

## Literary Exploration Exemplar

### Essential Question: To what extent do choices affect our lives?

Literary Text: *Touching Spirit Bear*      Author: Ben Mikaelson      Character: Cole

I don't know about you, but I sure have had a few times in my life where I really wondered about the quality of some of my choices! Cole, in the novel *Touching Spirit Bear*, made some really bad choices to begin with. These choices had a huge impact on his life. Choices have consequences, so the choices we make are very important, and can affect the rest of our lives. Cole and others around him were very impacted by Cole's choices.

In the novel, Cole's first really bad choice is when he almost kills Peter by smashing his head in. He caused a lot of physical harm to Peter. This resulted in Cole being sent to an island where he was supposed to live alone and fend for himself, rather than stay in a juvenile delinquent center. Cole chose to ignore people who tried to be friendly and he acted like he was big and tough and didn't care what anyone said. He burned down his own cabin on purpose, and this caused a lot of troubles for him. He learned that he was only hurting himself because his survival became more difficult. Cole did not really care about his mistakes and he kept on acting like nothing mattered. Garvey kept trying to help Cole to understand things better, but Cole would not even try. Then one day, Cole met up with the Spirit Bear, and the Spirit Bear hurt Cole. As Cole laid there, he realized that the Spirit Bear could kill him if he wanted to, but the Bear didn't bother with him. That is when Cole started to change. He realized that he was not the most powerful thing on earth and that maybe he better get busy trying to get along with others and make a life for himself. Peter ended up coming to the island, and Cole tried to get Peter to respect him some. In the end, Cole learned that his earlier choices had not been good choices, and he wanted to become a better person.

There have been times in my own life when I have not always made good choices, and this has caused problems for me. When I was in junior high, I started hanging around with a group of kids who I thought were very "cool" at the time. They could do whatever they wanted and their moms let them stay out late on weekend nights. Once my mom figured out that I was hanging with this group, she told me I couldn't anymore. I didn't listen at first because I thought she was being biased. When I came home to late one Friday night, she grounded me for three weekends. At first I was really mad at her, but my dad supported her, and I wasn't even allowed to go fishing with him when he went. As it turns out, that group of friends were causing trouble in the neighborhood by throwing eggs into everyone's car windows, and some of the windows even broke. They got caught and have to do 100 hours of community service on Saturdays and their names are being kept on the police records. If they get into trouble again, they will have more severe consequences. I am glad I wasn't with them, because I had done this with them before, and I would be in super amounts of trouble with my parents if I did that and got caught. I don't hang out with them now, and while I don't have as many friends, I do have one friend who I'm getting to know. My mom is happy about that. Choices do make a difference.

Cole's choices did affect his life. He started out being a mean person who no one wanted to be around, but by the end of the novel, he realized that he wanted to be loved too. Him and his mom started to get along better and Peter started to forgive him for all of his pain he had caused. Garvey was proud of Cole for changing into a better person. Cole started to make good choices, and when he did this, good things started to happen for him. Making good choices is really important in life!

## 6.3 Literary Exploration Rubric

Value	Thought and Support	Form and Structure	Matters of Choice	Matters of Correctness
<b>Focus</b>	<p>When marking <b>Thought and Support</b>, the marker should consider how effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the <b>student's ideas</b> reflect an understanding of the task</li> <li>ideas are related to the theme/message</li> <li>the <b>support</b> explains and/or clarifies the response</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider ideas presented in the personal connection.</b></p>	<p>When marking <b>Form and Structure</b>, the marker should consider how effectively the <b>student's</b> organizational choices result in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the development and maintenance of a <b>controlling idea</b> or <b>unifying effect</b></li> <li>the creation of a <b>coherent, shaped</b>, and <b>concluded</b> discussion in response to the assignment</li> </ul>	<p>When marking <b>Matters of Choice</b>, the marker should consider how effectively the <b>student's</b> choices enhance communication. The marker should consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>diction</b>, including connotative language, imagery, idiomatic expressions, and dialect</li> <li><b>syntax</b>, including such choices as parallelism, balance, inversion, sentence length, and variety</li> <li>the contribution of stylistic choices to the creation of <b>voice</b></li> </ul>	<p>When marking <b>Matters of Correctness</b>, the marker should consider the correctness of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>sentence construction</b> (completeness, consistency, subordination, coordination, predication)</li> <li><b>usage</b> (accurate use of words according to convention and meaning)</li> <li><b>grammar</b> (subject–verb/pronoun–antecedent agreement, pronoun reference, consistency of tense)</li> <li><b>mechanics</b> (punctuation, spelling, capitalization)</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider the proportion of error in terms of the complexity and length of the response.</b></p>
<b>E Excellent</b>	An insightful understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are perceptively explored. The theme/message is related effectively to the student's ideas. Support is precise and effective.	A focused controlling idea or unifying effect is skillfully sustained throughout the response. Development of ideas and explanations is smooth and coherent.	Diction is precise and effective. Many sentences have been successfully structured for effect and are sometimes polished. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a convincing voice.	This writing demonstrates confident control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The relative insignificance of errors present is impressive considering the complexity of the response and the circumstances.
<b>P Proficient</b>	A well-considered understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are thoughtfully explored. The theme/message is related competently to the student's ideas. Support is specific and relevant.	A controlling idea or unifying effect is sustained throughout the response. Development of ideas and explanations is coherent.	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.	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.
<b>S Satisfactory</b>	A defensible understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are appropriately and straightforwardly explored. The theme/message is related adequately to the student's ideas. Support is relevant but tends to be general.	A controlling idea or unifying effect is evident, but unity may falter on occasion. Development of ideas and explanations is generally clear and coherent.	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.	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.

### 6.3 Literary Exploration Rubric Continued

Value	Thought and Support	Form and Structure	Matters of Choice	Matters of Correctness
<b>L</b> <b>Limited</b>	An understanding of the topic is evident but is only partially demonstrated or is not always sustained. The student's ideas are incompletely or unclearly explored. The theme/message is lacking. Support is overgeneralized, inconsistent, and/or marginally relevant.	A controlling idea or unifying effect is evident, but unity falters frequently. Development of ideas and explanations is uncertain and/or unclear.	Diction is imprecise and/or inappropriate. Sentence structures are frequently ineffective and/or awkward. Inadequate stylistic choices contribute to the creation of an uncertain or unclear voice.	This writing demonstrates faltering control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The range of sentence construction problems and errors in usage, grammar, and/or mechanics blur the clarity of communication.
<b>P</b> <b>Poor</b>	A minimal understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are underdeveloped, unexplored, and/or incomprehensible. The theme/message is absent or unrelated to the student's ideas and/or to the topic. Support is deficient and/or irrelevant.	A controlling idea or unifying effect is absent or is not sustained. Development of ideas and explanations is deficient, ineffective, and/or incoherent.	Diction is inaccurate and/or overgeneralized. Sentence structures are misused to such an extent that clarity suffers. A lack of stylistic choices contributes to the creation of an ineffective voice.	This writing demonstrates lack of control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The unclear and incorrect sentence constructions and jarring errors in usage, grammar, and mechanics impede communication.
<b>R</b> <b>Redo</b>	Please contact your teacher to discuss how you can make improvements to your Literary Exploration essay. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment <b>OR</b></li> <li>• The writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess Ideas and Impressions</li> </ul>			
<b>TOTAL: 18/25</b> <b>= 72%</b>	<b>7/10</b>	<b>4/5</b>	<b>3/5</b>	<b>4/5</b>
<b>Assesement</b>	<b>Teacher Comments:</b> You have done quite a good job with this! You have stayed on your topic throughout and that creates a good sense of unity. You could have provided more specific details of how Cole underwent his transformation. For example, you do not discuss Edwin and Garvey enough, as they both played huge roles in changing Cole. You also did not mention the rock rolling and cold baths that gave Cole time to reflect on his past choices. Overall, this is a good effort for your first literary exploration!			