Galloping Gertie. Other bridges look sturdy enough, but there is only one railing between me and the water. When I drive over them, I roll up my window, because if my car plunges into the water -- it is possible, it really is -- there will be an air bubble in it. I will be able to breathe until I collect myself and then

*Continued*



execute a perfect escape like the ones you see on television.

Don't tell me if it isn't true.

45 My greatest phobia is about tunnels -- maybe because my escape plans  
stink. Every time I go through a tunnel, I expect the Ultimate Leak.  
And I haven't figured any way out against the rising water except (1)  
drive for it or (2) run for it.

50 I do try to control myself. After all, I have driven through two  
thousand tunnels without even using the windshield wipers. But I am  
prepared for the worst.

I don't know how tunnels are built, or bridges, or elevators, or  
airplanes. I don't know how or why they work. So why should I believe  
they're safe? How do I know they won't break with me on, in, over or  
under them?

55 My escape plans are nothing more than an attempt at control. I know  
that I don't want to be dependent on the metal of a bridge, or the  
concrete of a tunnel. In truth, I don't really want to depend on man-  
made things at all. I hate being that far from Control Center. A  
severe failure of faith.

60 I suppose I would make one lousy astronaut.

*Ellen Goodman*

1. When the writer says "Don't tell me if it's not true" (line 23), she implies that she
  - A. fears the 50 per cent odds
  - B. prefers the security of ignorance
  - C. trusts the information that she reads
  - D. distrusts the elevators in which she rides
  
2. The words "until I collect myself" (line 41) refer to the writer's action of
  - A. saving her energy
  - B. getting her wits about her
  - C. holding her breath in fear
  - D. gathering her belongings together
  
3. The writer believes that she "would make one lousy astronaut" (line 60) because she is
  - A. distrustful of technology
  - B. a very superstitious person
  - C. an extremely opinionated person
  - D. terrified of heights and enclosed spaces

4. The writer capitalizes "Certain Death," "Ultimate Leak," and "Control Center" to
- A. create contrast
  - B. attain coherence
  - C. provide emphasis
  - D. develop personification
5. The writer is poking fun PRIMARILY at
- A. her own fears
  - B. escape methods
  - C. mechanical devices
  - D. people who have fears

Sample Questions -- Key and Discussion

Although the sample set of questions on pages 46 and 47 (taken from the English 33 Diploma Examination administered in January 1986) is relatively short, it illustrates the types of questions that form the bulk of Part B of all English 33 Diploma Examinations. Two reporting categories are represented: Meanings (questions 1, 2, 3, and 5) and Relationships of Form and Content (question 4). Also, two cognitive levels are represented: Inference and Application (questions 1, 2, 3, and 4) and Evaluation (question 5).

The following table presents the key and the distribution of student responses by alternative (A, B, C, and D) in per cent for each of the sample questions.

Question Number	Key	Distribution of Responses by Alternative*			
		A	B	C	D
1	B	19.3%	52.2%	24.2%	4.2%
2	B	9.8%	81.6%	6.0%	2.5%
3	A	81.4%	3.4%	4.1%	11.0%
4	C	11.1%	5.3%	75.7%	7.8%
5	A	51.0%	20.3%	12.0%	16.6%

N = 4401 (January 1986)

\*The sum of the percentages for each question is 99.9%; approximately 0.1% of the students did not respond to each question.

1. When the writer says "Don't tell me if it's not true" (line 23), she implies that she
  - A. fears the 50 per cent odds
  - B. prefers the security of ignorance
  - C. trusts the information that she reads
  - D. distrusts the elevators in which she rides

The first question tests two important reading functions: the student's ability to relate a pronoun to its antecedent and to infer the meaning of a statement. This is reflective of concepts 6, 8, and 10 of the Statement of Content for English 13, 23, and 33.\*

When Ellen Goodman writes "Don't tell me if it's not true" (line 23), the pronoun "it" in her request refers back to a previous statement -- "I read once that if you jump up and down while the elevator is crashing you have a 50 percent chance of being up while it's down and softening the impact" (lines 20-22). The implication in "read once" is that this information about surviving an elevator crash may be suspect. Also, the image of the writer jumping up and down in the elevator as it plunges earthward is itself tinged with black humor. Therefore, alternative C, "trusts the information that she reads," chosen by 24.2% of the total group of students (9.3% of the high achieving group and 34.7% of the low achieving group), is incorrect. Indeed it is because she *does not* trust this information that Ellen Goodman makes her request.

The keyed response, alternative B, "prefers the security of ignorance," was chosen by 52.2% of the total group (85.4% of the high achievers and 21.5% of the low achievers).

Question 1 was difficult, but it discriminated well between high and low achieving students.

2. The words "until I collect myself" (line 41) refer to the writer's action of
  - A. saving her energy
  - B. getting her wits about her
  - C. holding her breath in fear
  - D. gathering her belongings together

Questions 2 and 3 were quite easy with over 80% of the students answering each question correctly. Both questions discriminated well between high and low achieving students.

Question 2 tests the student's ability to perform the important reading function of determining the meaning of an idiomatic expression, and is reflective of curriculum concepts 6, 8, and 10.

\*As found in the Senior High School Language Arts 1982 Curriculum Guide, pp 13-16.

The vast majority of students, 81.6% (97.9% of the high achieving group and 54.0% of the low achieving group), associated the idiomatic expression "until I collect myself" with the keyed response, alternative B, "getting her wits about her." Alternative A "saving her energy" drew 9.8% of the total group but discriminated well since it drew only 1.1% of the high achieving group and 21.9% of the low achieving group.

3. The writer believes that she "would make one lousy astronaut" (line 60) because she is
- distrustful of technology
  - a very superstitious person
  - an extremely opinionated person
  - terrified of heights and enclosed spaces

Question 3 asks the student to determine why Ellen Goodman believes that she "would make one lousy astronaut" (line 60), and is reflective of curriculum concepts 6, 7, 8, and 10. Certainly the whole selection is dealing, albeit humorously, with Goodman's distrust of technology as represented by her "failure of faith in man-made things."

The keyed response, alternative A, "distrustful of technology," was chosen by 81.4% of the total group (94.7% of the high achieving group and 61.5% of the low achieving group). Alternative D, "terrified of heights and enclosed spaces," was chosen by 11.0% of the total group (4.4% of the high achievers and 21.1% of the low achievers).

It is *not*, however, heights and enclosed spaces *per se* that terrify Goodman; what terrifies her is being forced to rely on technology in what could become dangerous situations. There is nothing in the selection to suggest that Goodman would be terrified if she were snug in a bower in a green wood or placed on top of a high hill, providing solid earth were underfoot.

4. The writer capitalizes "Certain Death," "Ultimate Leak," and "Control Center" to
- create contrast
  - attain coherence
  - provide emphasis
  - develop personification

Question 4 was another relatively easy but highly discriminating question. It tests the student's ability to determine the effect of the writer's technique of capitalizing words that are normally written without capitals, in this case "Certain Death," "Ultimate Leak," and "Control Center." This is reflective of curriculum concepts 6, 7, 8, and 10.

The keyed response, alternative C, "provide emphasis," was chosen by 75.7% of the total group (93.5% of the high achieving group and 54.2% of the low achieving group). Alternative A, "create contrast," drew 11.1% of the total group (1.8% of the high achieving group and 22.1% of the low achieving group).

5. The writer is poking fun PRIMARILY at
- A. her own fears
  - B. escape methods
  - C. mechanical devices
  - D. people who have fears

The final question of the set, question 5, was difficult but, like the other questions, highly discriminating between the high and low achieving groups.

This is the only question of the set that asks the student to select the *best* rather than the *correct* response, indicated in the stem of the question by the qualifier PRIMARILY in upper case letters. All four alternatives (A, B, C, and D) are, to some degree, correct; the student is required to judge which alternative is best. This question reflects curriculum concepts 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11.

Ellen Goodman is certainly "poking fun" at "her own fears," at "escape methods," at "mechanical devices," and at "people who have fears," but the primary target of her humor is herself and an exaggerated version of "her own fears." The selection is written in the first person and gives prominent display to the personal pronouns "I," "me," and "my." The writer has adopted the role of the jester or fool to provide entertainment for the reader.

The keyed response, alternative A, "her own fears," was chosen by 51.0% of the total group (70.0% of the high achieving group and 36.8% of the low achieving group). Alternative B, "escape methods," drew 20.3% of the total group (10.6% of the high achievers and 32.3% of the low achievers).

#### CREDITS

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