Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

Directions: The following prompt is based on the accompanying six sources.

This question requires you to synthesize a variety of sources into a coherent, well-written essay. When you synthesize sources you refer to them to develop your position and cite them accurately. Your argument should be central; the sources should support this argument. Avoid merely summarizing the sources.

Remember to attribute both direct and indirect citations.

Introduction

Some nations have a defined national school curriculum, while others, such as the United States, do not. As a result, students in high school English classes in the United States can read texts that vary widely from school to school, while students in other countries may all read the same books in high school.

Assignment

Read the following sources (including the introductory information) carefully. Then write an essay that develops a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. Synthesize at least three of the sources for support.

You may refer to the sources by their titles (Source A, Source B, etc.) or by the descriptions in the parentheses.

Source A (Lando\w)
Source B (Greer)
Source C (Table)
Source D (Book cover)
Source E (Pirofski)
Source F (Fowler)
The score should reflect a judgment of the essay’s quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 40 minutes to read the sources and 60 minutes to write; the essay, therefore, is not a finished product and should not be judged by standards appropriate for an out-of-class assignment. Evaluate the essay as a draft, making certain to reward students for what they do well. All essays, even those scored 8 or 9, may contain occasional lapses in analysis, prose style, or mechanics. Such features should enter into the holistic evaluation of an essay’s overall quality. In no case may an essay with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics be scored higher than a 2.

Effective
9 Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for a score of 8 and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their argument, thorough in development, or impressive in their control of language.

8 Essays earning a score of 8 effectively argue the extent to which schools should support individuality or conformity. They develop their position by effectively synthesizing* at least three of the sources. The evidence and explanations used are appropriate and convincing. Their prose demonstrates a consistent ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not necessarily flawless.

7 Essays earning a score of 7 meet the criteria for a score of 6 but provide more complete explanation, more thorough development, or a more mature prose style.

Adequate
6 Essays earning a score of 6 adequately argue the extent to which schools should support individuality or conformity. They develop their position by adequately synthesizing at least three of the sources. The evidence and explanations used are appropriate and sufficient. The language may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

5 Essays earning a score of 5 argue the extent to which schools should support individuality or conformity. They develop their position by synthesizing at least three sources, but how they use and explain sources is somewhat uneven, inconsistent, or limited. The argument is generally clear, and the sources generally develop the student’s position, but the links between the sources and the argument may be strained. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the student’s ideas adequately.

Inadequate
4 Essays earning a score of 4 inadequately argue the extent to which schools should support individuality or conformity. They develop their position by synthesizing at least two sources, but the evidence or explanations used may be inappropriate, insufficient, or less convincing. The sources may dominate the student’s attempts at development, the link between the argument and the sources may be weak, or the student may misunderstand, misrepresent, or oversimplify the sources. The prose generally conveys the student’s ideas but may be less consistent in controlling the elements of effective writing.

3 Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for a score of 4 but demonstrate less success in arguing the extent to which schools should support individuality or conformity. They are less perceptive in their understanding of the sources, or their explanation or examples may be particularly limited or simplistic. The essays may show less maturity in control of writing.

Little Success
2 Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate little success in arguing the extent to which schools should support individuality or conformity. They may merely allude to knowledge gained from reading the sources rather than citing the sources themselves. These essays may misread the sources, fail to develop a position, or substitute a simpler task by merely summarizing or categorizing the sources or by merely responding to the prompt tangentially with unrelated, inaccurate, or inappropriate explanation. The prose of these essays often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing, such as grammatical problems, a lack of development or organization, or a lack of control.

1 Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for a score of 2 but are undeveloped, especially simplistic in their explanation, weak in their control of writing, or do not cite even one source.

0 Indicates an on-topic response that receives no credit, such as one that merely repeats the prompt.

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* For the purposes of scoring, synthesis means referring to sources to develop a position and citing them accurately.
The American Heritage Dictionary has eleven separate definitions of the term canon, the most relevant of which is “an authoritative list, as of the works of an author” and “a basis for judgment; standard; criterion.” . . . To enter the canon, or more properly, to be entered into the canon is to gain certain obvious privileges. The gatekeepers of the fortress of high culture include influential critics, museum directors and their boards of trustees, and far more lowly scholars and teachers. Indeed, a chief enforcer of the canon appears in middlebrow anthologies, those hangers on of high culture that in the Victorian period took the form of pop anthologies like Golden Treasury and today that of major college anthologies in America. To appear in the Norton or Oxford anthology is to have achieved, not exactly greatness but what is more important, certainly—status and accessibility to a reading public. And that is why, of course, it matters that so few women writers have managed to gain entrance to such anthologies.

Clayton Eshleman, who edits the poetry journal Sulfur and teaches English at Eastern Michigan University, agrees with . . . criticism of the major anthologies, arguing that . . . “teachers have to make their own decisions” about what to include in an introductory poetry course, and that they “can’t trust anthologies” to answer students’ questions about the nature and significance of poetry.

Eshleman’s strategy is to teach anthologies alongside other poems—sometimes by the same poets—that the editor(s) chose not to include. In one instance, he provided his class with portions of Whitman’s “Song of Myself” that had been edited out of a particular anthology. Because the passages in question (which Eshleman had to photocopy and provide to the class in handout form) were highly charged with homoerotic energy and sexual imagery, the discussion shifted to the question of what subject matter was “appropriate” in poetry and why a particular editor might have chosen a small selection as “representative” of Whitman’s work.
The following table is based on data gathered from schools in the United States.

Table 1
Most Frequently Required Titles, Grades 9–12
Title and Percent of Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public (non-tuition-charging) Schools</th>
<th>Independent (tuition-charging) Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romeo and Juliet</td>
<td>Macbeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macbeth</td>
<td>Romeo and Juliet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huckleberry Finn</td>
<td>Huckleberry Finn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julius Caesar</td>
<td>Scarlet Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Kill a Mockingbird</td>
<td>Hamlet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarlet Letter</td>
<td>Great Gatsby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Mice and Men</td>
<td>To Kill a Mockingbird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Julius Caesar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Gatsby</td>
<td>Odyssey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord of the Flies</td>
<td>Lord of the Flies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 84%                                  | 74%                                    |
| 81                                   | 66                                     |
| 70                                   | 56                                     |
| 70                                   | 52                                     |
| 69                                   | 51                                     |
| 62                                   | 49                                     |
| 56                                   | 47*                                    |
| 55                                   | 42*                                    |
| 54                                   | 39                                     |
| 54                                   | 34                                     |

*Percentage significantly different from public school sample, p < .05.
The following is the cover of a widely used literature textbook.

The Norton Anthology
World Masterpieces
EXPANDED EDITION IN ONE VOLUME

Tori Kiyonaga, Shigeyuki Executing Calligraphy, Philadelphia Museum of Art: Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1946
Source E


The following is taken from an online article about using multicultural literature in the classroom.

This paper presents an historical overview of research and reading programs which have found that multicultural literature is a valuable learning tool as well as research which documents the longstanding lack of multicultural literature in the children's literature. Reasons for the exclusion of culturally authentic reading materials in the canon are discussed as well.

Pioneer researcher, Florez-Tighe (1983), was one of the first educators to advocate the use of multicultural literature in school curriculum. Her research indicated that culturally authentic children's literature enhances language development and thought processes of African-American children (Florez-Tighe, 1983). Florez-Tighe (1983) believes that use of African-American folktales by teachers in the classroom can teach respect for African-American culture and affirm a child's feeling of self worth (Florez-Tighe, 1983).

Source F


The following is the introduction to a discussion about how reading changes when it occurs online.

What happens when text moves from page to screen? First, the digital text becomes unfixed and interactive. The reader can change it, become writer. The center of Western culture since the Renaissance—really since the great Alexandrian editors of Homer—the fixed, authoritative, canonical text, simply explodes into the ether. (Lanham, The Electronic Word, 31)

In the world of electronic writing, there will be no texts that everyone must read. There will only be texts that more or fewer readers choose to examine in more or less detail. The idea of the great, inescapable book belongs to the age of print that is now passing. (Bolter, Writing Space, 240)

The idea of a relatively stable [literary] canon made sense in a culture dominated by printed books. The canon was also appropriate to a centralized educational system, in which everyone studied the same subjects and the same texts in order to be introduced into the standards of cultural life. But the notion of a standard has now collapsed, and the collapse is mirrored in the shift from the printed to the electronic writing space, in which a stable canon of works and authors is meaningless. (Bolter, Writing Space, 237)
Question 1

The score should reflect a judgment of the essay’s quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 15 minutes to read the sources and 40 minutes to write; therefore, the essay is not a finished product and should not be judged by standards that are appropriate for an out-of-class assignment. Evaluate the essay as a draft, making certain to reward students for what they do well.

All essays, even those scored 8 or 9, may contain occasional flaws in analysis, prose style, or mechanics. Such features should enter into the holistic evaluation of an essay’s overall quality. In no case may an essay with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics be scored higher than a 2.

9 Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for 8 essays and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their argument, skillful in their synthesis of sources, or impressive in their control of language.

8 Effective

Essays earning a score of 8 effectively develop a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. They support their position by successfully synthesizing* at least three of the sources. The argument is convincing, and the student uses the sources effectively to develop a position. The prose demonstrates an ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not necessarily flawless.

7 Essays earning a score of 7 fit the description of 6 essays but are distinguished by more complete or more purposeful argumentation and synthesis of sources or a more mature prose style.

6 Adequate

Essays earning a score of 6 adequately develop a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. They synthesize at least three of the sources. The student’s argument is generally convincing, and the student generally uses the sources to support a position, but the argument is less developed or less cogent than the arguments of essays earning higher scores. The language may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

5 Essays earning a score of 5 develop a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. They develop the position by synthesizing at least three sources, but their arguments and their use of sources are somewhat limited, inconsistent, or uneven. The argument is generally clear, and the sources generally develop the student’s position, but the links between the sources and the argument may be strained. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the student’s ideas adequately.

*For the purposes of scoring, synthesis refers to combining the sources and the student’s position to form a cohesive, supported argument and accurately citing sources.
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2008 SCORING GUIDELINES (Form B)

Question 1 (continued)

4 Inadequate

Essays earning a score of 4 inadequately develop a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. They attempt to present an argument and develop the position by synthesizing at least two sources but may misunderstand, misrepresent, or oversimplify either their own argument or the sources they include. The link between the argument and the sources is weak. The prose of 4 essays may suggest immature control of writing.

3 Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for a score of 4 but demonstrate less understanding of the sources, less success in developing their own position, or less control of writing.

2 Little Success

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate little success in developing a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. They may merely allude to knowledge gained from reading the sources rather than citing the sources themselves. These essays may misread the sources, fail to present an argument, or substitute a simpler task by merely responding to the question tangentially or by simply summarizing the sources. The prose of 2 essays often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing, such as a lack of development or organization, grammatical problems, or a lack of control.

1 Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for a score of 2 but are especially simplistic or are weak in their control of writing or do not cite even one source.

0 Indicates an on-topic response that receives no credit, such as one that merely repeats the prompt.
— Indicates a blank response or one that is completely off topic.
I am a product of at least five different educational systems.

Frequently people ask me if these experiences have harmed my academic development and social upbringing, and I respond saying "definitely not." As Pirofski stated, "multicultural" aspects of education are "valuable learning tools" for developing children. Therefore, a non-standardized approach to education is the most beneficial. I am against the statement that specific texts should be read by all high school English students on the grounds that standardization excludes mainstreams and possibilities limit high schooler's education in a changing world.

Creating a list of specific texts that all high school students must read will exclude "greatness" (Landow). Anthologies and other "course-related syllabi" gate keep many great writers. To be included in these standardized guidelines for school curriculums one must thank "influential critics" (Landow) and the like not solely one's ability as a writer. Those "gatekeepers" (Landow) ensures a writer's acceptance into "high culture" (Landow) proof that connections to influential members of the "Fortress of high culture" versus genuine writer's ability ensures literary success. In spite of how few women writers have managed to gain entrance to such anthologies. "Women have been writing as long as men have" but their socioeconomic status has inhibited them from continuing to achieve "greatness." Therefore, to have a good school curriculum one should not solely pull from the celebrated writers from well known standardized "course" anthologies but one should also open one's students' minds to some of the noncelebrated.
talent of non-mainstream writers.

Another negative side effect of standardizing the reading
units of all high school English classes is mainstreaming. To
ensure a well-educated young generation entering the world of
adulthood at the end of their/years in high school one wants
able independent thinkers that can contribute to society. To generate
such a capable group of citizens teachers should avoid
mainstreaming and avoid “pop narratives” (Landau). As Foshan
reminds us “can’t trust narratives.” He elaborates by stating
“teachers have to make their own decisions” regarding what
literary works to include in their English classes. Incorporating a
variety of sources guarantees a well constructed knowledge
base for a particular piece of literature, with which the student
can better understand and analyze the piece. Having drawn
from a variety of sources also ensures that not all
freshmen English students interpret “Lord of the Flies” the
same way and opens the doors for discussion and further
intellectual stimulation.

One method by which students study literature in our
global world is via internet. On the computer screen “the
digital text becomes worked and interactive” (Fowler) for the
students. Besides being able to analyze and interactively work
with the material online students can also “become a writer”
(Fowler) and further their creative abilities in online forums.
These activities would not be possible if every student’s work
and curriculum was identical. There would be no purpose for discussion if every freshman interpreted the "Lord of the Flies" in the same manner. Therefore, by standardizing the text all high school English students read and would be limiting the possibilities of the modern age. As Fowler states, "a relatively stable [literary] canon made sense in a culture dominated by printed books," but in "electronic writing space a stable canon of works and authors become meaningless as we and continuity as students are our strategies transforming global environment change.

To change one has to be open to new ideas and one has to do away with standardization. Standardization confines us into a prediction of the future and excludes possibilities. (today's) "greatness" to earn through the "gatekeepers" (London). In a continuously transforming global society standardization inhibits academic progress. The Weberes, Locke's and Marxes of tomorrow can not be formed by a society that seeks success through conformity. A more open-minded and intellectually capable generation will result from de-standardization and the pursuit of true "greatness."
In every school there are teachers and students. The two have a distinct relationship and bond that they do not have for others, outside the scholastic society. These teachers know their students. They know what is best for them and what they will need to teach them in order to advance in life—both through career opportunities and college. They want their students to be successful in both the field in which they want to study, and their ethics; attitudes towards others and about life. Most importantly, the teacher knows the student’s culture. Every location all over the globe has a distinct culture from the other. Through this understanding, it should most definitely be the teacher’s decision on what they give their students to read in an English class.

In the class the teachers need to teach their students properly. The term properly, refers to different styles of teaching so the student will learn best. The proper way of teaching is different for almost every teacher. As srcue C states, “teachers have to make their own decisions.” They cannot base their schedule on what a single person or group of people have decided is the best and only way to teach an English class. If you observe the chart in Source C you can see that the same books titles appear in both Public and Private Schools in the United States.

If you observe more intensely you will see that the percent of each book read is almost 20% different then the other school. This is because the teachers knew which of the
books is more appropriate for their students. The students
who go to public and private schools are different. The
lower class citizen will attend the public school.
And the teacher knows that what he has to learn in their
English class is different from what the economically upper
class citizen in the private school is learning. The few
have completely different futures. Set from the minute they were
born. The teacher needs to be involved and help each student
become successful in life. The two students have different goals,
dreams and ideals. This is why each teacher has to teach
to their own curriculum.

What draws more attention is the students attending
English class all over the world. They have their own culture and
background. They need to learn things differently, according
to their lifestyle and their home. The use of African American
folktales by teachers in the classroom can teach respect for
African American culture. This certainly is true
for a somewhat racist or segregated view of another
person from another culture, and even for the African American
student about Sudan where he is taking the English class, he will need to read
different articles about different topics than their American student. For
example, the teacher in America assigns the reading of East Peck
Nation. This may have a significant impact on the American student because
it shows the medical issues, rape and disgusting detail in making
Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

1

a. Steak or hamburgers party that he will eat every other day.

b. But the Sudanese students, surrounded by civil war and sense of loss about his back, it is more important for him to learn about his culture and background, it will be more important for that Sudanese student to read a book like What is the Lost. Where a Sudanese refugee tells his story of survival and his victories or misadventure and pain it will give hope to the student. The author of this autobiography had escaped Sudan's hard times and traveled through America. Difficult he fled to America to start a new life. This story brings hope and what the student may need. The teacher will know this because he knows what is best for his student.

This is why each teacher needs to teach their own way.

Overall, you can easily observe why each teacher needs to teach their own content and assign a variety of reading texts to help the student. Each student has a different lifestyle and will need to read different texts to help him through life. Each student has a different culture and historical background and will need to read content which teaches him to either be aware of what he eats every day or something that inspires and gives him hope and confidence. This is why the teacher teaches the student. And this is why they cannot all teach the same content in an English class.
I believe that there should not be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. The purpose of this essay is to give the reader a thoughtful analysis on my position of why there should not be specific texts. As a student, I have had many different teachers and have observed how each one of them teaches differently. I feel like if we make each school read the same books we are limiting both what the students learn and how or what the teachers teach.

In source B it shows a table adapted from a 1992 publication of the National Council of Teachers of English. The table consists of the most frequently required titles and their percent from grades 9-17 within the US. The table also compares Public Schools versus Independent Schools (Private school). As I observed the table I realized that the types of schools are for the most part on the same page. I don't see the need to limit the schools variety on what they read.
In source c it talks about how an editor of the poetry journal *Sulfur*, Clayton Eshleman, believes that "teachers have no choice but to make their own decisions. Sometimes a teacher can pull something out of a book that another teacher cannot and relate it to a certain topic. Why should we take that privilege away?" Eshleman's strategy is to teach anthologies alongside other poems—sometimes by the same poets—that the editor(s) chose not to include. This is an example of how teachers can teach out of certain passages and books that others found unneeded.

In today's society more and more students are becoming less interested in school. Why not let the teachers expand their teaching in order to keep the students interested? Our society right now is at a point that the drop out rate in schools are higher than ever. I think it's time to think outside the box in order to keep students inside the box.
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2008 SCORING COMMENTARY (Form B)

Question 1

Sample: 1A
Score: 8

The first paragraph of this effective essay has pertinent content (none of the trivially obvious generalizations typical of lower-scoring responses) and personal observation relevant to its thesis. The thesis alludes to issues found in the sources (standardization, exclusion, a changing world) but is not dependent on the language or specific argumentation used in these sources. The language is controlled throughout the essay, which has sophisticated vocabulary and sentence structure. The student’s synthesis of sources is effective. Source A (Landow) is examined in terms of wording and specific claims, points that are interspersed with the student’s own interpretive statements. The student lingers in discussion of Landow but also explicitly references Eshleman (who is cited by Greer in Source C) and nicely connects the arguments of these two sources. Source B is also implicitly invoked with a mention of “Lord of the Flies” as a canonical work that can be better understood if read in conjunction with nonstandard texts. The discussion of Source F is also effective. The concluding paragraph has an interesting flourish, which goes beyond the main argument of the essay: “The Webers, Lockes and Marxes of tomorrow can not be formed by a society that seeks success through conformity.” The concluding sentence is also particularly strong.

Sample: 1B
Score: 5

The opening statement of this essay (“In every school there are teachers and students”) is not particularly insightful, but the introductory paragraph is reasonably developed. There is some sophisticated identification of issues from the sources, such as “distinct culture,” which informs the student’s argument against having a standard reading list. Source C is paraphrased in somewhat specific terms, but the treatment is less thoughtful and less directed toward synthetic argument than in upper-half essays. The third paragraph includes a discussion of the kind of noncanonical source that might be appropriate in the United States (Fast Food Nation), which is compared with a noncanonical source appropriate for readers in Sudan (What Is the What). This outside information enhances the information provided in Source E and supports the student’s thesis. The essay is briefly but inconsistently adequate, which is why it received a score of 5.

Sample: 1C
Score: 2

This unsuccessful essay begins with a trivially true introductory statement—that each teacher “teaches differently.” The thesis is a simplistic paraphrase of source positions that offers no real argument. This is followed by descriptions of Source B and Source C that use simplistic language for limited interpretations. The conclusion is based on a claim that students need interesting reading material rather than on any synthesis of the sources.