

# English Language Arts Curriculum

Education and Early Childhood Development English Programs

# Writing Exemplars

English 621A



#### 2011

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Research has shown that when teachers help students understand what needs to be learned, students learn more. Exemplars or examples of student work allow teachers to provide students with even more support during learning. Using exemplars can help students to visualize or picture success. They can assist students in understanding assessment criteria and improving their own assignments. Once students know what quality work looks like, they are more likely to be able to self-regulate their way to success (Handley & Williams, 2009).

#### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The following samples of writing were collected during the spring of 2009 from Prince Edward Island grade 12 students. The prompt, rubric, and rationale were developed by committees of P.E.I. teachers working together with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development division of assessment and curriculum specialists. The exemplars in this collection were initially used as training pieces during marking sessions provided for P.E.I. high school English teachers.

The purpose of this package is to support clear and consistent expectations and a shared language in writing assessment.

#### **HOW TO USE THESE MATERIALS**

Teachers are encouraged to use the exemplars with students, parents, administrators, and other teachers to illustrate the characteristics of effective writing at the grade 12 level. The exemplars may be displayed and used as models during lessons.

Teachers may use or modify the rubric as they see fit. It is provided here as an example of one kind of writing assessment tool, developed to meet the specific needs of one particular writing assessment.

#### LINKS TO CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

GCO #8 – Students will expected to use writing and other ways of representing to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learning and to use their imaginations.

GCO #10 – Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing and to enhance their clarity, precision, and effectiveness.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Although the prompt, rubric, and rationale all underwent a series of revisions inspired by feedback from English department heads and teachers, the following teachers deserve particular recognition for committee work specific to this project:

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Jackie Cutcliffe Colonel Gray High School

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### **Writing Assignment: Grade 12**

Read "Moving Violations" by Salar Abdoh and respond to ONE of the following statements. Your response should take the form of a multi-paragraph essay.

- A) In our technologically connected global society, we are able to live in many worlds at once. Based on the article, discuss the effect of this global connectedness.
- B) "Human nature is the same all over the world" (Earl of Chesterfield, letter to his son, Oct. 2, 1747). Discuss what the article says about the sameness of human nature.

#### Instructions:

- Assume that your audience is an interested adult.
- Before you begin writing, brainstorm and plan on a separate piece of paper. Then, from your notes, develop a thesis.
- QUOTE FROM THE ARTICLE AT LEAST TWICE in your essay, choosing and discussing quotations that help to illustrate your points. In addition to specific details and quotations from the article, you may use examples from your own experience or from other literature you have studied to support your thesis.
- Write on the lined paper provided using a blue or black pen.
- You may use a dictionary and/or a thesaurus if you wish.
- Proofread your work before submitting it.
- Write your name on this sheet only. When you finish, staple this sheet to your writing.
- You have 75 minutes to complete the writing task.

# **Moving Violations**

by Salar Abdoh June 2007

Part one in a series on Iran



On one of the last days of the month of April, 2007, you happen to be sitting in a Starbucks coffee shop in Chelsea looking out of the window, laptop open. A Sunday morning in New York City, with an hour to go before yoga class - the class a weekly ritual of your life in the States for the past several years. Your cell phone does a jig, a call from a friend back home in Iran. She is calling from somewhere on high, in the mountains that overlook the Caspian Sea. She tells you that yesterday she was walking in the woods with a mutual friend and was stopped by the morality police. She tells you a lot of things - the inane questioning that somehow always smacks of the screeching sexual frustrations of the questioners, the night in jail, the stinking cell, the incessant weeping of the twenty-year-old girl, her cellmate, who was hauled in for something similar - like daring to smile in public or singing in the rain or whatever else it is they haul you in for during their periodic campaigns to enforce the codes of *modesty*.

But what of the indignity of it? A woman and man in their late-thirties having to pay fines or be lashed with a garden hose because the weather was nice and they wanted to take a walk together.

So your friend, who has been freed on bail and has to appear in front of a cleric in the morning, tells you that there are a couple of possibilities for the two of them: they either have to cough up some money or get a few good whacks. There is no question of innocence. This is just the way it is. Another 24 hours will pass before you find out that your friend actually opted for the beating. When she calls again she tells you that it wasn't too hard; in fact the folks with the rubber hoses did not really have the heart to deliver the blows. You see, she says, the revolution is on auto-pilot and no one believes in it any more, not even the whack-givers.

But what of the indignity of it? you think. A woman and a man in their late-thirties having to pay fines or be lashed with a garden hose just because the weather was nice and they wanted to take a walk together, up there in the forests above the once lovely and now obscenely polluted Caspian Sea.

The judge who sees to their case is, of course, a classic fellow, first making a stab at trapping them by saying that one of them has already confessed. When that doesn't work, he threatens to have your friend sent to the "official doctor" to see if she has had intercourse of late. But when both defendants say they are ready for that too, the judge resorts to chiding them for their bad behavior - *Do you not know that a man and woman walking together can cause all sorts of difficulties?* (No, judge, we don't.) *Do you know that you may not be able to control yourself?* (Your friend answers that she's quite capable of controlling herself, that she's neither an animal nor a slave to the hysterical desires from which his highness implies she's suffering.) *But what of your* 

male friend? He's a man, after all. You could be walking along and suddenly he jumps on you; what will you do then? (In the judge's world everything begins and ends with the matter of conquest; he cannot possibly imagine that two human beings of the opposite sex who have been friends for years could simply be taking a walk outside because the weather was fine.)

That's the story of feeling as if you live a fragile, perilous existence every day of your life, in a place that can turn on you in a heartbeat.

And so with the court done, the judge satisfied to have dispensed his wisdom and his ruling, your friend ends up with the lashes and goes on her way. As she conveys this, she sounds distressed, yet resigned. There aren't even any marks on her back, she says. How she felt during the beating and how she will feel for the weeks and months after, that's a story for another day. That's the story of feeling as if you live a fragile, perilous existence every day of your life, in a place that can turn on you in a heartbeat. This is not an experience unique to Iran, but it's common there, and one that you return to often.

You think about the newspapers in America and the articles you have read, here and there, about the annual Iranian "grab them" campaign. The articles are basically correct: each year at the turn of spring as the weather improves, the powers that be see fit to harass "sinners and decadents," as they put it. They send their vigilantes out on the streets of Tehran and the provinces to make sure that veils are properly worn and that men and women keep clear of each other. It's a thankless task for all involved and nothing ever comes of it. Once the campaign is over, everybody goes back to doing exactly what they were doing before. But the papers here, they speak of the Islamic Republic's campaign like it's the Great Inquisition. You are, for instance, particularly struck with one headline article from a few days earlier that ran in the *New York Post*. The cover of the paper featured a photo of the authorities back in Tehran grabbing a Persian woman on the street for not being properly covered up, the title of the paper reading: MEDIEVAL. You have no quarrel with that; it is in many ways medieval. It is just that there is something hysterical in that one-word headline; something a little over-dramatized.

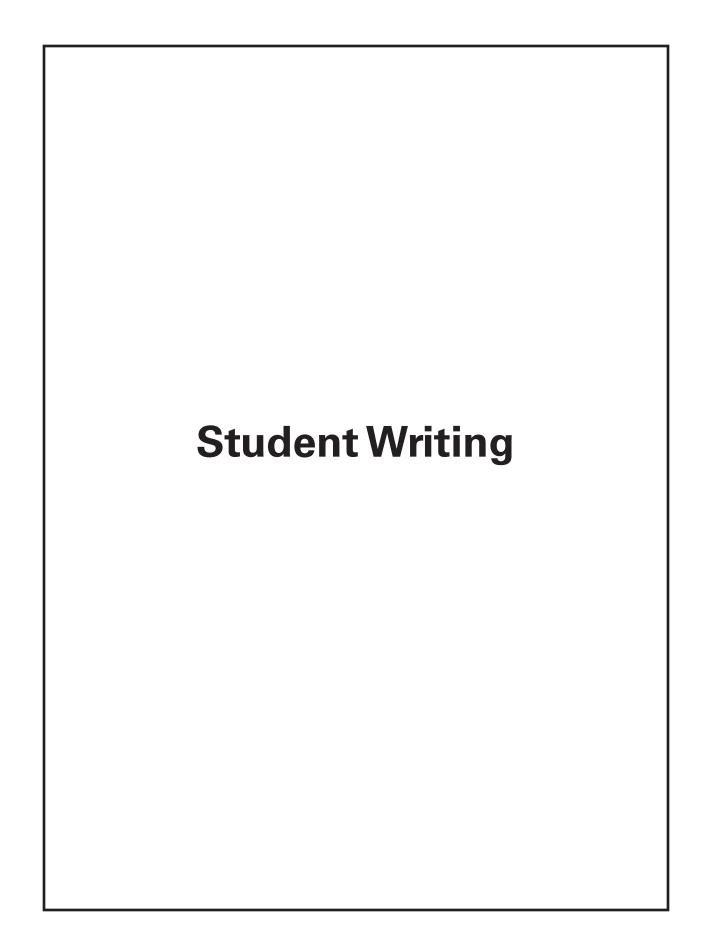
So, after your friend's phone call, as you sit in the coffee shop pondering all that has just befallen her, you look out into the quiet Sunday morning in Chelsea and think: How many worlds am I really living in? You do not have a whole lot of time to brood on this, however. It's time for that weekly yoga class. The class happens to be quite full, about four-fifths women and the rest men, both sexes wearing revealing outfits that you barely even notice; you are here to do yoga after all, not gawk. But you can't help thinking that some of the poses in the one and a half hour session would be considered so enticing to an obsessed mind that if the judge who handed down the lashes to your friend were there he'd lapse into madness.

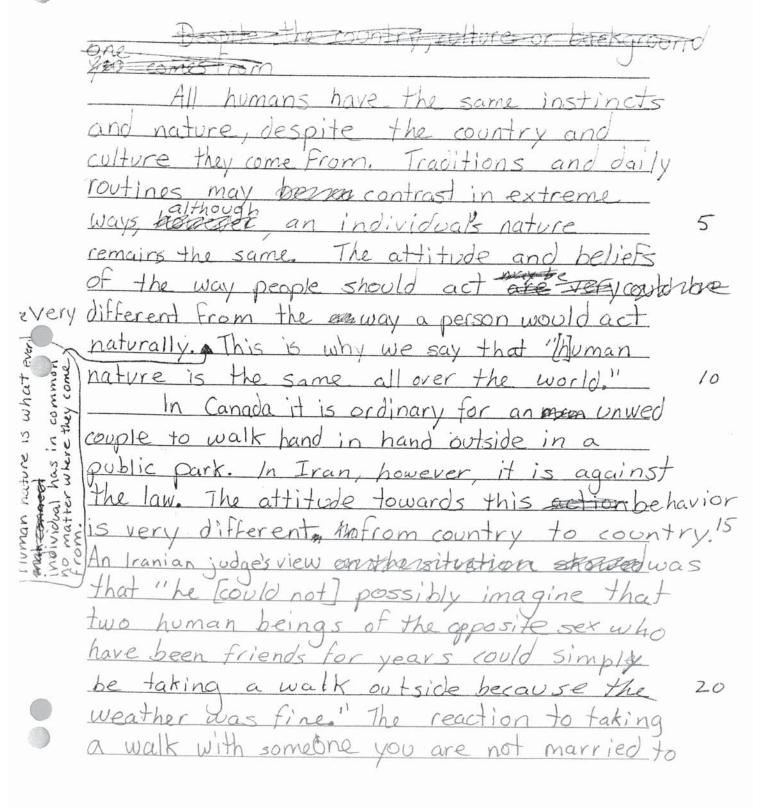
This notion, besieging you in the middle of yoga class, brings home the enormity of the gap between your friends' lives out there by the Caspian shore and where you are now. And the idea of that gap freezes you for a minute; you completely lose track of the movements and of what the instructor is saying. Before you know it, you've managed to fall into a depression while doing yoga. How is this possible? It is possible because you are living in a world of in-betweens. You are never really in a yoga class or a coffee shop or a Banana Republic clothing store, or anywhere else for that matter. Your world, too, like the world of your friends over there is perilous and fragile. Any moment a call could come on your cell phone, bad news waiting to announce itself. Your only reprieve, in fact, used to come during these yoga classes, when you are directed to turn the damn cell phone off (which you do), and to quiet your mind (which you are now incapable of doing).

http://www.guernicamag.com/features/347/moving\_violations/

Category	4	3	2	1
Thought  Develops ideas that reveal a critical understanding of the topic/theme	Writing is supported by focused and insightful ideas.	Writing is supported by effective and relevant ideas.	Writing is supported by simple ideas.	Writing lacks focus and ideas; or the ideas are superficial.
Details  Provides details (quotations, examples, anecdotes) to support ideas	Ideas are effectively supported by specific, integrated details, including at least two carefully considered questions.	Ideas are consistently supported by specific details, including at least two purposefully chosen quotations; integration is generally effective.	Ideas are supported by simple but appropriate details, including at least two appropriate quotations.	Ideas are unsupported by details/quotations or the details/ quotations are inappropriate.
Organization  Arrange ideas in a logical order.	Logical and consistent organization	Competent organization	Organization is attempted but occasionally coherence falters.	Organization is lacking or unfocused.
Establishes relationships between idea/ themes and details (both between and within paragraphs)	Clear connections exist between ideas and sustain the controlling idea/ theme in a clear, purposeful, and coherent manner.	Connections between ideas are usually clear and contribute to the coherent development of the idea/theme.	Connections are attempted but awkward or weak; an idea/theme exists but coherence may falter.	No connections are attempted between ideas; a focused idea/theme is lacking or is not maintained.
Introduction and Conclusion				
Provides an introduction that establishes a thesis and a conclusion that completes it	Engaging and skillfully constructed introduction; thoughtful conclusion, effectively related to the thesis.	Competent introduction and conclusion, clearly related to the thesis.	Functional introduction and/ or conclusion (one of the other may be weak, poorly stated) or introduction and conclusion are not related.	Introduction and/ or conclusion are missing.

Category	4	3	2	1
Matters of Correctness				
Demonstrates correct sentence construction, usage (grammar), and mechanics	Confident control of sentence construction, usage (grammar), and mechanics. The relative absence of error is impressive.	Competent control of sentence construction, usage (grammar), and mechanics. Significant errors exist but communication remains clear.	Satisfactory control of sentence construction, usage (grammar), and mechanics. Significant errors exist but do not blur meaning.	Faltering control of sentence construction, usage (grammar), and mechanics. Meaning is blurred.
Matters of Choice				
Demonstrates effective choices in diction, sentence construction, and sentence variety	Diction is consistently clear, vivid, and precise. Syntactical structures are sophisticated.	Diction is usually clear and effective. Syntactical structures are effective.	Diction is adequate but conventional and may contain awkward, mundane, or repetitive word choices. Syntactical structures are functional; attempts at more complex structures may be awkward.	Diction is imprecise and/or inadequate; writing contains redundant confusing, immature, and/or inappropriate word choices. Syntactical structures are frequently awkward and/or immature.





ream. 30

50 55 human's nature to circumstance 65 rem

#### "All humans have the same instinct and nature..."

#### Thought (3)

Writing is supported by generally effective and relevant ideas. However, there are many generalizations (II 42-43, II 52-54).

#### Details (4)

Ideas are consistently supported by specific and effectively integrated details and carefully considered quotations.

- "The reaction to taking a walk with someone...a fictional dream" (ll 22-30). *The elaboration effectively explains how the detail helps to define human nature.*
- "One who asks, 'but what of your male friend?'..." (Il 39-48). The quotation illustrates a point about human nature by showing how the judge "misses the point" (I 43).

#### Organization (3)

Generally competent organization—ideas are arranged from general to specific—Canada to Iran; general discussion of human nature leading to the individual.

Connections between ideas are usually clear and contribute to the coherent development of the idea/theme.

"A human's need to go on a walk..." (ll 25-28); "A human's nature is to ... (l 31); "Everyone feels as if their world... (ll 60-62). Frequent connections are made to the controlling idea/theme of human nature. In places, connections between ideas might be enhanced through the use of transitional words or phrases.

#### **Introduction & Conclusion (3)**

Competent introduction and conclusion, clearly related to the thesis. Intentional choice of planning—thesis found at the end of the intro and essay brings focus back to conclusion; evidence of a cyclic argument.

#### Matters of Correctness (3)

Competent control of sentence construction, usage, and mechanics. Impressive absence of error considering the complexity of response (i.e. square brackets, however).

#### Matters of Choice (3)

Diction is generally clear and effective ("animal-like impulses" (32), "genuine concern" (38), "Occasionally, however, it occurs..." (ll 48-49)

Syntactical structures are generally effective

"Traditions and daily routines may..." (Il 3-6)

"In Canada...In Iran..." (Il 11-15) establishes contrast effectively

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In this dry and age, technology aids all of us. Whitesist be notified your employer that you will be late there to an accident on the I-9 via your cell phone. Or perhaps you are a student in University and you know you want make it home in time for supper. You send your parents an email from your boton from in the library. No matter what the case man be, these devices allow us to cornect with one mother all over the world, which is more than often a useful tool.

The article "Morina Violations," depicts how technology can be used to ad into and inform the general public. The speaker in the article receives a call, on their cell phone, from a friend back home in Iran." The friend explains how she had been put through a beating, conducted by the government during a period called: "grab them campaigns." The friend talks about the ridicularsness of the incorceration, the judge and the punishment she received.

The speaker also references the media particularly and article published by a newspaper, and how they inform the society in America. The article from the "New York Post" was one that gave the American perspective of these so called "amb them campaigns." The speaker also makes not of the one word title, "MEDIEVAL," and how it is "a little over-dramatized."

#### "In this day and age..."

#### Thought (1)

Writing is supported by superficial ideas.

#### Details (1)

Ideas are adequately supported by simple but appropriate details, including at least two appropriate quotations

Quotations do not advance a reader's understanding...ideas are not supported by quotations.

#### Organization (2)

The organization is logical yet the body of the essay is primarily a plot summary.

#### **Introduction & Conclusion (3)**

A competent introduction and conclusion, clearly related to the thesis. However, there is no mention of the article or the prompt, either directly or indirectly.

#### Matters of Correctness (3)

Competent control of sentence construction, usage, and mechanics "The speaker also references..." (1 18).

Minor errors exist (sentence fragment (ll 1-3; comma overuse (13, 20, 29)

#### Matters of Choice (3)

Diction is generally clear and effective

- "notifying your employer" (1)
- "depicts how technology can be used" (9)

Syntactical structures are generally effective

- "Even though this article may very well be biased..." (ll 23-25)
- "Without the technology..." (26); "Without this constant flow of education..." (33)

	In this article "Moving violations" by Saker Abdel
	we learn about the tragic stories of
	people (mostly women) being punished for
	simple things we do everyday like "daving to
5	Smile in public or singing in the rain " (5.1.1410)
	or "walking in the woods with a mutual friend"
	Here walking with someone of the opposite sex
	would not be considered a crime, but in Iran
	people would be beaten with rubber hoses for
10	Such a thing. The fuerywhere in the world
)	people do pretty the same simple things
)	but every country seems to respond differently
	to these actions no matter how big or small
15	they may be. Such as the yoga class mentioned
, 5	in this article both sexes in the same room
	wearing revealing outfits/doing poses so enticing
	to an obsessed mind" here going to a q
	yoga class is any everyday event for Some but there this type of activity
20	could be good and you in jail.
	good good and good an
)	
)	

	By living in a technologically connected global society we are able to live in many worlds at once, we can
¥	See the way that other countries live and operate through the internet and television. The effects
25	of this connectedness are we are able to how
	different their beliefs and laws are, such as
	"Cat woman and amon in their late - thirties having too
	they wanted to take a walk together" (p.Z.11:3-5),
30	and not having authority to help or do anything
	Another effect of this connectedness is the
	only stories we really here about in canada are ones of horror and tradey tragedy so that
35	
	with their own lives, We are all in one
	world only split up by different beliefs
	and governments.

#### "In this article Moving Violations...."

#### Thought (1)

Writing is supported by adequate ideas, but it lacks focus.

"Everywhere in the world people do pretty the same simple things..." (ll 10-14)

"...we can see the way that other countries live and operate..." (22-24)

#### Details (1)

Some ideas are unsupported by simple but appropriate details, including at least two appropriate quotations

"Such as the yoga class" (14) is a supporting example.

#### Organization (1)

Organization is lacking or unfocused

A focused idea/theme is lacking or is not maintained

a lack of paragraphing contributes to a lack of focus

#### **Introduction & Conclusion (1)**

Introduction and conclusion are missing

#### Matters of Correctness (2)

Satisfactory control of sentence construction, usage, and mechanics; the meaning is clear

Although many sentences contain errors of various kinds, several complete sentences do exist.

Errors blur the communication at times

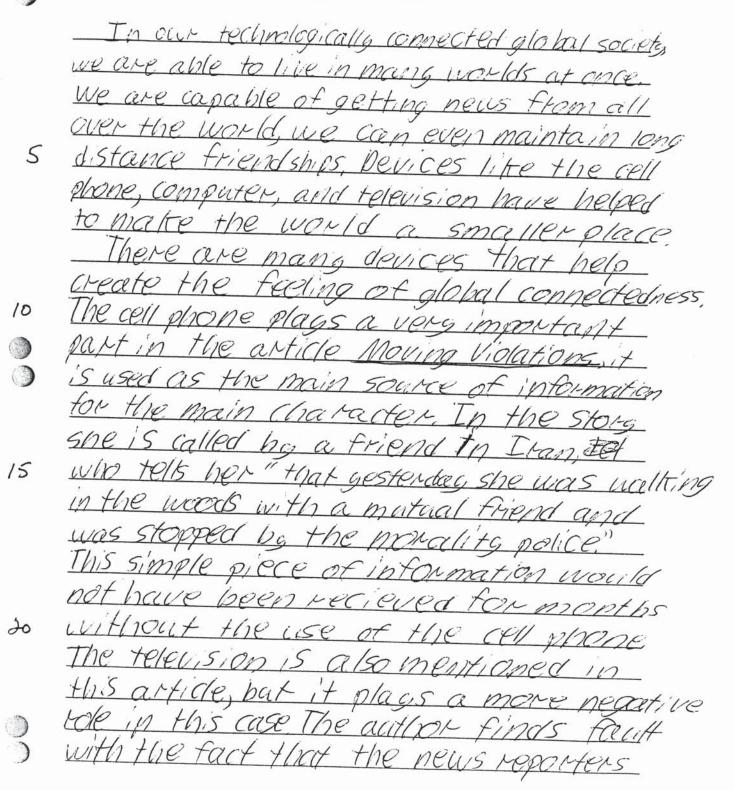
"Here going to a yoga class..." (17); "we are able to how different..." (25)

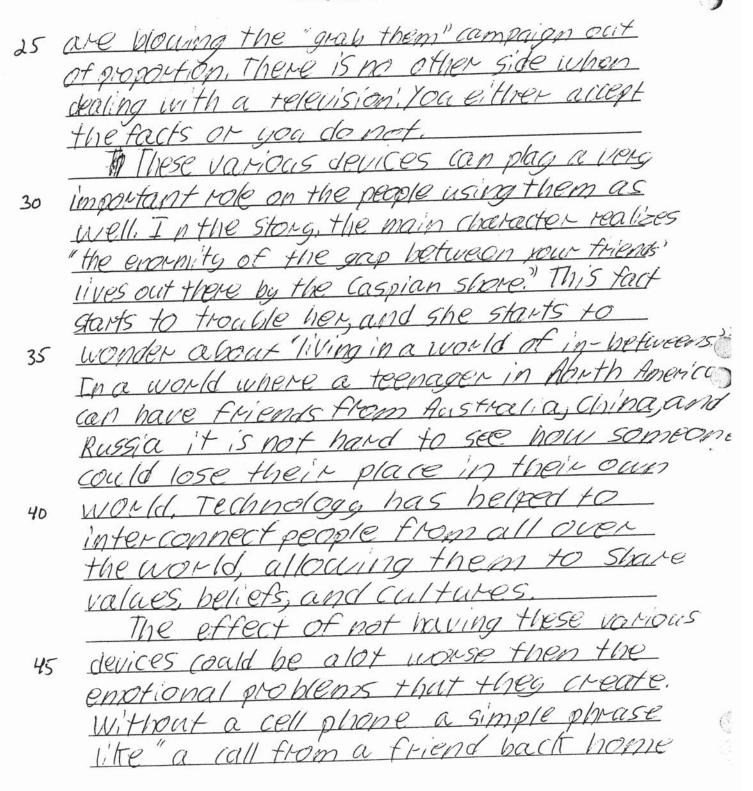
#### Matters of Choice (2)

Diction is adequate but conventional

Syntactical structures are functional; attempts at more complex structures may be awkward

"The effects of this connectedness are..." (24-31)





<b>)</b>	Writing Task: Grade 12
50	in Iran' would not be possible. Think about all the things that we would miss out on if the cell phone or television had not been created we would pever heard "One small step for man, one giant leap
55	for plantind" or the world changing "I have a brecem" Without technology our world would be very different, The cell phone and the computer
	allow us to change the wag we see the world around us. They allow us to talk to long lost friends and make new ones. They help us know the world around us.
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#### "In our technologically connected global society..."

#### Thought (2)

#### Writing is supported by adequate ideas.

"These various devices can play a very important role on the people using them..." (29-30)

"The effect of not having these various devices could be alot worse then the emotional problems that they create" (44-46)

Topic sentences remain unsupported (ll 29-44)

#### Details (2)

Ideas are effectively supported by mostly specific details, including at least two quotations; yet integration is not purposeful.

"the main character realizes 'the enormity of the gap..." (31-33). This detail supports the idea that connectedness plays an important role. The quotation is effectively integrated.

"Think about all the things that we would miss out on..." (49-56). Details provide text-to-world connections to support ideas.

#### Organization (3)

#### Generally competent organization

# Connections between ideas are usually clear and contribute to the coherent development of the idea/theme

"There are many devices..." (8); "These various devices..." (29); "The effect of not having these various devices..." (44). Topic sentences establish clear connections.

Ideas are supported immediately by details, contributing to a sense of flow and coherence.

#### **Introduction & Conclusion (3)**

Competent introduction and conclusion, clearly related to the thesis

#### Matters of Correctness (4)

Competent control of sentence construction, usage, and mechanics

#### The relative absence of error is impressive

The two comma splices (5, 11), "recieved" (19), and "alot worse then" (45) are forgivable under the circumstances

#### Matters of Choice (3)

#### Diction is usually clear and effective

"finds fault" (23); "starts to trouble her" (34)

#### Syntactical structures are generally effective

"There is no other side when..." (26-28)

The two concluding sentences demonstrate parallel structure.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Technology has helped to interconnect people..." (40)

We are able to live in many worlds at once the because like the story was stating one person could be having a wonderful day until she picks up the phone to hear a friend crying because someone Close to them has died a been hurt. Having Computers, Cell phones and other technological devices we connect to perpe from any where maring you could be living in one place be all about another. "Your cell phone cioes a jig a coul from a friend back home in Iron " For people who believe in living their life without Drecking any rules like "the morality police" it very easy for them to to live in many worlds For someone who is sitting in a coffee shop enjoying their day, then to get a phone crul that Pretty much took your mind off of relaxing to thinking about that friend all chy puts people of guird uman nature 20 world! The article Strates that in alot of places all over the world the places are similar. There are people who want a safe clean carth others don't give a care. That

25	the people that do care are trying
	to get the people that don't care to
	understand why they care and how
	they care Try are trying to make
	every one see why it is so important
30	to keep our earth clean "up there in
	the forests above the once lovely and
	now obseenely polluted Caspian Sea "
	People nava day just don't rare about
	the earth as much as they used to. The
35	
	if every one careel just even if they
	cared a rittle bit.
£	
	*

#### "We are able to live in many worlds at once...."

#### Thought (1)

Task instructions are not followed. No evidence of critical thought and no obvious understanding of the topic.

Writing lacks focus and contains disjointed ideas unrelated to the topic/theme.

• "People now a day just don't care about the earth..." (33)

#### Details (1)

Ideas are unsupported by details/quotations or the details/quotations are inappropriate.

- "up there in the forests..." (Il 30-32) *Ideas and quotations do not support a critical discussion of the prompt.*
- "your cell phone does a jig call from a friend back home in Iran" (ll 9-10)

  Ideas and quotations do not support a critical discussion of the prompt.
- Many generalizations ((ll 20-21)

#### Organization (1)

Organization is lacking or unfocused

No connections are attempted between ideas.

Topic sentences do not attempt connections to preceding paragraphs.

#### **Introduction & Conclusion (2)**

Conclusion is inappropriate and not connected to introduction. The introduction attempts to discuss living in many worlds at once while the conclusion speaks to another topic.

#### Matters of Correctness (2)

Satisfactory control of sentence construction, usage, and mechanics.

Although many sentences contain errors of various kinds, several complete sentences do exist.

Errors blur the clarity of communication at times, but they do not blur meaning. "For people who believe in living their life..." (ll 11-12)

#### Matters of Choice (2)

Diction is adequate but conventional and contains awkward, mundane, or repetitive word choices

- "you could be living in one place but <u>be all about</u> another (ll 8-9)
- repetitive use of "care" (ll 24-36)
- Syntactical structures are functional; attempts at more complex structures are awkward

"For someone who is sitting in a coffee shop..." (ll 14-18)

## References

Handley, K. & Williams, L. (2009). From copying to learning: Using exemplars to engage students with assessment criteria and feedback. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 2 October 2009, 1-14.