RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKING THE SIGHT PASSAGE

“Prisoners of the Wired World”
From an article by Alan Lightman

(1) The following is a set of suggested answers. It is not a rigid or absolute marking guide. The marker must exercise judgment in determining the range of acceptable answers.

(2) Half-marks may be allotted for "close" answers.

(3) Up to four marks will be awarded for the quality of writing on the entire Sight Passage Section of the examination.

1. In your own words, state the author's thesis. (2 marks)

The overload of information, work, and technological devices has left each of us with little time to connect to our inner real selves. (1 mark) It is essential to our well being, however, that we take time to escape from the wired world and allow ourselves freedom to dream, imagine, and reflect. (1 mark)

2. Identify ONE of the following methods of development from the passage, and explain how the author uses it to advance his argument. (2 marks)

In order to obtain the two marks, the student must both provide a specific reference (1 mark), preferably a quotation, for the method of development; and explain (1 mark) how the author uses this example to support an argument. No mark is to be given for merely giving the location (e.g., there is an example in the first sentence of the second paragraph).

The second mark is awarded for explaining how the example advances the argument. This explanation should logically explain why the example supports one of the author's arguments in support of the thesis. It is insufficient to say merely that the example emphasizes the author's argument: the argument must be stated.

Although the sample answers that follow cite several examples, the student's answer requires only one.

a) anecdote

An anecdote is a brief, simple narration of an incident.

- Paragraph A is an anecdote in which the author describes an incident when he was sitting at his desk at home, and he realized that he needs to allow himself free time. This anecdote is used to support his thesis that life in the wired world is a hectic one that no longer allows us...
to have time to connect with our inner selves. We have, in effect, become prisoners to its hectic and continuous pace.

- The writer relates an anecdote of his childhood in paragraph C. The description of his "wasting" time in solitude and daydreaming beside a pond advances his argument by presenting a picture of what life was like before we descended into the wired world. That life included peaceful, quiet days that allowed one time to connect with the inner self. It is a world to which the author longs to return, at least periodically.

b) contrast

Any contrast, such as one of the following (1 mark), should be chosen by the student to show how the author advances his argument that we have become disconnected from our true selves and must strive to reconnect (1 mark).

- The world of today, the wired world, is contrasted with the world of the author’s childhood. He describes the time of his childhood as a time when he could take long walks, lounge by a pond, and contemplate life. He goes on to describe the wired world as one that has become “faster, less patient, louder, more wired, more public” (E). This contrast is used to demonstrate that we have lost something important as we have acquired more technology. It also demonstrates the negative aspects that result from this change (e.g., rudeness and lack of patience).
- There is a contrast between the “wired world” and the world of the inner self. After his negative description of the “wired world,” particularly in paragraph I, he uses positive diction to discuss the importance of the inner self: “imagines,” “dreams,” “explores,” “freedom,” “nourish” (K). This contrast clearly supports his argument that listening to his inner self (in a solitary, quiet place) is a worthwhile pursuit and not a waste of time.
- Paragraph M involves a comparison of public and private space. He argues public space is “occupying more and more of our physical and psychic terrain,” but “private space is not a physical space.” This contrast supports his argument that people now normally view private space as less important because it is not tangible, but he argues that the “space of the mind” is what is truly important.

c) cause and effect

- Paragraph I lists a number of examples of cause and effect: an obsession with speed results in impatience with slowness; too much information can result in less knowledge; subdivision of TV screens reflects multi-tasking; communication technology results in fewer face-to-face communication; the noise of technology results in the loss of silence; being wired to communication technology results in loss of privacy. This method of development makes the readers consider the negative aspects of technology.
- The cause is the writer not allowing himself free time; the effect is a loss of his true freedom, and he becomes a prisoner (J-K). This powerful expression advances the argument that free time is essential in maintaining a connection with the inner self.
- The cause is “my growing understanding of the vast forces that shape modern life;” the effect is an increase in “my resolve to counter those forces, to build a parallel universe for my inner
life and spirit” (O). This cause and effect is used to prove that we can and must do something to avoid becoming prisoners of the wired world.

3.  

a) State the dominant tone of the passage. (1 mark)

Several terms are acceptable. The student must identify one valid, specific tone for one mark. A general term for the tone, such as positive or negative, is too vague. Likewise, since the "dominant tone" is asked for, tones such as personal, conversational, thoughtful, emphatic, or opinionated are not specific enough.

In this essay, there are two tones, either of which a student could argue is dominant.
  • First, there is a strong tone of concern, worry, regret, or dissatisfaction because the wired world has caused us to be disconnected from our inner selves.
  • There is also a determined or motivating tone because Lightman is trying to motivate us to change our ways by arguing the importance of listening to the inner self and reminding us that technology is only a tool, and therefore, we are still the ones in control.

Note: Not every tone is valid. The tone selected should be one of the above or a close synonym. It would not be accurate to say that the tone in this essay is bitter or cynical; dignified or solemn; smug or boastful; whimsical; indifferent, etc.

b) With specific reference to the passage, explain how the author's use of diction reveals this tone. (1 mark)

Diction refers to specific words chosen for their connotation, their implications, and their power to reveal an attitude or tone. A student should not quote a whole sentence without identifying (underlining, or later quoting) a specific word or phrase as the effective diction; nor should a student explain that the idea in a quoted sentence supports the argument. Such a response has not dealt with "diction"; full marks should not be given in this case. For one mark, the student must explain briefly why the vocabulary used by the author is suitable for creating the tone that the student has identified.

While a student may gain the mark for providing one good example well explained, several examples may form a more persuasive and superior response.

The specific diction is in italics in the paragraphs that follow. The context is given to help the reader, but the context is not necessary in a student's answer.

A tone of concern, worry, regret, or dissatisfaction is evident in Lightman’s comments about the toll that the wired world is taking on us. The following diction in italics supports the tone:

  • “Prisoners of the Wired World” (title); “I am a prisoner of the world around me. Worse than a prisoner” (L). The author’s repeated use of the word “prisoner” indicates that he is concerned because we are allowing technology to take control of our lives.
• In the first line of the essay, the author says he had a “horrifying realization” (A). The expression here emphasizes the seriousness of his concern about our lost connection to our inner selves.

• The word “lost” is repeated throughout the essay, emphasizing that something important is missing in our lives.

• “Unconsciously…I have subdivided my waking day into smaller and smaller units of ‘efficient’ time use, until there is no fat left on the bone, no breathing spaces remaining” (B). Here the author implies that we have become so constricted within the wired world that there is no time left for us to do what is necessary, and that is connecting with our inner selves.

• “A robot? A cog in a wheel?” (B). The author here expresses his concern that he has lost the sense of who he truly is by being assimilated into the wired world.

• “A transformation so vast” (E) expresses concern because the world has changed so drastically since the time of the author’s childhood, a time that allowed for freedom.

• “All around me, everywhere I go, I feel a sense of urgency, a vague fear of not keeping up with the world, a vague fear of not being plugged-in” (G). These words express the author’s anxiety that he experiences as he makes his way through the wired world.

• “Some of the less agreeable symptoms and features of the Wired World” (I) expresses concern, as the use of the word “symptom” implies that the wired world is a disease.

A **determined** or **motivating** tone is present because Lightman argues that we can and must take the opportunity to connect with our inner selves and discover true freedom from the wired world. The following diction **in italics** supports this tone:

• “And what I discovered in that flicker of heightened awareness was this…” (A). His use of the words “discovered” and “heightened awareness” indicates that he has recognized the problem, and thus there is a good possibility for change and improvement, keeping the essay from being solely critical in tone. The word “awareness” is used again in paragraph P when it is described as the “key” that will lead people to change.

• The author repeatedly uses the expression “I can” throughout the essay suggesting that both the reader and the author are the ones in control and that they do not have to be prisoners if they do not want to be. This feeling is further emphasized when he says, “there is no real authority here” (G).

• “But the truly important spaces of one’s being cannot be measured in terms of square miles or cubic centimetres” (M). “Truly important” expresses the author’s feeling that getting in touch with your inner self is an important pursuit.

• “Am I helpless to regain my true freedom?” (N). The author’s use of the words “true freedom” underscores the importance of escaping the wired world, if only briefly, thus motivating readers to make an effort to connect with their inner selves.

• “In an odd way, my growing understanding…has only increased my resolve to counter those forces…” (O). This phrase indicates the writer’s decision to make the choices necessary for the survival of our inner selves.

• “This accounting…must be done and it can be done only by the individual” (R). The author tries to motivate the reader by indicating both the importance and possibility of change.
4. Identify from the passage TWO of the following stylistic devices, and explain the contribution of the device to the impact of the passage: a) metaphor, b) rhetorical question, c) parallel structure, d) onomatopoeia. (4 marks)

One mark is awarded for clearly identifying, preferably quoting, a valid example of the device. A second mark is awarded for explaining the contribution of the device to the impact of the essay.

Note that it is not enough by way of explanation merely to define the device or merely to state that the example adds emphasis. The student must state a specific contribution to this essay, preferably explaining which argument or tone is heightened by this device. As well, the student is not answering the question if he or she deals with word choice or the meaning of a sentence.

Although the marking guide cites several examples below, the student's answer needs to cite and explain only one.

a) metaphor
Metaphors include the following comparisons in italics. The context is included to help the marker, but the student need not include the context. If the context is included, the student should identify the metaphor by underlining or quoting the operative words later.

- “Prisoners of the Wired World” (title); “I am a prisoner of the world around me….Worse than a prisoner…” (L). The metaphor in these examples alarms the readers by suggesting that we are being held captive in our world, that we have lost our freedom. The metaphor here underscores the author’s thesis that we must take time out of our world to regain our freedom by getting in touch with our inner selves.
- “It was one of those rare moments when the mind is able to slip out of itself, to gaze down on its convoluted grey mass from above, and to see what it is actually doing” (A). The personification of the mind helps the reader to see the “inner self” as a valid and significant part of our selves, a part that needs solitude, time, and quiet.
- “What I discovered in that flicker of heightened awareness was this” (A). “Flicker” suggests that the moment of insight was short but enlightening. It also adds to the drama of the event suggesting that, if neglected, this significant insight would be lost.
- “I have subdivided my waking day…until there is no fat left on the bone, no breathing spaces remaining. I hardly ever give my mind permission to take a recess, go outdoors, and play” (B). These four metaphors support the thesis that the pressure of work has left no time not to work, to unwind, or to connect to one’s inner self.
- “What have I become? A robot? A cog in a wheel?” (B). These metaphors from machinery highlight the thesis that work makes us lose connection with our inner selves, and a cog or a robot has no inner self.
- “Some of the less agreeable symptoms” (I) suggests the wired world is like a disease.
• “In the face of this avalanche of facts, far more than can be excavated or digested, it becomes easier to confuse information with knowledge” (I). The amount of information on the Internet is not portrayed as something positive, but as something excessive and overwhelming to the extent that it ceases to be useful.

• “With many of the new technologies we are, in effect, plugged in and connected to the outer world twenty-four hours a day” (I). This metaphor is apt since it is from the age of e-mail and cell phones. It makes people seem like machines and provides a frightening image that we are losing our independence and humanity because there is no time to rest and connect with the inner self.

• “When I never sever myself from the rush and heave of the external world?” (J). This metaphor suggests that we are physically tied to this wired world in an unpleasant way.

• “My inner self roots me to me, and to the ground beneath me” (K); “The sunlight and soil that nourish my inner self are solitude and personal reflection” (K). These are positive metaphors that describe the inner self as something necessary to our lives and therefore deserving of time.

b) rhetorical question

Rhetorical question in the broad sense is any question that improves the rhetoric, or art of persuasion, by piquing the interest or attention of the reader. This may include questions which have an answer. A student should quote a rhetorical question and indicate how it contributes to the impact of the passage.

• “What have I become? A robot? A cog in a wheel? A unit of efficiency myself?” (B). The effect of these rhetorical questions is that the reader thinks of the writer as part of a machine, rather than as a human being emphasizing the loss of self that occurs due to the lifestyle to which we have all succumbed.

• “What happened to those careless, wasteful hours at the pond? Has the world changed, or just me?” (D). These rhetorical questions express the author’s feeling of reverence for the quiet days of his childhood. The questions also serve as a transition to his investigation of the role that technology plays in the hectic pace of our lives.

• “Haven’t we all seen people talking on cell phones while dining or riding the train, deadlines and lead-times growing shorter and shorter, video screens imposed in the most unexpected of places?” (F). This rhetorical question engages the readers, causing us to remember times when we have, in fact, seen or been involved in these exact scenarios. This question validates the author’s opinion that the world is faster and more public.

• “What have I personally lost when I no longer permit myself to ‘waste’ time? When I never let my mind spin freely, without friction from projects or deadlines; when I never let my mind think about what it wants to think about; when I never sever myself from the rush and the heave of the external world—what have I lost?” (J). These questions underscore the author’s belief that being so wrapped up in the wired world creates a significant loss.

• “Living in the Wired World as we do, are we then helpless to create private spaces and silences to contemplate our inner selves? Are we helpless to disconnect from the network? Am I helpless to waste time? Am I helpless to regain my true freedom?” (N). The author uses these rhetorical questions to make his point that we are not helpless; something can and must be done to disconnect from the wired world and reconnect with the inner self.
When do we unplug the telephone? When do we take our cell phones with us and when do we leave them behind? When do we read? When do we buy a new microwave or television or automobile? When do we use the Internet? When do we go out for a quiet walk to think? Do these decisions seem petty and trivial?” (Q). This series of rhetorical questions is used to present the choices that each of us must make in order to reach a point where we can be in touch with the inner self and escape the confines of the wired world. Making these choices and achieving a connection is essential.

c) *parallel structure*

- “If I have hours, I can work at my laptop on an article or book. If I have a few minutes, I can answer a letter. With only seconds, I can check telephone messages” (B). This parallel structure emphasizes the fact that every waking moment of the author’s time is spent doing tasks. Unfortunately, not a second of time is “wasted.”
- “A transformation so vast that it has altered all that we say and do and think” (E) emphasizes the significance of the change that has taken place.
- Lightman emphasizes the chaotic characteristics of the hectic world that we inhabit by saying “the world is faster, less patient, more wired, more public” (E).
- “Behind the technology, I believe that our entire way of thinking has changed, our way of being in the world, our social and psychological ethos” (H). This structure emphasizes that the transformation that has taken place in us and in our world is a significant one, and this transformation is not for the better.
- “What have I lost when I no longer permit myself to ‘waste’ time? When I never let my mind spin freely…when I never let my mind think about what it wants…when I never sever myself…” (J) emphasizes that we have become prisoners of the wired world as we “never” give ourselves time for us.
- “By inner self, I mean that part of me that imagines, that dreams, that explores, that is constantly questioning…” (K) emphasizes the aspects of inner self, all positive characteristics.
- “Living in the Wired World as we do, are we then helpless to create private spaces…? Are we helpless to disconnect from the network? Am I helpless to waste time? Am I helpless to regain my true freedom?” (N). The repetition of the word “helpless” in these questions implies that we may be prisoners with no control over our lives. His answer to all of these questions, however, is we are not helpless, thereby arguing that there is a way of escaping the wired world.
- “Every day, each of us decides…what to buy from the marketplace, what machines to have in our offices and homes, how to use those machines, when and how to communicate with the outer world, how to spend our time, what to think about” (P); “When do we unplug the telephone? When do we take our cell phones with us…When do we go for a quiet walk to think?” (Q). These two examples of parallel structure emphasize the number and variety of everyday choices we must make in order to prevent ourselves from becoming imprisoned in the wired world.

Other examples of parallel structure include the following. In each case, the student must explain how the example highlights the thesis or support for it.
• “I thought about what I wanted for dinner that night, whether God was a man or a woman, whether tadpoles knew they were destined to become frogs, what it would feel like to be dead, what I wanted to be when I became a man, how I got the fresh bruise on my knee” (C).
• “I struggle to understand what has happened to the world and to me, why it has happened, and what exactly has been lost” (G).

• “I need stillness to hear them; I need aloneness to hear them. I need vast, silent spaces of my mind” (L).
• “Only individuals can measure their own values and needs, their own spirit, their own quality of life” (R).

d) onomatopoeia

• Onomatopoeia only appears in paragraph I when the sounds of the wired world are described: “buzzes, hums, beeps, clatters and whines.” These words add to the sensory appeal of the essay because they imitate the sounds of different technological gadgets. The sounds also have negative feelings associated with them and would normally be considered irritating, but because they have become so common, they show the readers how accustomed we have become to this constant background noise. These examples emphasize Lightman’s claim that we are experiencing a loss of silence.

5. Personal response: (6 marks)

The personal response should be in the form of a paragraph or paragraphs. The student's opinion should be clarified with examples which the student reflects on insightfully and uses to support judgments. A well-developed response should be at least 200 words, as indicated in the Student Exemplar Handbook.

Division of marks:

Up to two marks can be earned for stating the position taken by the author and comparing one's own view with that of the author. The student must state his/her own position clearly; a simple statement of "I agree" or "I disagree" does not merit any mark.

Up to four marks can be earned for the student's commentary which includes examples from personal experience or observation and the use of these as the basis for judgments made or conclusions drawn. To receive full marks, a student must express a judgment based on evidence of his own. Note, also, that one example that is well explained and has a commentary which shows insight could merit full marks.

Each teacher should mark the personal response in a way that is consistent with his or her teaching and marking in class.

a) (from paragraph I)
“E-mail, although very useful in some respects, is fundamentally impersonal and anonymous.”

b) (from paragraph K)
“The sunlight and soil that nourish my inner self are solitude and personal reflection.”

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKING
THE ESSAY ANSWER SECTION

CLARIFICATIONS ON RUBRIC REFERENCES IN THE GUIDE BELOW

I. To save space, the expectations have not been written out in full each time they are referred to in the Marking Guide. For example, the third expectation under the Knowledge and Understanding category which reads "demonstrates an understanding of ideas, concepts, and themes from the prompt and the text" is referred to as "understands concepts (K3)"; and "synthesizes (C1)" refers to the first expectation in Communication, "organizes and synthesizes significant information and ideas." Likewise, the three expectations of Thinking and Inquiry are referred to, in order, as T1, T2, T3, with a word or two to indicate the main issue, for example, "makes support relevant (T2)." For further explication of each expectation, markers should refer to both the rubric and the "place mat."

II. In certain mishandling of the prompt, several expectations will not be met. These have been indicated using the codes above. For example, should a student fail to deal with a significant element of the question, or answer with simply a plot summary, the marking guide will advise that "such an answer would receive no higher than level one-minus for K3 'understands concepts,' T2 'makes support relevant,' T3 'analyzes ideas,' and C1 'synthesizes ideas'." The reasons for selecting these four are as follows:

- **K3**, "understands concepts," because understanding concepts in the prompt and what is expected in a literary essay is weak or not present;
- **T2**, "makes support relevant," because although the knowledge of text (K2) may be good, that knowledge is not discussed or made relevant to the prompt. (This is an important distinction between K2, "accurate support," and T2, "support made relevant.")
- **T3**, "analyzes ideas," because expected analysis is weak or absent in a plot summary or in a failure to deal with an important element of the question.
- **C1**, "synthesizes ideas" because organizing of information to develop the topic and synthesizing text and prompt are weak or have not been done.

In specific cases, it may also be the case that the thesis (T1) is not suitable to the prompt, or that the support is thin or inaccurate (K2); these may be assessed separately from the block of four above.

III. The **difference between K2 and T2** is that K2 assesses thorough and accurate knowledge of the text, whereas T2 assesses the thoughtful, insightful, and analytical application of that knowledge to the prompt in a relevant and persuasive argument.

Likewise, the **difference between K3 and T3** is this. K3 assesses the knowledge or understanding only of terms in the prompt or themes in the text, whereas T3 assesses the degree
to which the analysis creates a developed, insightful argument using those terms or themes applied to the text. For example, if *motifs* in the prompt is confused with *motives*, the student does not understand a term (K3); if a student expresses theme as one word, e.g., "the theme is revenge," the understanding (K3) of both the term theme* as well as the understanding of the theme in the work are weak. The essay must demonstrate knowledge of the message or inference we are to draw about revenge from the text. These are issues for K3, understanding and knowledge, rather than for T3, analysis. Of course, T3 will probably be adversely affected if a student does not understand the prompt or does not know of a good theme in the work.

* Theme in a literary essay should be expressed as an abstract "central, controlling" idea or opinion in a work. For example, a theme for *The Stone Angel* is not "death," even though Hagar is dying, but "fear and pride can isolate an individual." (See pages 66-69 in the *Student Exemplar Handbook*.)

**QUESTION # 1**

*Referring to a work studied in this course, show how the author’s use of imagery and/or symbolism reveals significant aspects of a central character's personality.*

**Elements of the question and expectations for answers:**

The student's answer should:

- identify a central character;
- identify significant aspects of that character’s personality;
- identify, with examples, imagery and/or symbolism that is used to reveal those aspects of character;
- show how, or explain how, the images or symbols are used to highlight or suggest important aspects of character.

**Problems students may have in answering this question or teachers may have in marking answers to it:**

**Recommended ways teachers should handle these problems when marking:**
1. The student fails to deal with one of the elements of the question.

1. Such an answer fails to deal with the question in a valid way and cannot be awarded higher than level one-minus for these four expectations: understands concepts (K3), makes support relevant (T2), analyses ideas (T3), and synthesizes significant information (C1).

2. The student deals with more than one character or more than one type of imagery and/or symbolism.

2. Full credit may be given if the student deals with at least one character and/or image/symbol thoroughly and insightfully. Accurate references to other characters may enhance the response.

3. The student deals with more than one work.

3. While the intent of the question is that the student deal with one work in some depth, full credit may be given if the student deals with at least one work thoroughly.

4. The student chooses a secondary character, or characters, e.g., Goneril and Regan in *Lear*, Wilson in *Gatsby*, or Laertes in *Hamlet*, suggesting that these characters are "central."

4. Because the prompt asks a student to deal with “a central” character rather than “the central” character, full marks may be awarded if the essay is done well. However, if a student chooses a minor character, he has not dealt with the prompt in a valid way. For example, Claudius or Laertes would be acceptable choices because, although they are not the protagonist, they are central to the play; Osric, on the other hand would not be an acceptable choice.

5. What is meant by “reveals significant aspects of a character’s personality”?

5. A student should demonstrate how imagery contributes to characterization. For example, the use of animal imagery (wolves and dogs in particular) to describe Heathcliff’s character in *Wuthering Heights* underscores his savage, uncivilized, and cruel nature.

6. The student responds to the prompt using simply a plot summary.

6. A plot summary cannot be awarded higher than level one-minus for these four expectations: understands concepts (K3), makes support relevant (T2), analyses ideas (T3), and synthesizes significant information (C1).

7. What may be used as imagery?

7. Any vivid description or comparison that creates a picture in the imagination. See the Appendix on imagery.

8. What is intended by “show how”?  

8. The Exemplar Booklet defines “show how” as “identify a process, method, or technique, and explain its effect.” In this case, a student must describe how the author’s use of imagery develops a character’s personality traits.
QUESTION # 2

With reference to a work studied in this course, to what extent is a character’s courage or strength revealed through confrontation with a moral dilemma?

Elements of the question and expectations for answers:

The student's answer should:

- identify a character;
- illustrate the courage or strength of that character;
- identify the moral dilemma;
- evaluate the extent to which strength or courage is revealed through the character’s confrontation with the moral dilemma.

Problems students may have in answering this question or teachers may have in marking:

1. The student fails to deal with one of the elements of the question.

   Recommended ways teachers should handle these problems when marking:

   1. Such an answer fails to deal with the prompt in a valid way and answer cannot receive higher than level one-minus for these four expectations: understands concepts (K3), makes support relevant (T2), analyses ideas (T3), and synthesizes significant information (C1).

2. The student deals with more than one character or more than one work.

   2. Since the prompt uses the indefinite article a, full credit may be given if the student deals with more than one character or work provided the support and analysis is thorough and insightful for at least one work.
3. The student uses a plot summary approach to describe the character’s strength or courage, but the student does not argue the extent to which the character’s confrontation with a moral dilemma reveals such character traits.

3. A plot summary can receive no higher than level one-minus for these four expectations: understands concepts (K3), makes support relevant (T2), analyses ideas (T3), and synthesizes significant information (C1). Higher level thinking is required to make the evidence relevant to the topic, and to use the evidence to explain how the moral dilemma reveals courage or strength.

4. The student argues against the question, contending a character’s strength or courage is not revealed, but rather a weakness.

4. Since the question asks for "the extent," this approach is acceptable if all elements of the question are addressed. However, support, logical analysis, and reasonable conclusions are required for any position taken. Hence, the connection between the moral dilemma and the lack of courage or strength must be explained.

5. What is meant by “moral dilemma”?

5. A “moral dilemma” implies an inner conflict between values with which a character struggles. The character is likely caught between two choices. For example, Thomas More must choose between his King and his God, and his choice ultimately reveals his courage and strength.

6. What is expected in response to "to what extent" in this prompt? Must the student explicitly state that the extent is great or small?

6. In responding to "to what extent," the student should judge and explain how a character’s confrontation with a moral dilemma reveals courage or strength. The student need not actually write “to a great / little extent”; this idea may be implied as the student’s essay develops.

**QUESTION # 3**

*Analyze how a secondary character enhances the reader’s understanding of theme in a work studied in this course.*

**Elements of the question and expectations for answers:**

The student's answer should:
• identify the secondary character;

• identify the theme;

• explain how the reader’s understanding of theme is enhanced by the secondary character.

Problems students may have in answering this question or teachers may have in marking answers:

1. The student fails to deal with one of the elements of the question.

2. The student deals with more than one work or more than one theme.

3. The student response is largely plot re-telling.

4. The student states the theme, not using a complete statement of opinion, but using merely one word or a phrase, e.g., "The theme is revenge."

Recommended ways teachers should handle these problems when marking:

1. Such an answer fails to deal with the question in a valid way and cannot be awarded higher than level one-minus for these four expectations: understands concepts (K3), makes support relevant (T2), analyses ideas (T3), and synthesizes significant information (C1).

2. While the intent of the question is that the student deal in some depth with one central theme in one work, full credit may be given if the student deals with at least one theme and work thoroughly. References to other themes or works could enhance the response.

3. A plot summary fails to deal with one or more elements of the question and cannot be awarded higher than level one-minus for these four expectations: understands concepts (K3), makes support relevant (T2), analyses ideas (T3), and synthesizes significant information (C1).

4. If the theme is not clarified in the essay as an abstract concept or insight that the work explores, then the answer cannot receive higher than level one-minus for these four expectations: understands concepts (K3), makes support relevant (T2), analyses ideas (T3), and synthesizes significant information (C1).
5. The student chooses the central character. 5. The prompt clearly states “secondary characters,” so the student must choose a character other than the protagonist. For example, Claudius is acceptable, Hamlet is not. If a student chooses the central character, the answer cannot receive higher than level one-minus for these four expectations: understands concepts (K3), makes support relevant (T2), analyses idea (T3), and synthesizes significant information (C1). An acceptable approach, however, would be to show how the secondary characters’ interaction with the protagonist enhances theme.

6. The student chooses more than one secondary character. 6. Full credit may be given if the student deals with more than one character, provided the support and analysis is thorough and insightful.

7. What is meant by “analyze how?” 7. “Analyze how” does not require a statement of the extent to which the reader’s understanding of theme is enhanced; this idea may be implied. The quality of the essay lies in persuasively arguing with evidence that a theme is developed through the use of secondary characters.

8. What is meant by “enhance the reader’s understanding of theme”? 8. The student should show how an author uses secondary characters as tools to reinforce or intensify the theme for a reader or audience.

QUESTION #4

Show that a character’s inability to escape the difficulties of his/her past contributes to the development of a theme in a work studied in this course.

Elements of the question and expectations for answers:

The student's answer should:

- identify a character;
- identify a theme;
- identify or describe the difficulties of this character’s past;
- show that the character is not able to escape these difficulties;
• explain the extent to which the theme is developed due to this inability to escape past difficulties.

Problems students may have in answering this question or teachers may have in marking answers to it:

1. The student fails to deal with one of the elements of the question.

2. The student refers to more than one central theme or more than one character.

3. The student deals with more than one work.

4. The student uses a plot summary to demonstrate the character’s inability to escape the difficulties of his/her past, but the student does not show that this inability is related to developing a theme.

5. The student states theme, not using a complete statement of opinion, but using merely one word or a phrase, e.g., "The theme is revenge."

Recommended ways teachers should handle these problems when marking:

1. Such an answer fails to deal with the question in a valid way and cannot be awarded higher than level one-minus for these four expectations: understands concepts (K3), makes support relevant (T2), analyzes ideas (T3), and synthesizes significant information (C1).

2. Full credit may be given if the student deals with more than one character or theme, provided at least one character and one theme are treated thoroughly. Referring to two or more characters and/or themes may enhance the response.

3. While the intent of the question is that the student deal with one work in some depth, full credit may be given if the student supports the prompt thoroughly using references to more than one work.

4. A plot summary cannot be awarded higher than level one-minus for these four expectations: understands concepts (K3), makes support relevant (T2), analyses ideas (T3), and synthesizes significant information (C1). Higher level thinking is required.

5. If the theme is not clarified in the essay as an abstract concept or insight that the work explores, then the answer cannot receive higher than level one-minus for these four expectations: understands concepts (K3), makes support relevant (T2), analyses ideas (T3), and synthesizes significant information (C1).
6. **What is suggested by “inability to escape the difficulties of his/her past”**?

   “Inability to escape the difficulties of his/her past” suggests that physical, mental, and/or social issues affect a character’s outlook and continue to influence behaviour and emotions. For example, Gatsby’s lifestyle is controlled by the past pain of being rejected by Daisy.

7. **What is expected for “show that”**?

   The student should present positive proof through the use of adequate supporting evidence and explanation of relationships. In this case, one needs evidence and explanation of the relationship between theme development and a character’s inability to escape past difficulties.

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**APPENDIX**

**WHAT COUNTS AS IMAGERY?**

Imagery may include specific images, sets of images, or any developed word picture. Imagery includes anything that evokes the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste. Specific quotations that include simile or metaphor are most desirable, especially when a pattern or repetition is evident. A broad definition of imagery may include any connotative, figurative, descriptive language that develops a mental image. For example, a student might refer to light and dark imagery in *Heart of Darkness* with an explanation and examples showing that darkness represents ignorance and self-centredness, whereas light represents enlightenment and concern for others. Such an answer would be weak if support was merely to claim that light and darkness imagery emphasizes the theme that blindness (ignorance) and selfishness is a problem for most of humanity.

- **Can parallel events or individual events be used as imagery?**

  This requires application but can be effective. Imagery in the broad sense includes "any word picture" (*Exemplar Booklet*). Accordingly, a vivid event such as the shooting of Candy’s dog in *Of Mice and Men* that parallels the killing of Lennie supports the theme that mercy-killing is preferable to allowing a loved one to suffer. Likewise, in *Heart of Darkness* the description of events Marlow notes on his arrival at the Outer Station, such as his encounters with natives in the death grove and in a chain gang, or the futile blasting of rock on a mountain that was not in the way, vividly emphasize themes related to the abuse, waste, and folly of colonialism.

- **Can representative characters be used as imagery?**

  This also requires explanation but can be effective. Reduced marks for aspects of knowledge and thinking are in order if the response is merely a character sketch. However, if the character is shown to be a representative figure used by the author to create an image to support theme, then full marks may be awarded. For example, in *Heart of Darkness*, the bookkeeper in the Outer Station is vividly depicted to illustrate the theme that people are often indifferent to the plight of others: the bookkeeper is tidy as a "dressmaker's dummy" with his oiled hair, pure white shirts and polished boots; but he is indifferent to the death grove that is fifty feet from his door and finds the moans of the dying white man in his shack an irritating distraction to his bookkeeping. He is an image of the refined individual in the hollow dark shell of himself.
Can symbolism be used as imagery?

This also may require some finesse but can be effective. In the broad sense, imagery is the use of word pictures. In "The Rocking-Horse Winner," undoubtedly the description of the boy riding the rocking horse frenetically to make money for his spendthrift mother creates a vivid word picture; and the scene is symbolic, suggesting a theme that the common man works frenetically at his riding-nowhere job to get money for insatiable capitalist businesses or governments. The stark description of the grey men in the grey valley of ashes in The Great Gatsby has both imagery and symbolism: the spoiled landscape symbolizes the effect of industrialization on the “fresh, green breast of the new world” that “flowered once for” the eyes of the first settlers.

In conclusion, imagery in its broadest interpretation is the use of words to create mental images. Metaphors, similes, and personification may create these images, but the images may also be created by vivid description of appropriate settings, representative characters, analogies and symbolic events.

### 4U CONFERENCE MARKING LOG

Conference Marking Date: Friday, January 27, 2006

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3. Other papers chosen by the teacher to be re-read (no more than three per class)

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