

ASSIGNMENT II: LITERARY EXPLORATION

Suggested time: 70 to 80 minutes

Read the following nonfiction excerpt and complete the assignment that follows.

The narrator of this excerpt is musician Salman Ahmad. He describes the experience of attending his first rock concert as a new immigrant to America in the 1970s.

from ROCK & ROLL JIHAD

The minute the band started to play, I knew why I'd come. The excitement I felt as Led Zeppelin ripped into its set began at the base of my spine and enveloped first my heart and then my head. I didn't know any Zeppelin songs but it didn't matter. Celtic, Indian, and Arabic melodies combined with the blues with effortless ease, glued together by John Paul Jones's bass and drummer John Bonham's powerhouse percussion. Robert Plant and Jimmy Page ruled the stage with incredible visceral energy and oversized personas. Standing on my feet in the sixty-third row of a jam-packed Garden, I looked over the heads and shoulders of a teenage wasteland and watched as the distant exploding stars foretold my musical destiny.

For most of the night my eyes were transfixed on the guitar player, Page. He had an otherworldly presence, coaxing, bending, squeezing, bowing, and physically summoning mystical sounds out of a two-headed guitar. He was dressed in a white satin shirt and pants with dragons painted on them. Red, blue, and green laser lights formed a pyramid around him as he played, totally soaked in sweat and bathed in an admixture of color and sound. Everywhere I looked around me there were smiling, happy young people, swept up in this menagerie of deafening sonic thunder and blinding lights. I had never experienced such an assault on the senses, and I felt fully awake despite the fact that everyone around me was swimming in the depths of dizziness. The tornado of guitars, bass, vocals, and drums made this brown-skinned boy boogie woogie! And to think I'd come to the concert on a whim. I was a still-fresh immigrant. ... I had no preconceived notions about the band so I just listened to the music. But when Jimmy Page switched his red twelve- and six-string Gibson double neck for a sunburst Les Paul and tore into the signature riffs of "Moby Dick" and "Whole Lotta Love," I entered another realm. I never came back. ...

The show was nearly three hours long, but it seemed to fly by in a wink of an eye. That Zeppelin concert gave me an audio-visual blueprint for the distant music I was hearing in my head. Sitting in the Garden, I saw a vision for my future crystallize. I wanted to play music for the rest of my life. Period. I had found my passion and now I wanted to connect with it, share it, and change the world with it. By the end of the night my shoulders, head, and feet were in a state of *fana*. I was one with the music. I didn't just like rock and roll. I loved it.

Salman Ahmad

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The Assignment

In this excerpt, the narrator describes his experience at a rock concert as a defining moment in his life. It was here that he discovered his passion and decided to dedicate his life to a career in music.

What is your opinion of the idea that an individual's life can be altered by a particular experience?

You **must**:

- Discuss a character from literature or film that you have studied in English Language Arts 30–2. You may choose to discuss more than one character.
- Ensure the details you select support your opinion of the idea that an individual's life can be altered by a particular experience.
- Present your ideas in *prose*.

You **should**:

- Reflect upon your own knowledge and/or experience and/or the reading selection provided.
- Use the *Initial Planning* section on page 9 to help you plan your response. Carefully consider your *controlling idea* or how you will create a *strong unifying* effect.
- Select a character who is relevant to your ideas about the topic and interesting to you from the short stories, novels, plays, poetry, nonfiction, or films that you have studied in English Language Arts 30–2.
- Organize your discussion so that your ideas are clearly and effectively presented.

Assignment II: Literary Exploration

Initial Planning

Suggested Time: 10 minutes

Read the assignment question on page 8 and write your controlling idea below.

Select a character (or characters) from a text you have studied in ELA 30–2.

Character(s) Chosen _____

Literary Text(s) and Author(s) _____

Briefly identify details about the character(s) that you intend to use to develop your ideas. Make sure the details associated with this character are relevant to your ideas about the topic question.

Note: Write the title(s) of your chosen literary text(s) on the back cover of this examination booklet.

There is space for planning on page 10.

There are all kinds of experiences some are good and some are bad. In the film *Shawshank Redemption*, Andy's life was altered by his arrest. In the excerpt from *Rock & Roll Jihad*, Salman's life was changed by the Led Zepplin concert. A single experience can change a person's life drastically, either for better or for worse.

Andy from the film *Shawshank Redemption* had his life change for the worse. The experience that changed Andy's life was when he was convicted for his wife's murder. Andy had been a banker with a nice home and a beautiful wife. Now his wife was dead and he was in prison. In prison he had no power he was a "fish". During his stay at the prison he was raped by a gang called the Sisters, the only way he could fight back was to use his words and if he did he would beat him up. These points together show that Andy's arrest altered his life in a negative way.

Salman from the *Rock & Roll Jihad* had his life affected in a good way. Salman is a new

immigrant which can make it very hard to fit in. It can be even harder if you do not have something to work toward. Salman's life was change when he decided to attend a Zed Zeppelin concert. At the concert he discovered his passion for music and knew that he wanted to be a musician. With his newly found passion Salman has something to give him purpose. This together shows that Salmans life was changed for the better.

When I was 6 life was changed for the better by a shopping trip. My ~~to~~ mom wanted me to come with her to Fabric Land but I did NOT want to go. I wanted to be lazy and watch more cartoons but mom made me go anyway. As soon as we walked in the door I knew that I wanted to be a Fashion Designer. That shopping experience helped me fulfill my dream changing my life in a positive way.

Experiences can change our lives for the good or the bad. Andy's was chance for bad, while

Salman and mine were changed for the good.

Experiences can drastically affect our lives whether for good or bad.

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EXAMPLE PAPER—Satisfactory (S)

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE	SCORE
Thought and Support (S) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A defensible understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student’s ideas are appropriately and straightforwardly explored. The literary example is related adequately to the student’s ideas. Support is relevant but tends to be general. 	<p>A defensible understanding of the topic is demonstrated in the student’s discussion of the idea that “A single experience can change a persons life drastically, ether for better or for worse.”</p> <p>The student’s ideas are appropriate and straightforwardly explored in the discussion of <i>The Shawshank Redemption</i> (“Andy from the film Shawshank Redemption had his life change for the worse”), the excerpt (“Salman from the Rock & Roll Jihad had his life afected in a good way”), and the student’s experience (“When I was 6 life was changed for the better by a shopping trip”).</p> <p>The literary example is related adequately to the student’s discussion of the idea that “These points together show that Andy’s arrest altered his life in a negative way.”</p> <p>Support is relevant but tends to be general, as as in “Andy had been a banker with a nice home and a beautiful wife. Now his wife was dead and he was prision,” “At the concert he discover his pation for music and new that he wanted to be a musician,” and “As soon as we walked in the door I knew that I wanted to be a fashion designer.”</p>	S
Form and Structure (S) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A controlling idea or unifying effect is evident, but unity may falter on occasion. Development of ideas and explanations is generally clear and coherent. 	<p>A controlling idea is evident in the student’s discussion of the idea that “Experiences can drastically affect our lives wether for good or bad.”</p> <p>Development of ideas and explanations is generally clear and coherent, as in “The experience that changed Andy’s life was when he was convicted for his wifes murder,” “Salman’s life was change when he disided to attend a Zed Zeppelin concert,” and “That shopping experience help me find my dream changing my life ina positive way.”</p>	S

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE	SCORE
<p>Matters of Choice (S)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diction is appropriate but may be general rather than specific. Sentence structures are generally straightforward and clear. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a clear voice. 	<p>Diction is appropriate but general, as in “With his newly found passion Salman has something to give him purpose” and “Experiences can drastically affect our lives whether for good or bad.”</p> <p>Sentence structures are generally straightforward and clear, as in “Experiences can change our lives for the good or the bad. Andy’s was change for bad, while Salman and mine were changed for the good.”</p> <p>Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a clear voice, as in “My mom wanted me to come with her to fabric land but did NOT want go. I wanted to be lazy and watch more cartoons but mom made me go any way.”</p>	S
<p>Matters of Correctness (S)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. There may be occasional lapses in control of sentence construction and usage, and/or minor errors in grammar and mechanics. The communication, however, is clear. 	<p>The writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics: “Salman is a new immigrant which can make it very hard to fit in. It can be even harder if you do not have something to work toward.”</p> <p>There are occasional lapses in control of sentence construction and usage, and minor errors in grammar and mechanics, as in “During his stay at the prison he was raped by a gang called the sisters, the only way he could fight back was to use his words and if he did the would beat him up.”</p> <p>The communication, however, is clear.</p>	S

Many people would wonder what exactly they would want to do in their future and how they are going to do it. They would start to wonder if it is really worth being what they want to be and so they start to stress out and over think about it. What people do in their future is not because they need to, it is because they love doing what they are doing. The idea that an individual's life can be altered by a particular experience can lead an individual to achieve his or her goals in life. It can give a sense of motivation to those who are not sure of what they want to do in their lives. The film *October Sky* can convey to this topic. The main character Homer Hickam was not sure what he wanted to do in his life but when he saw the launch of Sputnik flying through the air, he began to find his passion in Rocketry.

In the excerpt *Rock & Roll Jihad* by Salman Ahmad describes the experience of attending his first rock concert as a new immigrant to America in the 1970s. The rock band he saw live was Led Zeppelin. "...I was a still fresh immigrant...I had no preconceived notions about the band so I just listened to the music..." This excerpt can relate to the

topic of an individual's life being altered by a particular experience because throughout the show and the amount of songs they played, the narrator finally discovered his passion and decided to dedicate his life to a career in music. "...I saw a vision of my future crystallize. I wanted to play music for the rest of my life. I had found my passion and now I wanted to connect with it, share it, and changed the world with it..."

The film *October Sky* deals with a teenage boy from Coal wood, West Virginia named Homer Hickam. He was not sure what he wanted to do in his life. His father Mr. Hickam wanted Homer to work in the coalmine because that is what he did as well as most men in the community did but he refused to. Homer wanted to be different from others and wanted to make a change in his life. When Homer saw the first launch of a satellite called Sputnik, he finally found his passion with Rocketry. It was not easy for Homer because he had many challenges he had faced. His family did not take him seriously especially his father. His grades for math were very poor, and the people in his community even doubted him, but that never stopped Homer. He was not alone. Mrs. Riley was a math teacher for him. She helped him by giving books for studies and gave him the courage he

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needed to do what he wanted for his career. His friends were there for him as well. With the amount of failed launches with past rocket ships and with the help of his friends, he finally had his first successful launch. He proved many people wrong including his family and were now starting to be amazed with his work. Homer Hickam now works with NASA in rocketry.

Through my experience, there were many things that I wanted to do but could not. So I began to overthink, stress out and even wonder if I am really going to have a successful career. I have always loved cars especially American Muscle. I always love to hear those big V8 engines roar to life. I found my passion for cars when I first saw a 1999 Nissan Skyline R34 GT-R from the movie Fast & Furious in Vancouver, British Columbia. I knew then and there that I wanted to be a mechanic and work with cars. When I bought my first car, I immediately began to work on it as a project car. My first car was a 1997 Honda Civic Hatchback. I use it as a daily car because I know that Hondas are great on gas. The car has some neat modifications to it in my opinion. It has a body kit to it as well as aftermarket rims and stereo, it is very low from coil overs, and it used to be an automatic but

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now is converted into a manual transmission, aftermarket cold air intake and is straight piped dual exhausts.

The idea that an individual's life can be altered by a particular experience can give a sense of motivation to help achieve his or her goals in their life. Not only does it give motivation but it also can give a sense of ideas for what he or she would like to do for their career.

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EXAMPLE PAPER—Proficient (Pf)

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE	SCORE
Thought and Support (Pf) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A well-considered understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student’s ideas are thoughtfully explored. The literary example is related competently to the student’s ideas. Support is specific and relevant. 	<p>A well-considered understanding of the topic is demonstrated in the student’s exploration of the idea that “a particular experience can lead an individual to achieve his or her goals in life. It can give a sense of motivation to those who are not sure of what they want to do in their lives.”</p> <p>The student’s ideas are thoughtfully explored in the discussion of how “Homer Hickam was not sure what he wanted to do in his life but when he saw the launch of Sputnik flying through the air, he began to find his passion in Rocketry,” how “the narrator finally discovered his passion and decided to dedicate his life to a career in music,” and how “I knew then and there that I wanted to be a mechanic and work with cars.”</p> <p>The literary examples from <i>October Sky</i> are related competently to the student’s ideas, as in “When Homer saw the first launch of a satellite called Sputnik, he finally found his passion with Rocketry” and “He proved many people wrong including his family and were now starting to be amazed with his work.”</p> <p>Support is specific and relevant in the discussion of the excerpt (“‘I wanted to play music for the rest of my life. I had found my passion and now I wanted to connect with it, share it, and changed the world with it’”), <i>October Sky</i> (“His grades for math were very poor, and the people in his community even doubted him, but that never stopped Homer”), and the student’s experience (“I found my passion for cars when I first saw a 1999 Nissan Skyline R34 GT-R from the movie <i>Fast & Furious</i> in Vancouver, British Colombia”).</p>	<p>Pf</p>

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE	SCORE
<p>Form and Structure (Pf)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A controlling idea or unifying effect is sustained throughout the response. Development of ideas and explanations is coherent. 	<p>A controlling idea is sustained throughout the response from the discussion of how “Salman Ahmad describes the experience of attending his first rock concert as a new immigrant to America in the 1970s,” how “With the amount of failed launches with past rocket ships and with the help of his friends, he finally had his first successful launch,” and how “When I bought my first car, I immediately began to work on it as a project car.”</p> <p>Development of ideas and explanations is coherent from the student’s discussion that “What people do in their future is not because they need to, it is because they love doing what they are doing” through to the conclusion that “The idea that an individual’s life can be altered by a particular experience can give a sense of motivation to help achieve his or her goals in their life.”</p>	Pf
<p>Matters of Choice (Pf)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diction is specific and generally effective. Many sentences appear to have been purposefully structured for effect. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a competent voice. 	<p>Diction is specific and generally effective, as in “passion in Rocketry,” “amazed,” “V8 engines roar to life,” and “aftermarket rims.”</p> <p>Many sentences appear to have been purposefully structured for effect, as in “She helped him by giving books for studies and gave him the courage he needed to do what he wanted for his career” and “So I began to overthink, stress out and even wonder if I am really going to have a successful career.”</p> <p>Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a competent voice, as in “My first car was a 1997 Honda Civic Hatchback. I use it as a daily car because I know that Hondas are great on gas.”</p>	Pf

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE	SCORE
<p>Matters of Correctness (Pf)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This writing demonstrates competent control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. • Minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and/or complex language structures are understandable considering the circumstances. 	<p>This writing demonstrates competent control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics: “Not only does it give motivation but it also can give a sense of ideas for what he or she would like to do for their career.”</p> <p>Minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and complex language structures are understandable considering the circumstances.</p>	<p>Pf</p>

For the Better

Experience is what makes up an individual. Their views on life and death and their fears. All can be traced back to an experience. However, sometimes there is a particular experience that changes individuals the most. When an individual experiences a feeling of helplessness during a horrible act, they tend to change for the better because they never want to feel or go through the same experience again. This can be seen in the movie *Schindler's List*, directed by Steven Spielberg, by the character Oskar Schindler.

Oskar Schindler was a business man who was very wealthy and a member of the Nazi party. He did not care for the war, just as long as he made money. His lust toward money soon came to an end in a certain scene. In this scene Schindler was horseback riding with his wife as they came to a stop on the top of the hill. Below him he watches as the ghettos are in the process of liquidation. He didn't do, or say anything as this happened. He saw men, women and children getting killed as they were forced to leave their homes. This is the first time Schindler felt helpless as this evil occurred. A little further into the movie Schindler noticed snow falling, but soon comes to realize that it wasn't snow but the ashes of the Jewish people. Again, feeling nothing but helplessness he begins to act, never wanting the same feeling again. These experiences changed him. They were the catalyst to the creation of Schindler's list.

He later bought nearly 1100 Jewish people in order to save them and put them in his factory. he made sure they were safe and allowed them to practice their religion. In the final scene as Schindler was leaving to go into hiding he is filled with regrets. Regretting that he didn't make enough money to buy one more person. Regretting he didn't sell his car to buy at least one more person. Regretting he didn't trade his golden pin for one more person. As he falls weeping and realizing the value of life, the audience may truly see his wish to never feel helplessness again. His experiences set his life on a very different course than what could have been, not only for himself, but for others.

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My Dad has also experienced a particular event that changed his life long ago. He was once at a concert when he was in high school. He was with a group of friends as they passed the train station as they saw a drunk man going about with his own friends. This drunk man's friends took his coat and threw it onto the Train tracks and wobbled as he went to pick it up. As he picked it up the train came and struck him. My dad rushed over to check his pulse as it faded. He stood there helplessly and didn't know what to do. When my dad recalls the story, Every time he tells me "that was the day I lost my innocence". It changed how he views life and death and gave him more insight it as well as the loss of innocence.

As people go through life there is bound to be life changing experiences and they can be a very important tool in growth. The feeling that an individual would never like to have again changes them for the better. As shown in *Schindler's list* and as well as through personal experience from my dad, helplessness and horrible acts changes people for the better.

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EXAMPLE PAPER—Excellent (E)

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE	SCORE
<p>Thought and Support (E)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well-considered understanding of the topic is demonstrated. • The student’s ideas are thoughtfully explored. • The literary example is related competently to the student’s ideas. • Support is specific and relevant. 	<p>An insightful understanding of the topic is demonstrated in the student’s exploration of the idea that “When an individual experiences a feeling of helplessness during a horrible act, they tend to change for the better because they never want to feel or go through the same experience again.”</p> <p>The student’s ideas are perceptively explored in the discussion of <i>Schindler’s List</i> (“As he falls weeping and realizing the value of life, the audience may truly see his wish to never feel helplessness again”) and in the student’s reflection on the father’s personal experience (“It changed how he views life and death and gave him more insight”).</p> <p>The literary example is related effectively to the student’s ideas in the discussion of how “feeling nothing but helplessness [Schindler] begins to act, never wanting the same feeling again” and how “In the final scene as Schindler was leaving to go into hiding he is filled with regrets.”</p> <p>Support is precise and effective in “He saw men, women and children getting killed as they were forced to leave their homes. This is the first time Schindler felt helpless as this evil occurred,” “Regretting that he didn’t make enough money to buy one more person,” and “As he picked it up the train came and struck him. My dad rushed over to check his pulse as it faded. He stood there helplessly and didn’t know what to do.”</p>	<p>E</p>

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE	SCORE
<p>Form and Structure (E)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A controlling idea or unifying effect is sustained throughout the response. • Development of ideas and explanations is coherent. 	<p>A focused controlling idea is skillfully sustained through the discussion of how “there is bound to be life changing experiences and they can be a very important tool in growth. The feeling that an individual would never like to have again changes them” and “helplessness and horrible acts changes people for the better.”</p> <p>Development of ideas and explanations is smooth and coherent in the student’s exploration of the ideas that “Oskar Schindler was a business man who was very wealthy and a member of the Nazi party. He did not care for the war, just as long as he made money. His lust toward money soon came to an end,” “These experiences changed him. They were the catalyst to the creation of Schindler’s list,” “He later bought nearly 1100 Jewish people in order to save them and put them in his factory. he made sure they were safe,” and “My Dad has also experienced a particular event that changed his life long ago.”</p>	<p>E</p>

SCORING CRITERIA	RATIONALE	SCORE
<p>Matters of Choice (E)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diction is specific and generally effective. • Many sentences appear to have been purposefully structured for effect. • Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a competent voice. 	<p>Diction, such as “process of liquidation,” “catalyst,” “weeping,” and “wobbled” is precise and effective.</p> <p>Many sentences have been successfully structured for effect, as in “When an individual experiences a feeling of helplessness during a horrible act, they tend to change for the better because they never want to feel or go through the same experience again” and “A little further into the movie Schindler noticed snow falling, but soon comes to realize that is wasn’t snow but the ashes of the Jewish people.”</p> <p>Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a convincing voice, as in “he is filled with regrets. Regretting that he didn’t make enough money to buy one more person. Regretting he didn’t sell his car to buy at least one more person. Regretting he didn’t trade his golden pin for one more person.”</p>	E
<p>Matters of Correctness (E)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This writing demonstrates competent control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. • Minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and/or complex language structures are understandable considering the circumstances. 	<p>This writing demonstrates confident control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics, as in “However, sometimes there is a particular experience that changes individuals the most” and “His experiences set his life on a very different course than what could have been, not only for himself, but for others.”</p> <p>The relative insignificance of errors present is impressive considering the complexity of the response and the circumstances.</p>	E