### Cognitive Processes

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<td>2. Synthesis Texts 1 and 2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
PART A: STAND-ALONE TEXT

Ordinary Life

This was a day when nothing happened,
the children went off to school
without a murmur, remembering
their books, lunches, gloves.

All morning, the baby and I built block stacks
in the squares of light on the floor.
And lunch blended into naptime,
I cleaned out kitchen cupboards,
one of those jobs that never gets done,

then sat in a circle of sunlight
and drank ginger tea,
watched the birds at the feeder
jostle over lunch’s little scraps.
A pheasant strutted from the hedgerow,
preened and flashed his jeweled head.

Now a chicken roasts in the pan,
and the children return,
the murmur of their stories dappling the air.
I peel carrots and potatoes without paring\(^1\) my thumb.

We listen together for your wheels on the drive.
Grace\(^2\) before bread.
And at the table, actual conversation,
no bickering or pokes.
And then, the drift into homework.

---

\(^1\) paring: cutting
\(^2\) Grace: in this context, a prayer before a meal
The baby goes to his cars, drives them
along the sofa’s ridges and hills.
Leaning by the counter, we steal a long slow kiss,
tasting of coffee and cream.
The chicken’s diminished to skin & skeleton,
the moon to a comma, a sliver of white,
but this has been a day of grace
in the dead of winter,
the hard cold knuckle of the year,
a day that unwrapped itself
like an unexpected gift,
and the stars turn on,
order themselves
into the winter night.
1. Discuss irony in the poem “Ordinary Life.” Use paragraph form and support your response with specific references to the text.

Suggestions Regarding Response:

The poem demonstrates that this particular day is anything but ordinary.

- the title and line 1

- “the children went off to school / without a murmur, remembering / their books, lunches, gloves” lines 2 to 4

- “And lunch blended into naptime” line 7

- “I cleaned out kitchen cupboards, / one of those jobs that never gets done” lines 8 and 9

- “I peel carrots and potatoes without paring my thumb” line 19

- “And at the table, actual conversation, / no bickering or pokes” lines 22 and 23

- “we steal a long slow kiss” line 27

- “but this has been a day of grace / in the dead of winter” lines 31 and 32

- “a day that unwrapped itself / like an unexpected gift” lines 34 and 35

This list is not exhaustive.

The exemplars will provide sample responses.

Marks will be awarded for content and written expression. Refer to the Holistic Scale on page 4 of this key.
SCORING GUIDE FOR STAND-ALONE TEXT

This is a first-draft response and should be assessed as such. The use of paragraph structure is assessed holistically with reference to the clarity of expression and organization.

6

The six response is superior and may draw upon any number of factors, such as depth of discussion, effectiveness of argument, or level of insight. It exhibits an effective writing style and a sophisticated use of language. Despite its clarity and precision, the response need not be error-free.

5

The five response is proficient and reflects a strong grasp of the topic and the text. The references to the passage may be explicit or implicit and convincingly support a thesis. The writing is well organized and demonstrates a strong command of the conventions of language. Errors may be present, but are not distracting.

4

The four response is competent. The assertions tend to be simplistic; there are no significant errors in understanding. References are present and appropriate, but may be limited to only part of the text. The writing is organized and straightforward. Conventions of language are usually followed, but some errors are evident.

3

The three response is barely adequate. Understanding of the topic and/or the text may be partially flawed. Support may consist of long references to the text which are not clearly connected to a central idea or may be meagre or repetitive. The response may show some sense of purpose, but errors may be distracting.

2

The two response is inadequate. While there is an attempt to address the topic, understanding of the text or the task may be seriously flawed. Errors are recurring, distracting, and often impede meaning.

1

The one response is unacceptable. Although the response attempts to address the question, it is too brief or there is a complete lack of control in the writing.

0

The zero response reflects a complete misunderstanding of the text and/or the task, is off-topic, or is a restatement of the question.

*Any zero paper must be cleared by the section leader.

NR

A blank paper with no response given.
PART B: SYNTHESIS TEXT 1

Blindly He Goes…Up
*Sports Illustrated*, July 25, 2005

by Steve Rushin

1. Before he climbed to the summit of Mount Everest four years ago, Erik Weihenmayer felt compelled to prove to his disbelieving sherpas\(^1\) that he really was blind. So he pulled down his lower left eyelid, leaned forward and let his prosthetic\(^2\) eye drop into his cupped hand, like an olive into a martini glass. When he offered to remove his false *right* eye, the head sherpa, Kami Tenzing, protested preemptively, “No, no, no! I believe you!”

2. But then Weihenmayer’s whole life beggars belief. As a fifth-grade teacher in Phoenix he once snatched, from the hand of a girl, the crinkling note she was about to pass. Then he threatened to read it to the hushed class. “The kids knew I was blind,” he says. “But I was also their teacher, so they figured somehow I’d be able to read it.”

3. While he can’t do that, the 36-year-old Weihenmayer is a skydiver, a paraglider and a marathon runner. He has climbed the Seven Summits (the highest peaks on each continent) and completed Primal Quest, billed as the world’s most dangerous endurance race. After climbing Mount Elbrus, the tallest peak in Europe, Weihenmayer skied the 10,000 feet\(^3\) to base camp. He has scaled the rock face of Yosemite’s El Capitan, the icefall of Polar Circus in the Canadian Rockies and—upon returning from Everest—the fibreglass Matterhorn at Disneyland.

4. Weihenmayer was born legally blind. By age 13 he was entirely blind. Nevertheless, he became a superb high school wrestler. As a

---

\(^1\) sherpas: *members of a Tibetan tribe who are famous mountain climbers*

\(^2\) prosthetic: *artificial replacement*

\(^3\) feet: *1 foot = approximately 0.3 metre*
teenager he went on exotic hikes with his father, Ed, a Marine pilot. “We were walking from valley to valley on Kilimanjaro⁴, and Erik suddenly says, ‘Is there a new flower here?’” recalls Ed. “And I said, ‘As a matter of fact, Erik, there is.’ And in front of us, though I hadn’t noticed it before, was a whole meadow of beautiful purple flowers.”

In 1991 Erik graduated from Boston College with a degree in English and embarked on his teaching career. Two years later he moved from Phoenix to Colorado and decided to join a gym. Traveling to the gym by city bus, he got off at a park whose concrete pathways he could navigate alone. When he found those paths obscured by fresh snowfall, Weihenmayer wound up walking into a duck pond. So he returned to the bus stop and tried again. And again. When he finally did reach the gym, it was closed. “Faced with that kind of frustration,” he says, “you can look at life as a nightmare or as an adventure. I chose adventure.”

Last year Weihenmayer was climbing a rock face in the Dolomites with his friend Mike O’Donnell when the pair paused to rest, halfway up the 2 000-foot ascent, on a ledge two feet deep and 10 feet long. “You’re not gonna believe this,” O’Donnell told Weihenmayer when the two were safely seated, “but there’s another blind guy up here.” He was an Austrian named Andy Holtzer, and last week he and Weihenmayer and Hugh Herr—an American climber with two prosthetic legs—returned to the Dolomites to give a weeklong clinic for novice and disabled climbers. Weihenmayer hikes with two telescoping trekking poles and always climbs with at least one partner who wears a bell. He climbs not because he’s superhuman, but precisely because he’s human. Weihenmayer didn’t climb Everest “because it’s there.” He climbed Everest, he likes to say, “because we’re here.”

“I think climbing is built into our human code,” says Weihenmayer. “It’s why we build skyscrapers. We’re a species of Walter Mittys, always striving beyond our reach.”

In 2001, he became the first and only blind man to summit Everest, a feat that put him on the cover of Time Magazine. “It’s the size of the floor of a one-car garage,” Weihenmayer says of the 29 035-foot high peak. And you should have heard the view from up there. “It’s loud,” he says, “the sound of sound traveling infinitely through space.”

Weihenmayer’s wedding was on Kilimanjaro, with its purple meadows. He met his wife, Ellen, when both were teachers at Phoenix Country Day School. Their workplace romance was revealed at a faculty meeting, when Erik’s guide dog, Wizard—who was trained to walk to the first empty chair in the conference room—strode straight over to Ellen, laid his head in her lap and began panting. The room erupted in laughter and applause. The couple now has a five-year-old daughter, Emma.

In September, Weihenmayer can be seen in Climb Higher, a documentary film about his 2004 return to Everest. In a country where some believe blindness to be caused by karma—payback for previous sins—Weihenmayer led six blind Tibetan teens 21 500 feet up the mountain’s north face. In doing so he again added to the fund of human knowledge about what our species can and cannot do. “He is a modern-day alchemist who has turned the lead of his life into gold for the world,” says his father of the son who stood atop the planet’s tallest peak and saw only one direction to go from there: up.

⁴ Kilimanjaro: high mountain in Africa
2004 – Weihenmayer returns to Everest to lead six blind Tibetan teenagers part way up the north face of the mountain

2001 – Weihenmayer reaches the summit of Mount Everest

2000 – Weihenmayer and wife Ellen have a daughter

1993 – Weihenmayer moves from Phoenix to Colorado

1991 – Weihenmayer begins teaching at Phoenix Country Day School

1991 – Weihenmayer graduates from Boston College

1982 – Weihenmayer loses sight entirely

1969 – Weihenmayer is born legally blind

*Figure 1*
PART B: SYNTHESIS TEXT 2

As a child, the narrator heard stories about his Uncle Jim. As an adult, he returns from Canada to South Africa where he meets Uncle Jim and hears the stories first-hand.

Versabraille
by Bill Schermbrucker

1 To leave us feeling tranquil for the night, my father would tell of the advantage Jim had by being blind: “At lights-out he could just go on reading! We’d all have to put our books away, and there Jim would be with his Braille book under the blankets, chuckling away to himself.”

2 As a child, that was all I knew about Uncle Jim. Now he is 85, and still active. He has lived most of his life in Cape Town¹, where, before he retired, he had a thriving physiotherapy practice. Early each morning, he’d walk down Rondebosch Road to the station, and take the suburban train to town. Then up the length of Adderly Street to his office. From there he also travelled to patients in three separate hospitals, one of which was at least a mile² from the train. I don’t know how, but he managed all this without complaint or apparent difficulty, and in his spare time he crusaded for the blind, and was specially interested in ways to make them independent.

3 He was seventy-seven when I saw him, and he told me he was raising money to buy Versabraille machines. “We could probably have raised quite a lot more by now,” he said, with a bitter edge to his voice, “if I hadn’t had to spend so much of my energy speaking out against guide dogs!”

4 “What’s the matter with guide dogs, Uncle Jim?”

5 “Nothing!” he said. “They’re fine animals.” And then, after a storyteller’s pause, he added: “Only trouble is, they don’t live to be threescore and ten, you know. Twelve or thirteen years, and they kick the bucket. Meanwhile the blind person’s that much older, and believe you me, it’s not easy to adapt to a new dog. No, man, having a dog cramps your style in the end. I know quite a few blind people who’re homebound now, because their second or third dog died. A Versabraille’s a lot more worth having.”

6 We were sitting in the crowded living-room of my half-brother’s little house in Cape Town. A dozen of my relatives had assembled, for I had been in Canada over twenty years, and this was my first trip back to Africa. It was a marvelous evening, full of stories.

7 Uncle Jim cannot remember actually seeing things. But he was not born blind. His parents accepted his blindness. They arranged for him to have piano lessons. Did they hope that he might be able to earn a living as a concert pianist, or were they just trying to give him a gift, something extraordinary that he could become good at, and feel a measure of control over? I don’t know. After he passed the

---

¹ Cape Town: a city in South Africa
² mile: approximately 1.6 kilometres
Conservatory grade, they sent him for physiotherapy training. Was that their plan or his? Either way, it worked. Meanwhile, his father, a magistrate, never got a big city posting, but stayed content at little towns in the Cape.

“Your father doesn’t seem to have been ambitious, Uncle Jim,” I say, “is that right? I don’t hear much about him.”

“My father,” he declares, in that stern, proud voice, “my father gave us all a name to live up to!”

And then Uncle Jim smiles, and begins:

One day, when I was seven years old, and the family was living in Tulbagh, my father called me into his study.

“Jim, I want you to go to town and get something for me, all right?”

“Me, Dad?” the blind boy protests. “But I’ve never been that far on my own before!”

“Come, come, you’re old enough,” his father says adamantly. “Off you go and buy me two ounces of Rum and Maple at the tobacconist.”

“Ag, Daddy, how will I know the shop?”

“You’ll smell it, man! Here’s the money. Go now. I’ll be in my study when you come back.”

The terrified little boy, with a shilling tight in his left hand, tap-taps his cane along fences, then tall grass and ditches, block after block. He stands at the side of the road wondering if he dare cross. The clopping of horses’ hooves is mixed in with the rumble of wagon wheels, and a chudder of Model Ts. Little Jim can’t separate out the sounds enough to get the picture. Finally, he takes a deep breath, holds his white stick high in the air, and marches slowly, determinedly across the road. Terrified! He hears a car motor coming louder, nearer. He raises the cane as high as he possibly can. His ears are pounding; he cannot tell if that car has stopped, or what. Finally, he feels the roadbed sloping down. Excited, he stumbles into the curb, and falls forward almost flat on his face, but luckily, manages to catch his balance. He stops and turns his face around, around. His father was right. He can smell tobacco, and he moves towards the smell until he’s there. He buys the Rum and Maple and begins the return, with pounding heart. Eventually, his hand touches the carved, wooden gatepost of home. The blind boy enters his father’s study holding up a small jute bag in triumph. “I brought your tobacco, Dad!”

“Thanks. Just put it on the table by the door, please. And you can keep the change as your reward.” The old man does not get out of his chair.

That was 1914. Twenty-one years later, his father lay dying, and Jim sat beside him at his sick-bed, holding his hand. “Dad,” he said, “you know that time you sent me to buy tobacco when I was just a little boy? That was the best thing you ever did for me, huh. It taught me self-reliance, and at just the right age too. I owe you a ton for that. All that I’ve managed to do in my life. But, oh boy, was I scared. And, you know, Dad, I realized recently: I was only seven then. Do you not think you were taking a bit of a risk?”

The old man waited a moment, then put his hand upon his son’s shoulder. “My boy,” he said, “I didn’t tell you this before. But I can tell you now. When you went for that tobacco, I was two paces behind you, every step of the way.”

3 ounces: 23 grams
4 shilling: coin
5 Model T: early automobile
21 After the family get-together in 1984, I said goodbye to Uncle Jim, thinking it would be the last time I’d ever see him. I was wrong. I went back to Cape Town two years later to research a historical novel, and in due course found myself a sort of guest of honour at a dinner at cousin Chloe’s, amid a throng of relatives.

22 After dinner of salmon and lamb, Uncle Jim ensconced himself in an easy chair, with a small glass of red wine and began to hold forth. Age was making him bolder. He railed over a man who had traded on his blindness for sympathy. He told the famous story about skinny-dipping with his blind schoolmates at Worcester when someone stole their clothes. And then, remembering all of a sudden how I had called his father’s memory into question two years before, he turned to me sharply and said, “Those little towns in the Cape that you mentioned, Tulbagh, and Stutterheim, and so forth, where Dad was magistrate: you look on a map, and see where Worcester is.”

23 I didn’t need the map. I understood immediately. Those small towns form a ring around Worcester. My grandfather had not sought promotion — probably had turned it down more than once — so that the family could stay close to the Blind School. “You know, magistrates were not paid very well in those days,” my father used to say, to explain why he relied on a maternal uncle, rather than his parents, to send him through law school. But now I understood what my father possibly didn’t: maybe magistrates were paid quite well enough, but this one had expensive priorities. There were six other children but Jim’s needs took first place. I thought better of my grandfather when I understood that. I wished that he had lived long enough for me to meet him.

24 In August, 1987, Uncle Jim turned eighty.

25 A few days later, I decided to call Uncle Jim myself. That way at least I could say something personal. Carefully, I pressed the numbers of the country code, the city routing, and then the number. Nothing. Then there started a very noisy, urgent double ring, but no one answered. Then a taped message came on, and I couldn’t catch the Afrikaans. The English operator told me the line had been disconnected.

26 **Disconnected!** What a sinister euphemism! I felt a shame come over me, as though I had killed Uncle Jim. Then I pulled myself together and called his daughter’s number.

27 Uncle Jim was tired, Chloe said. They’d decided to move him out of his apartment, into a room in their house. Yes, I could speak to him, but right now he was lying down. Could I call in an hour?

28 But an hour later the line was bad, or his hearing was weak. He kept shouting, “What’s that? Come again?” He didn’t seem very interested.

29 I summoned my powers of enunciation, and said as distinctly as I have ever spoken: “Do you mind, Uncle Jim, if I write that story about your father sending you to get tobacco?”

30 “Write any story you darn well please!” he shouted back.

31 Then, after a pause, he said, in a sharp, clear voice, “Look here, man, if you get any money out of it, make sure you send me a donation for the Lighthouse Club. We’ve got six Versaivals on order, and no cash to pay for them.”

32 “Yeah, yeah. I’ll see what I can do.”

33 “Righto,” he said. And just when I meant to ask him what a Versaivale was, he hung up.

---

6 Afrikaans: a South African language
2. Discuss the qualities that Erik Weihenmayer in “Blindly He Goes…Up” and Uncle Jim in “Versabraille” share in facing their challenges. You must refer to both passages in your essay.

Suggestions Regarding Response:

Responses may state either Eric Weihenmayer or Uncle Jim is more successful at meeting challenges.

<table>
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<th>“Blindly He Goes…Up”</th>
<th>“Versabraille”</th>
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<td>Resourcefulness</td>
<td>paragraphs 1, 2 and 10</td>
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<td>High degree of motivation</td>
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<td>Acceptance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>paragraphs 6 and 10</td>
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This list is not exhaustive.
The exemplars will provide sample responses.

Marks will be awarded for content and written expression. Refer to the Holistic Scale on page 12 of this key.
SCORING GUIDE FOR ANALYSIS OF SYNTHESIS TEXTS 1 AND 2

This is a first-draft response and should be assessed as such.
The response is assessed holistically.

6

The six essay is superior, demonstrating an insightful understanding of the texts. The essay shows a sophisticated approach to synthesis, including pertinent references. The writing style is effective and demonstrates skillful control of language. Despite its clarity and precision, the essay need not be error-free.

5

The five essay is proficient, demonstrating a clear understanding of the texts at an interpretive level. The essay clearly synthesizes the concepts within the texts. References may be explicit or implicit and convincingly support the analysis. The writing is well organized and reflects a strong command of the conventions of language. Errors may be present, but are not distracting.

4

The four essay is competent. Understanding of the texts tends to be literal and superficial. Some synthesis is apparent. The essay may rely heavily on paraphrasing. References are present and appropriate, but may be limited. The writing is organized and straightforward. Conventions of language are usually followed, but some errors are evident.

3

The three essay is barely adequate. Understanding of the texts may be partially flawed. An attempt at synthesis is evident. References to the texts are not clearly connected to a central idea or may be repetitive. The response may be somewhat underdeveloped. A sense of purpose may be evident, but errors can be distracting.

2

The two essay is inadequate. While there is an attempt to address the topic, understanding of the texts or the task may be seriously flawed. An essay that makes reference to both texts but refers only fleetingly to one of them is inadequate. The response may be seriously underdeveloped. Errors are recurring, distracting, and impede meaning.

1

The one essay is unacceptable. Although the essay mentions both texts, the essay is too brief to address the topic or there may be a complete lack of control in the writing.

0

The zero essay reflects a complete misunderstanding of the texts and/or the task, or is a restatement of the question. Exclusive reference to only one text does not constitute synthesis. Exclusively narrative responses reflect a complete misunderstanding of the task.

*Any zero paper must be cleared by the section leader.

NR

A blank paper with no response given.
PART D: COMPOSITION

INSTRUCTIONS: Using standard English, write in the Response Booklet, a coherent, unified, multi-paragraph (3 or more paragraphs) composition of at least 300 words on the topic below. In your composition, you may apply any appropriate method of development including exposition, persuasion, description, and narration.

Use the Organization and Planning space to plan your work.

3. Write a multi-paragraph composition on the topic below. In addressing the topic, consider all possibilities. You may draw support from the experiences of others or from any aspect of your life: your reading and your experiences. You do not have to accept the basic premise of the topic.

Topic:

Happiness can be found in unlikely circumstances

Marks will be awarded for content and written expression. Refer to the Holistic Scale on page 14 of this key.
A composition may apply any effective and appropriate method of development which includes any combination of exposition, persuasion, description, and narration. No one form of writing should be considered superior to another. This is a first-draft response and should be assessed as such.
The use of paragraph structure is assessed holistically with reference to the clarity of expression and organization.

6
The six paper is superior and may draw upon any number of factors, such as maturity of style, depth of discussion, effectiveness of argument, use of literary and/or rhetorical devices, sophistication of wit, or quality of imagination. This composition exhibits an effective writing style and a sophisticated use of language. Despite its clarity and precision, this paper need not be error-free.

5
The five paper is proficient. The composition displays some manipulation of language to achieve a desired effect and exhibits a clear sense of voice and of audience. The writing is thoughtful and interesting. Vocabulary and sentence structure are varied and serve the writer’s purpose successfully. Errors may be present, but are not distracting.

4
The four paper is competent. The composition conveys the writer’s ideas, but without flair or strong control. Diction and syntax are usually appropriate, but lack variety. Structure, regardless of type, is predictable and relatively mechanical. The paper shows a clear sense of the writer’s purpose. Conventions of language are usually followed, but some errors are evident.

3
The three paper is barely adequate. The paper may feature somewhat underdeveloped or simplistic ideas. Transition[s] may be weak or absent. Support is frequently in the form of listed details. Little variety in diction and sentence structure is discernible. The composition may reflect some sense of purpose, but errors may be distracting.

2
The two paper is inadequate. The ideas are seriously underdeveloped and awkwardly expressed. The composition may be excessively colloquial or reflect inadequate knowledge of the conventions of language. While meaning is apparent, errors are frequent and rudimentary.

1
The one paper is unacceptable and may be compromised by its deficiency of composition, content, diction, syntax, structure, voice, or conventions of language.

0
The zero paper manifests an achievement less than outlined in a scale-point one, is written in verse, is off-topic, or is a restatement of the topic.
*Any zero paper must be cleared by the section leader.

NR
A blank paper with no response given.