

2012-13 NAEP Training

High School Reading Sample Items

Contents

Prior Year Regents Items.....	2
PARCC Literary Analysis Task Prototype.....	7
NAEP Sample Questions.....	12

2012-13 NAEP Training

High School Reading Sample Items

Part 1:
Prior Year Regents Items

Comparison of ELA/Literacy Items: NYS to PARCC

Regents Comprehensive Examination in English



Passage I

...Photography demands a high degree of participation, but never have I participated to such an extent as I did when photographing various episodes in the life of Gandhi.

I shall always remember the day we met. I went to see him at his camp, or ashram, in Poona where he was living in the midst of a colony of untouchables. Having thought of
5 Mahatma Gandhi as a symbol of simplicity, I was a bit surprised to find that I had to go through several secretaries to get permission to photograph him. When I reached the last and chief secretary, an earnest man in horn-rimmed spectacles, and dressed entirely in snow-white homespun, I explained my mission. I had come to take photographs of the Mahatma spinning.

10 "Do you know how to spin?" asked Gandhi's secretary.

"Oh, I didn't come to spin with the Mahatma. I came to photograph the Mahatma spinning."

"How can you possibly understand the symbolism of Gandhi at his spinning wheel? How can you comprehend the inner meaning of the wheel, the charka, unless you first
15 master the principles of spinning?" He inquired sharply, "Then you are not at all familiar with the workings of the spinning wheel?" ...

I know when I'm licked. "How long does it take to learn to spin?" I asked wearily.

"Ah," said the secretary, "that depends upon one's quotient of intelligence."

I found myself begging for a spinning lesson. ...

20 Somehow I persuaded Gandhi's secretary that my spinning lesson must start this very afternoon. It embarrassed me to see how clumsy I was at the spinning wheel, constantly entangling myself. It did not help my opinion of my own I.Q. to see how often and how awkwardly I broke the thread. I began to appreciate as never before the machine age, with its ball bearings and steel parts, and maybe an occasional nail. ...

25 I found the inside of the hut even darker than I had anticipated. A single beam of daylight shone from a little high window directly into my lens and into my eyes as well. I could scarcely see to compose the picture, but when my eyes became accustomed to the murky shadows, there sat the Mahatma, cross-legged, a spidery figure with long, wiry legs, a bald head and spectacles. Could this be the man who was leading his people to freedom—
30 the little old man in a loincloth who had kindled the imagination of the world? I was filled with an emotion as close to awe as a photographer can come.

He sat in complete silence on the floor; the only sound was a little rustling from the pile of newspaper clippings he was reading. And beside him was that spinning wheel I had heard so much about. I was grateful that he would not speak to me, for I could see it would take
35 all the attention I had to overcome the halation¹ from that wretched window just over his head.

Gandhi pushed his clippings aside, and pulled his spinning wheel closer. He started to spin, beautifully, rhythmically and with a fine nimble hand. I set off the first of the three flashbulbs. It was quite plain from the span of time from the click of the shutter to the flash

¹halation — a blurring or spreading of light around bright areas on a photographic image

Continued on next page.

40 of the bulb that my equipment was not synchronizing properly. The heat and moisture of India had affected all my equipment; nothing seemed to work. I decided to hoard my two remaining flashbulbs, and take a few time exposures. But this I had to abandon when my tripod “froze” with one leg at its minimum and two at their maximum length.

45 Before risking the second flashbulb, I checked the apparatus with the utmost care. When Gandhi made a most beautiful movement as he drew the thread, I pushed the trigger and was reassured by the sound that everything had worked properly. Then I noticed that I had forgotten to pull the slide.

I hazarded the third peanut [flashbulb], and it worked. I threw my arms around the rebellious equipment and stumbled out into the daylight, quite unsold on the machine age.
50 Spinning wheels could take priority over cameras any time. ...

—Margaret Bourke-White
excerpted and adapted from *Portrait of Myself*, 1963
Simon and Schuster

Passage II

Running the 400 Meters

You had to use breath
you didn't have
enough of meanwhile
staying in one lane
5 of cinders¹ running
so far ahead of you
you couldn't believe
you were supposed to
catch up to where
10 it seemed to be going
without you without
the loss of your lungs
your feet no longer
yours your whole body
15 longing for a tape
suspended across a line
you could see but had no sense
you could ever touch
without dying and being
20 transformed into a creature
of a higher lower order
with wings or more legs
than these two shreds
at the ends of you and yours
25 which had almost disappeared.

—David Wagoner
from *The Cincinnati Review*, Winter 2009

¹cinders — fragments of lava paving a track



Regents Comprehensive Examination in English (2012)

Multiple-Choice Questions

Directions (21–25): Select the best suggested answer to each question and record your answer on the separate answer sheet provided for you.

Passage I (the memoir excerpt) — Questions 21–23 refer to Passage I.

- 21 The narrator most likely writes about her photo session with Mahatma Gandhi in order to
- (1) expose Gandhi's ideas to a wider audience
 - (2) describe an interesting experience from the narrator's life
 - (3) teach students how Gandhi used a spinning wheel
 - (4) inform Americans about rural life in India
- 22 As used in the passage, "licked" (line 17) most likely means that the narrator felt
- (1) frightened
 - (2) inquisitive
 - (3) beaten
 - (4) elated

23 The difficulties faced by the narrator during the photo shoot were the result of

- (1) Gandhi's attitude
- (2) political conditions
- (3) reporters' interference
- (4) equipment failure

Passage II (the poem) — Questions 24–25 refer to Passage II.

24 The poem is written in what form?

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| (1) couplet | (3) sonnet |
| (2) blank verse | (4) free verse |

25 The lack of punctuation combined with short lines creates the effect of a

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| (1) runner's fatigue | (3) bird's flight |
| (2) congested cough | (4) vanishing target |

Short-Response Questions

Directions (26–27): Write your responses to question 26 on page 1 of your essay booklet and question 27 on page 2 of your essay booklet. Be sure to answer **both** questions.

26 Write a well-developed paragraph in which you use ideas from **both** Passage I (the memoir excerpt) and Passage II (the poem) to establish a controlling idea about challenges. Develop your controlling idea using specific examples and details from **both** Passage I and Passage II.

27 Choose a specific literary element (e.g., theme, characterization, structure, point of view, etc.) or literary technique (e.g., symbolism, irony, figurative language, etc.) used by **one** of the authors. Using specific details from **either** Passage I (the memoir excerpt) **or** Passage II (the poem), in a well-developed paragraph, show how the author uses that element or technique to develop the passage.



Comprehensive Examination in English (June, 2012)

Your Task:

Write a critical essay in which you discuss **two** works of literature you have read from the particular perspective of the statement that is provided for you in the **Critical Lens**. In your essay, provide a valid interpretation of the statement, agree **or** disagree with the statement as you have interpreted it, and support your opinion using specific references to appropriate literary elements from the two works. You may use scrap paper to plan your response. Write your essay beginning on page 3 of the essay booklet.

Critical Lens:

“...fear is simply the consequence of every lie.”

— Fyodor Dostoevsky
from *The Brothers Karamazov*
1990 Translation

Guidelines:

Be sure to

- Provide a valid interpretation of the critical lens that clearly establishes the criteria for analysis
- Indicate whether you agree **or** disagree with the statement as you have interpreted it
- Choose **two** works you have read that you believe best support your opinion
- Use the criteria suggested by the critical lens to analyze the works you have chosen
- Avoid plot summary. Instead, use specific references to appropriate literary elements (for example: theme, characterization, setting, point of view) to develop your analysis
- Organize your ideas in a unified and coherent manner
- Specify the titles and authors of the literature you choose
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

2012-13 NAEP Training

High School Reading Sample Items

Part 2:
PARCC Literary Analysis Task Prototype

LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK (GRADE 10)

Text 1 - Ovid. "Ovid's Metamorphoses: Daedalus and Icarus." Sogang University. Web. 31 Jan. 2012.

Ovid's Metamorphoses : Daedalus and Icarus
 But Daedalus abhorred the Isle of Crete--
 290 and his long exile on that sea-girt shore,
 increased the love of his own native place.
 "Though Minos blocks escape by sea and land."
 He said, "The unconfined skies remain
 though Minos may be lord of all the world
 295 his sceptre is not regnant of the air,
 and by that untried way is our escape."
 This said, he turned his mind to arts unknown
 and nature unrevealed. He fashioned quills
 and feathers in due order -- deftly formed
 300 from small to large, as any rustic pipe
 prom straws unequal slants. He bound with thread
 the middle feathers, and the lower fixed
 with pliant wax; till so, in gentle curves
 arranged, he bent them to the shape of birds.
 305 While he was working, his son Icarus,
 with smiling countenance and unaware
 of danger to himself, perchance would chase
 the feathers, ruffled by the shifting breeze,
 or soften with his thumb the yellow wax,
 310 and by his playfulness retard the work
 his anxious father planned.
 But when at last
 the father finished it, he poised himself,
 and lightly floating in the winnowed air
 315 waved his great feathered wings with bird-like ease.
 And, likewise he had fashioned for his son
 such wings; before they ventured in the air
 he said, "My son, I caution you to keep
 the middle way, for if your pinions dip
 320 too low the waters may impede your flight;
 and if they soar too high the sun may scorch them.
 Fly midway. Gaze not at the boundless sky,
 far Ursa Major and Bootes next.
 Nor on Orion with his flashing brand,
 325 but follow my safe guidance."
 As he spoke
 he fitted on his son the plumed wings
 with trembling hands, while down his withered cheeks
 the tears were falling. Then he gave his son
 330 a last kiss, and upon his gliding wings
 assumed a careful lead solicitous.
 As when the bird leads forth her tender young,
 from high-swung nest to try the yielding air;
 so he prevailed on willing Icarus;
 335 encouraged and instructed him in all
 the fatal art; and as he waved his wings
 looked backward on his son.
 Beneath their flight,
 the fisherman while casting his long rod,
 340 or the tired shepherd leaning on his crook,
 or the rough plowman as he raised his eyes,
 astonished might observe them on the wing,
 and worship them as Gods.
 Upon the left

345 they passed by Samos, Juno's sacred isle;
 Delos and Paros too, were left behind;
 and on the right Lebinthus and Calymne,
 fruitful in honey. Proud of his success,
 the foolish Icarus forsook his guide,
 350 and, bold in vanity, began to soar,
 rising upon his wings to touch the skies;
 but as he neared the scorching sun, its heat
 softened the fragrant wax that held his plumes;
 and heat increasing melted the soft wax--
 355 he waved his naked arms instead of wings,
 with no more feathers to sustain his flight.
 And as he called upon his father's name
 his voice was smothered in the dark blue sea,
 now called Icarian from the dead boy's name.
 360 The unlucky father, not a father, called,
 "Where are you, Icarus?" and "Where are you?
 In what place shall I seek you, Icarus?"
 He called again; and then he saw the wings
 of his dear Icarus, floating on the waves;
 365 and he began to rail and curse his art.
 He found the body on an island shore,
 now called Icaria, and at once prepared
 to bury the unfortunate remains;
 but while he labored a pert partridge near,
 370 observed him from the covert of an oak,
 and whistled his unnatural delight.
 Know you the cause? 'Twas then a single bird,
 the first one of its kind. 'Twas never seen
 before the sister of Daedalus had brought
 375 him Perdix, her dear son, to be his pupil.
 And as the years went by the gifted youth
 began to rival his instructor's art.
 He took the jagged backbone of a fish,
 and with it as a model made a saw,
 380 with sharp teeth fashioned from a strip of iron.
 And he was first to make two arms of iron,
 smooth hinged upon the center, so that one
 would make a pivot while the other, turned,
 described a circle. Wherefore Daedalus
 385 Enraged and envious, sought to slay the youth
 and cast him headlong from Minerva's fane,--
 then spread the rumor of an accident.
 But Pallas, goddess of ingenious men,
 saving the pupil changed him to a bird,
 390 and in the middle of the air he flew
 on feathered wings; and so his active mind--
 and vigor of his genius were absorbed
 into his wings and feet; although the name
 of Perdix was retained.
 395 The Partridge hides
 in shaded places by the leafy trees
 its nested eggs among the bush's twigs;
 nor does it seek to rise in lofty flight,
 for it is mindful of its former fall.



LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK (Grade 10)

Text 2. Sexton, Anne. "To a Friend Whose Work Has Come to Triumph by Anne Sexton." Hello Poetry. 2009.

Anne Sexton (1928 - 1974)

To a Friend Whose Work Has Come to Triumph

Consider Icarus, pasting those sticky wings on,
testing that strange little tug at his shoulder blade,
and think of that first flawless moment over the lawn
of the labyrinth. Think of the difference it made!
There below are the trees, as awkward as camels;
and here are the shocked starlings pumping past
and think of innocent Icarus who is doing quite well.
Larger than a sail, over the fog and the blast
of the plushy ocean, he goes. Admire his wings!
Feel the fire at his neck and see how casually
he glances up and is caught, wondrously tunneling
into that hot eye. Who cares that he fell back to the sea?
See him acclaiming the sun and come plunging down
while his sensible daddy goes straight into town.



Partnership for Assessment of
 Readiness for College and Careers

LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK (Grade 10)

Evidence Based Selected Response Item #1 from Literary Analysis Task

Part A

Which of the following sentences best states an important theme about human behavior as described in Ovid’s “Daedalus and Icarus”?

- a. Striving to achieve one’s dreams is a worthwhile endeavor.
- b. The thoughtlessness of youth can have tragic results.
- c. Imagination and creativity bring their own rewards
- d. Everyone should learn from his or her mistakes.

Part B

Select three pieces of evidence from Ovid’s “Daedalus and Icarus” that support the answer to Part A.

- a. "and by his playfulness retard the work/his anxious father planned" (lines 310-311)
- b. "But when at last/the father finished it, he poised himself" (lines 312-313).
- c. "he fitted on his son the plumed wings/ with trembling hands, while down his withered cheeks/the tears were falling" (lines 327-329).
- d. "Proud of his success/the foolish Icarus forsook his guide" (lines 348-349)."
- e. "and, bold in vanity, began to soar/rising upon his wings to touch the skies"
- f. "and as the years went by the gifted youth/began to rival his instructor’s art "
- g. "Wherefore Daedalus/enraged and envious, sought to slay the youth "
- h. "The Partridge hides/in shaded places by the leafy trees...for it is mindful of its former fall "

Evidence Based Selected Response Item #2 from Literary Analysis Task

Part A

What does the word *vanity* mean in these lines from the text “ Daedalus and Icarus ” ?

“ Proud of his success, the foolish Icarus forsook his guide, and, bold in vanity, began to soar ” (lines 348-350)

- a. arrogance
- b. fear
- c. heroism
- d. enthusiasm

Part B

Which word from the lines of text in Part A best helps the reader understand the meaning of vanity?

- a. proud
- b. success
- c. foolish
- d. soar



LITERARY ANALYSIS TASK (Grade 10)

The following are two examples of the prose constructed response items for the Literary Analysis Task. The essay prompt for Sample #1 allows students more flexibility in terms of their focus than the prompt for Sample #2 which chooses a particular aspect of the text for students to analyze.

Prose Constructed Response Sample #1 from Literary Analysis Task (Less Focused)

Student Directions

Use what you have learned from reading "Daedalus and Icarus" by Ovid and "To a Friend Whose Work Has Come to Triumph" by Anne Sexton to write an essay that provides an analysis of how Sexton transforms Daedalus and Icarus.

As a starting point, you may want to consider what is emphasized, absent, or different in the two texts, but feel free to develop your own focus for analysis.

Develop your essay by providing textual evidence from both texts. Be sure to follow the conventions of standard English.

Answer:

Font Size... Font Family. **B** *I* U [List icons] x_2 x^2 [Globe icon]

Prose Constructed Response Sample #2 from Literary Analysis Task (More Focused)

Student Directions

Use what you have learned from reading "Daedalus and Icarus" by Ovid and "To a Friend Whose Work Has Come to Triumph" by Anne Sexton to write an essay that analyzes how Icarus's experience of flying is portrayed differently in the two texts.

Develop your essay by providing textual evidence from both texts. Be sure to follow the conventions of standard English.

Answer:

Font Size... Font Family. **B** *I* U [List icons] x_2 x^2 [Globe icon]

2012-13 NAEP Training

High School Reading Sample Items

Part 3: NAEP Sample Questions

Days of Oaks, Years of Salt

LUCIENNE S. BLOCH

My grandmother walked most of the way from a little town near Graz, in Austria, to London. She was twenty, green-limbed and raw, and so was this century: both of them restless, unshackled, upheaved from an ancient order of things into a world whose recent peace was more tentative than convincing.

Of course she did not walk alone; there were, still, vestigial proprieties in operation. Her brother, senior by a couple of significant years, accompanied her: two dark-eyed travelers seeking roomier futures than the ones they stood to inherit at home. Leaving behind three younger sisters and a widowed mother, they strolled toward the possibilities that an uncle, well settled in a woolens business in London, might provide. They carried everything on their backs, food and shoes and such, the goodbyes. At night they slept in fields, in barns when the weather turned. They picked up crumbs of new languages, mouthfuls to get by on. There is no record of this legendary journey apart from the remembered and recounted one; no documentary diaries, no franked passports, no railway or steamship ticket stubs, no hotel bills, no souvenir photographs or trinkets, no many-creased maps. Did it happen, as told? I believe so. I always believed so, although I knew the reports had been altered by the time they reached me, embroidered, translated, aggrandized, I supposed. Even so, I swallowed them whole, lured and hooked like a trout by a glitteringly fabulous fly. The adventure of it!

Taking a southerly route—longer, warmer, certainly more picturesque—my grandmother and her brother climbed into Italy through the Carnic Alps where frontiers weren't as strict as they could have been. They walked across the top of Italy, each step lighter than the one before it, springier, down to Genoa, where they followed the seductive curve of the Riviera to Marseilles, then made their way across the bottom of France to Bordeaux to board a ship for the final leg of their leisurely journey.

Upon seeing the Mediterranean and its shores for the first time, my grandmother was so amazed she took to singing, in the streets particularly. She didn't sing for money; they had all the cash they needed wrapped in handkerchiefs in their rucksacks. She sang for the pure joy of adding her note to those that hovered, purling and trilling, in the pellucid sea air. Making a musical offering to gods whose existence she hadn't even suspected, she sang folk songs in the dialect of her girlhood. Her voice, small, untrained, may have moved a heart or two. In Antibes, singing on a boulevard planted with flowering laurels, she was sketched by a man sitting on the terrace of a cafe. It could have been Matisse, we like to think; the dates and place are right. The man showed her the sketch but he did not give it to her.

My grandmother arrived in London about seven months after she commenced walking. Her cheeks were flushed, tomato-red, despite the rough Channel crossing. Long ropy muscles snaked down her legs to her narrow feet. Between them, she and her brother had gone through five pairs of what they claimed were sturdy boots, and through something less tangible, not measurable in distance covered or time elapsed. "Why did you walk? Why didn't you go on trains?" I asked her once when I was nine or so and liked the mechanics of events to be fleshed out so I could grasp them more tightly.

"I was too beauty for men in irons," she answered. "Only stars could have my shining." She was said to be "somewhat" senile, a vague qualifier for an already vague condition. But I could usually catch the drift of her scattered words. She caught my more regular ones. We understood each other.

Soon after reaching London, my grandmother made what must be seen as a brilliant match, acquiescing to arrangements set in motion by her uncle prior to her arrival. Was this match to her liking? Did her likings matter? These are conjectures. The fact appears to be that a future was perceived and undertaken by a woman whose legs may have been stronger than her spirit and whose song, it is possible, was silenced. I know what she told me, repeatedly.

“I was my dream under a lock of petals,” she used to say, pointing to her wedding portrait in the snapshot album we looked at together week after week on the Saturday afternoons of my childhood; pictures were the safety net for what fell from her memory’s difficult trapeze act. “Seven times I swanned around my stranger, then the glass broke awake to weeping. Salt in the mouth was my sadness to come.”

Sadness? Was that the destination of her high adventure or only a stopping place, a marriage’s way station?

There was no sadness in my grandmother when I saw her weekly. Or else I was too young to recognize what I saw, a fadedness of sorts, but one I felt was due to a lack of color rather than of cheer. The three rooms of her apartment were done in a variety of whites. Alabaster, ivory, off-white, cream-white, and eggshell puddled into custards on the walls and upholstery, at the silk-swagged windows, on the painted tables and bureaus and kitchen cupboards. Even the rugs on the floors were pallid, washed over the years into what was no more than a thin reminder of beiges and blues. She was blanched too: snowy hair, chalky powdered face, starched white lace and linen blouses, pearly teeth she constantly took out of her soft oystery mouth to amuse me, herself also. She’d hand me the wet dentures and say something like, “Jewels to be is on the tongue. Try me on.” We laughed and laughed as I tried to clamp her false teeth between my lips like Halloween vampire fangs. All that whiteness she lived in wasn’t cold, wasn’t bleak; it didn’t chill our times together. We played cards. We baked cupcakes. We knitted wispy mohair mufflers for the entire family. We studied the single photo album she brought to this country, and she told me stories prompted by the pictures. “In the days of oaks,” she’d begin; that was her habitual opening phrase.

In my own days of oaks, Granny, there were questions I might have asked you but didn’t think of then. One, especially one question haunts me now, about the one photograph you kept on your bedside table to look at all the time, not just once a week when I came to visit you and we pored over the album for clues to remembering. The photograph I want to know about, the one you didn’t hide between the tooled leather covers of a book that was further hidden in a drawer between layers of your silky white underwear, is of a person you seldom mentioned to me, a man I never knew because he died in the blitz before I was born.

My grandfather struts on a seaside esplanade, straw-hatted, wearing a snappy striped blazer. His stance is jaunty. He looks extremely pleased, although there isn’t a smile below his mustache. His chin points toward his left shoulder, a birdlike tilt of the head. One hand grips a silver-headed walking stick, the other is tucked into the pocket of his white flannel pants. He is a tall slim man casting a sharp pencil-slim shadow on the paved promenade. At a distance behind him, behind a wrought-iron railing, a pier stretches across the pebbled beach and stilts into the sea. There is some kind of pavilion at the end of the pier above the water, a roofed but open-sided structure. It could have been Brighton, in August perhaps. The picture must have been taken very early in the morning, given the look and angle of his shadow. There aren’t any other people in the picture, no other strollers on the broad esplanade, no children squatting at the sea’s curly edge. Even in the old and faded photograph, the summer morning light is so splendid and immense it fills the image and its subject with bright importance.

What I want to know is this, Granny: Where were you? Why aren’t you on his arm as in all the other vacation snaps in the album, smiling at the photographer approaching and inviting you both to pose, please? What was it about this picture you’re not in that made you keep it out? Did it remind you of something you wouldn’t talk about even when I asked you the questions I could then? Was that your salty sadness: his self-importance? Did he shine so sharply, absolutely, right in your eyes, dazzling you into arranging for a conspicuous absence of yourself, paling your intense promising colors until they were out of season for you? Did he white you out even then?

Dying, my grandmother's determination was vivid again; her courage as fresh as young grass. I hadn't ever seen her so lofty, almost imperious; death was a dirty penny she wouldn't stoop for. I was summoned from college to her sickroom, at home, to collect what she insisted on passing to me in person, making a physical gesture that resonated far louder and clearer than any testamental paper bell could. We had already said some of our farewells a month earlier when I was home on Christmas break, but certain matters had to be postponed until the last possible minute. She was in bed dozing, waiting for me, face powdered and cheeks rouged as though for a pleasanter outing. My kiss woke her. I couldn't see the sickness below her skin, the sly cells chewing through bone, excavating an insidious one-way tunnel. She still looked intact to me; only her dark eyes were worn, sunk deep in their sockets like eight balls dropping for end shots. I plumped up her pillows, propped her to a sitting position, and sat down on the edge of her bed. My mother left the room to take a nap, make some coffee or calls, go for a walk, get away from her mother-in-law's deathbed for the short time I was there to spell her.

"Eyes, darling eyes," my grandmother greeted me, "don't water me now, I'm for drying. Don't fear such dust. I'm keeping. I'm keeping in the eyes of your time."

I wasn't afraid, but I was crying.

She opened the drawer of her night table, took out a handful of jewelry, almost flung it in my lap, dismissing it disdainfully, such absurd little things: two gold necklaces, a diamond-studded wristwatch, a string of yellowed pearls, two rings that will never fit my thicker fingers. I thanked her. "Bauble me not!" she commanded.

Then we got down to business. She reached into the drawer for the snapshot album we passed so many afternoons with and presented it to me delicately, reverently, her thin arm floating like a ballet dancer's toward a partner, her proud head nodding up and down: yes, yes. I moved to her side, leaned back on the pillows with her, our knees bent up to form a book rest. Then we did what we'd always done, turned the pages one by one. Only this time we did it in silence because, she said, "the words cooked away before me."

Slowly, slowly, we turned the pages until she fell asleep. I sat in a chair by her bed for a while, holding my album, listening to her breathe, listening for the small song her bones, hollowed by disease, were whistling again.

Copyright 1986 by Lucienne S. Bloch. All rights reserved.

1. Describe your reaction to reading the story, and what was it about the story that made you react that way?

2. Explain the narrator's feelings about the grandmother.

3. What was the grandmother seeking in going to London, and did she find it? Support your answer using information from the story.

4. Soon after the grandmother arrived in London, her uncle persuaded her to

- A) emigrate to the United States
- B) marry someone he had chosen
- C) become a professional singer
- D) work as an artist's model

5. Explain what you think the grandmother was trying to communicate to the narrator by the gift of the photo album.

6. How does the description of the grandmother's apartment contribute to an understanding of her life?

7. How does the title relate to the story? Give an example from the story to support your answer.

8. Some people say that the grandmother's statement "I'm keeping in the eyes of your time" contains the key to what the story means. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain why, using evidence from the story.
