

English I Semester 2 Model Common Assessment

Writing in Response to Literary Text

In a well-organized, substantial paragraph (seven to ten sentences) written in formal English, respond to the following prompt.

An important element of good literature is the presence of **external conflict** in which a character experiences an important struggle with another character or an element of nature. From one of the readings studied this year in English, discuss how a character experiences such a conflict and how he or she changes because of it.

Using your class notes as a reference, cite specific examples from the text to support your response.

GSEs

- W-10-2.3 Connect what has been read to prior knowledge or broader world of ideas
- W-10-3.1a Make and support analytical judgments about text by establishing a claim in the form of a thesis in responding to a given prompt
- W-10-3.3 Use specific details to support thesis, interpretations, or conclusions
- W-10-3.4 Organize ideas, use transitions, and draw conclusions by synthesizing information
- W-10-9 In independent writing, demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by applying rules of standard English usage and capitalization
- W-10-9.4 Apply appropriate punctuation to various sentence patterns to enhance meaning
- W-10-9.5 Apply conventional spelling rules.

MODEL RESPONSE

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus experiences several forms of external conflict that reflect some changes in his character. Early on his journey, he and his men encounter Polyphemus, the terrible Cyclops who nearly devours the men. It is a conflict between Odysseus's native Greek culture in which a man's house was always open to visitors and the secluded, independent culture of the Cyclops, who of course sees Odysseus's visit as an intrusion. The violence and trickery that Odysseus practices on Polyphemus is also a type of conflict. He aims the hot spike directly at the one eye of the Cyclops, driving it in forcefully and causing blindness; then he and his men escape by clutching the undersides of the rams as the Cyclops lets them out in the morning. This conflict highlights the cunning for which Odysseus is praised at the start of the epic. Later, Eurylochus, one of Odysseus's men, questions the judgment of his leader in deciding to stay in the cave of Circe, a conflict that eventually proves the weakness of Odysseus in that it delays the journey. At the epic's close, there is conflict between Odysseus and his son, who at first does not recognize him, between Odysseus and the suitors, whom he kills in his jealous rage, and between Odysseus and Penelope, who doubts his identity until he discloses the secret of their bed. In confronting these conflicts with external forces, Odysseus proves his heroism to the audience of the epic.