



ROBERT L. MERRITT MIDDLE SCHOOL

9TH Grade Learn-At-Home Packet

Reading

Week 3

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

from “Chekhov Letter to His Brother Nikolai”

by Anton Chekhov

In the following excerpt, Anton Chekhov writes a letter to his brother to plead with him to change his life.

MOSCOW, 1886.

. . . You have often complained to me that people “don’t understand you”! Goethe and Newton did not complain of that. . . . Only Christ complained of it, but He was speaking of His doctrine and not of Himself. . . . People understand you perfectly well. And if you do not understand yourself, it is not their fault.

I assure you as a brother and as a friend I understand you and feel for you with all my heart. I know your good qualities as I know my five fingers; I value and deeply respect them. If you like, to prove that I understand you, I can enumerate those qualities. I think you are kind to the point of softness, magnanimous, unselfish, ready to share your last farthing; you have no envy nor hatred; you are simple-hearted, you pity men and beasts; you are trustful, without spite or guile, and do not remember evil. . . . You have a gift from above such as other people have not: you have talent. This talent places you above millions of men, for on earth only one out of two millions is an artist. Your talent sets you apart: if you were a toad or a tarantula, even then, people would respect you, for to talent all things are forgiven.

You have only one failing, and the falseness of your position, and your unhappiness and your catarrh of the bowels are all due to it. That is your utter lack of culture. Forgive me, please, but *veritas magis amicitiae*. . . . You see, life has its conditions. In order to feel comfortable among educated people, to be at home and happy with them, one must be cultured to a certain extent. Talent has brought you into such a circle, you belong to it, but . . . you are drawn away from it, and you vacillate between cultured people and the lodgers vis-a-vis.

Cultured people must, in my opinion, satisfy the following conditions:

1. They respect human personality, and therefore they are always kind, gentle, polite, and ready to give in to others. They do not make a row because of a hammer or a lost piece of india-rubber; if they live with anyone they do not regard it as a favour and, going away, they do not say "nobody can live with you." They forgive noise and cold and dried-up meat and witticisms and the presence of strangers in their homes.
2. They have sympathy not for beggars and cats alone. Their heart aches for what the eye does not see. . . . They sit up at night in order to help P. . . ., to pay for brothers at the University, and to buy clothes for their mother.
3. They respect the property of others, and therefor[e] pay their debts.
4. They are sincere, and dread lying like fire. They don't lie even in small things. A lie is insulting to the listener and puts him in a lower position in the eyes of the speaker. They do not pose, they behave in the street as they do at home, they do not show off before their humbler comrades. They are not given to babbling and forcing their uninvited confidences on others. Out of respect for other people's ears they more often keep silent than talk.
5. They do not disparage themselves to rouse compassion. They do not play on the strings of other people's hearts so that they may sigh and make much of them. They do not say "I am misunderstood," or "I have become second-rate," because all this is striving after cheap effect, is vulgar, stale, false. . . .
6. They have no shallow vanity. They do not care for such false diamonds as knowing celebrities, shaking hands with the drunken P., [Translator's Note: Probably Palmin, a minor poet.] listening to the raptures of a stray spectator in a picture show, being renowned in the taverns. . . . If they do a pennyworth they do not strut about as though they had done a hundred roubles' worth, and do not brag of having the entry where others are not admitted. . . . The truly talented always keep in obscurity among the crowd, as far as possible from advertisement. . . . Even Krylov has said that an empty barrel echoes more loudly than a full one.
7. If they have a talent they respect it. They sacrifice to it rest, women, wine, vanity. . . . They are proud of their talent. . . . Besides, they are fastidious.

8. They develop the aesthetic feeling in themselves. They cannot go to sleep in their clothes, see cracks full of bugs on the walls, breathe bad air, walk on a floor that has been spat upon, cook their meals over an oil stove. They seek as far as possible to restrain and ennoble the sexual instinct. . . . What they want in a woman is not a bed-fellow . . . They do not ask for the cleverness which shows itself in continual lying. They want especially, if they are artists, freshness, elegance, humanity, the capacity for motherhood. . . . They do not swill vodka at all hours of the day and night, do not sniff at cupboards, for they are not pigs and know they are not. They drink only when they are free, on occasion. . . . For they want *mens sana in corpore sano*. And so on. This is what cultured people are like. In order to be cultured and not to stand below the level of your surroundings it is not enough to have read "The Pickwick Papers" and learnt a monologue from "Faust." . . .

What is needed is constant work, day and night, constant reading, study, will. . . . Every hour is precious for it. . . . Come to us, smash the vodka bottle, lie down and read. . . . Turgenev, if you like, whom you have not read.

You must drop your vanity, you are not a child . . . you will soon be thirty.
It is time!

I expect you. . . . We all expect you.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 1 Read the paragraph from the text.

You have only one failing, and the falseness of your position, and your unhappiness and your catarrh of the bowels are all due to it. That is your utter lack of culture. Forgive me, please, but *veritas magis amicitiae*. . . . You see, life has its conditions. In order to feel comfortable among educated people, to be at home and happy with them, one must be cultured to a certain extent. Talent has brought you into such a circle, you belong to it, but . . . you are drawn away from it, and you vacillate between cultured people and the lodgers *vis-a-vis*.

Which reasoning **best** supports the author's claim that his brother is unhappy?

- (A) His brother is unhappy because he is not popular.
- (B) His brother is unhappy because he has too much debt.
- (C) His brother is unhappy because he spends time with the wrong people.
- (D) His brother is unhappy because he does not have sympathy for other people.

- 2 Read the paragraph from the text.

They are sincere, and dread lying like fire. They don't lie even in small things. A lie is insulting to the listener and puts him in a lower position in the eyes of the speaker. They do not pose, they behave in the street as they do at home, they do not show off before their humbler comrades. They are not given to babbling and forcing their uninvited confidences on others. Out of respect for other people's ears they more often keep silent than talk.

According to the author, what is **one** reason that cultured people do not lie?

- (A) It causes rifts in friendships.
- (B) It causes distrust among peers.
- (C) It shows that the person is not very interesting.
- (D) It shows disrespect for the person being lied to.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 3 How does the author use specific language and style to advance his purpose? Select **two** options.

- (A) He uses fear and threats to appeal to his brother.
- (B) He uses facts and statistics to appeal to his brother.
- (C) He uses similes and metaphors to appeal to his brother.
- (D) He uses their emotional connection to appeal to his brother.
- (E) He uses the fundamental values of society to appeal to his brother.

- 4 Read the paragraph from the text.

They develop the aesthetic feeling in themselves. They cannot go to sleep in their clothes, see cracks full of bugs on the walls, breathe bad air, walk on a floor that has been spat upon, cook their meals over an oil stove. They seek as far as possible to restrain and ennoble the sexual instinct. . . . What they want in a woman is not a bed-fellow . . . They do not ask for the cleverness which shows itself in continual lying. They want especially, if they are artists, freshness, elegance, humanity, the capacity for motherhood. . . . They do not swill vodka at all hours of the day and night, do not sniff at cupboards, for they are not pigs and know they are not. They drink only when they are free, on occasion. . . . For they want *mens sana in corpore sano*.

Which statement **best** expresses the author's central idea about cultured people?

- (A) Cultured people respect themselves.
- (B) Cultured people do not drink alcohol.
- (C) Cultured people are involved with charitable groups.
- (D) Cultured people are not concerned with appearances.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 5** In the text, the author makes a statement of fact regarding his brother and proceeds to support that statement. Underline **two** sentences that most directly support this text structure.

1. They respect human personality, and therefore they are always kind, gentle, polite, and ready to give in to others. They do not make a row because of a hammer or a lost piece of india-rubber; if they live with anyone they do not regard it as a favour and, going away, they do not say "nobody can live with you." They forgive noise and cold and dried-up meat and witticisms and the presence of strangers in their homes.
2. They have sympathy not for beggars and cats alone. Their heart aches for what the eye does not see. . . .

They sit up at night in order to help P. . . ., to pay for brothers at the University, and to buy clothes for their mother.

- 6** Which statement **best** supports the idea that the author likes his brother?

- (A) He lists his brother's good qualities.
- (B) He is interested in his brother's excuses.
- (C) He asks his brother to enter his social circle.
- (D) He asks his brother to further explore his talent.

- 7** Which sentences from the text **best** support the idea that the author thinks cultured people are charitable? Select **two** options.

- (A) "They respect human personality, and therefore they are always kind, gentle, polite, and ready to give in to others."
- (B) "They have sympathy not for beggars and cats alone."
- (C) "They sit up at night in order to help P . . . , to pay for brothers at the University, and to buy clothes for their mother."
- (D) "They respect the property of others, and therefor[e] pay their debts."
- (E) "They are sincere, and dread lying like fire."

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 8** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A Read the paragraph from the text.

I assure you as a brother and as a friend I understand you and feel for you with all my heart. I know your good qualities as I know my five fingers; I value and deeply respect them. If you like, to prove that I understand you, I can enumerate those qualities. I think you are kind to the point of softness, magnanimous, unselfish, ready to share your last farthing; you have no envy nor hatred; you are simple-hearted, you pity men and beasts; you are trustful, without spite or guile, and do not remember evil. . . . You have a gift from above such as other people have not: you have talent. This talent places you above millions of men, for on earth only one out of two millions is an artist. Your talent sets you apart: if you were a toad or a tarantula, even then, people would respect you, for to talent all things are forgiven.

Which is the **best** synonym for the word enumerate?

- ☐ (A) approve
- ☐ (B) list
- ☐ (C) subtract
- ☐ (D) think

Part B Which detail from the paragraph **best** supports your answer in part A?

- ☐ (A) "I assure you as a brother . . ."
- ☐ (B) "... I know my five fingers . . ."
- ☐ (C) "I think you are kind . . ."
- ☐ (D) "... a toad or a tarantula . . ."

Name: _____ Date: _____

9 Read the paragraph.

6. They have no shallow vanity. They do not care for such false diamonds as knowing celebrities, shaking hands with the drunken P., [Translator's Note: Probably Palmin, a minor poet.] listening to the raptures of a stray spectator in a picture show, being renowned in the taverns. . . . If they do a pennyworth they do not strut about as though they had done a hundred roubles' worth, and do not brag of having the entry where others are not admitted. . . . The truly talented always keep in obscurity among the crowd, as far as possible from advertisement. . . . Even Krylov has said that an empty barrel echoes more loudly than a full one.

Which **three** words help indicate that the word renowned means *famous*?

- (A)** vanity
- (B)** celebrities
- (C)** raptures
- (D)** obscurity
- (E)** advertisement
- (F)** barrel

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

from *The Pickwick Papers* by Charles Dickens

The Pickwick Papers is Charles Dickens's first novel, in which Samuel Pickwick establishes a traveling society comprised of four members who travel through England. On their travels, they meet Mr. Wardle and are invited to stay at his estate. In the following excerpt, Wardle and Mr. Pickwick are trying to catch a villain, Mr. Jingle, who has eloped with Mr. Wardle's sister.

. . . The boys were sleeping with such mysterious soundness, that it took five minutes a-piece to wake them. The hostler had somehow or other mislaid the key of the stable, and even when that was found, two sleepy helpers put the wrong harness on the wrong horses, and the whole process of harnessing had to be gone through afresh. Had Mr. Pickwick been alone, these multiplied obstacles would have completely put an end to the pursuit at once, but old Wardle was not to be so easily daunted; and he laid about him with such hearty good-will, cuffing this man, and pushing that; strapping a buckle here, and taking in a link there, that the chaise was ready in a much shorter time than could reasonably have been expected, under so many difficulties.

They resumed their journey; and certainly the prospect before them was by no means encouraging. The stage was fifteen miles long, the night was dark, the wind high, and the rain pouring in torrents. It was impossible to make any great way against such obstacles united; it was hard upon one o'clock already; and nearly two hours were consumed in getting to the end of the stage. Here, however, an object presented itself, which rekindled their hopes, and reanimated their drooping spirits.

'When did this chaise come in?' cried old Wardle, leaping out of his own vehicle, and pointing to one covered with wet mud, which was standing in the yard.

'Not a quarter of an hour ago, sir,' replied the hostler, to whom the question was addressed. 'Lady and gentleman?' inquired Wardle, almost breathless with impatience.

'Yes, sir.'

'Tall gentleman—dresscoat—long legs—thin body?'

'Yes, sir.'

‘Elderly lady—thin face—rather skinny—eh?’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘By heavens, it’s the couple, Pickwick,’ exclaimed the old gentleman.

‘Would have been here before,’ said the hostler, ‘but they broke a trace.’

‘Tis them!’ said Wardle, ‘it is, by Jove! Chaise-and-four instantly! We shall catch them yet before they reach the next stage. A guinea apiece, boys be alive there—bustle about—there’s good fellows.’

...

‘Jump in—jump in!’ cried old Wardle, climbing into the chaise, pulling up the steps, and slamming the door after him. ‘Come along! Make haste!’ And before Mr. Pickwick knew precisely what he was about, he felt himself forced in at the other door, by one pull from the old gentleman and one push from the hostler; and off they were again.

‘Ah! we are moving now,’ said the old gentleman exultingly. They were indeed, as was sufficiently testified to Mr. Pickwick, by his constant collision either with the hard wood-work of the chaise, or the body of his companion.

‘Hold up!’ said the stout old Mr. Wardle, as Mr. Pickwick dived head foremost into his capacious waistcoat.

‘I never did feel such a jolting in my life,’ said Mr. Pickwick.

‘Never mind,’ replied his companion, ‘it will soon be over. Steady, steady.’

Mr. Pickwick planted himself into his own corner, as firmly as he could; and on whirled the chaise faster than ever.

They had travelled in this way about three miles, when Mr. Wardle, who had been looking out of the Window for two or three minutes, suddenly drew in his face, covered with splashes, and exclaimed in breathless eagerness—

‘Here they are!’

Mr. Pickwick thrust his head out of his window. Yes: there was a chaise-and-four, a short distance before them, dashing along at full gallop.

‘Go on, go on,’ almost shrieked the old gentleman. ‘Two guineas apiece, boys—don’t let ’em gain on us—keep it up—keep it up.’

The horses in the first chaise started on at their utmost speed; and those in Mr. Wardle’s galloped furiously behind them.

'I see his head,' exclaimed the choleric old man; 'damme, I see his head.'

'So do I' said Mr. Pickwick; 'that's he.' Mr. Pickwick was not mistaken. The countenance of Mr. Jingle, completely coated with mud thrown up by the wheels, was plainly discernible at the window of his chaise; and the motion of his arm, which was waving violently towards the postillions, denoted that he was encouraging them to increased exertion.

The interest was intense. Fields, trees, and hedges, seemed to rush past them with the velocity of a whirlwind, so rapid was the pace at which they tore along. They were close by the side of the first chaise. Jingle's voice could be plainly heard, even above the din of the wheels, urging on the boys. Old Mr. Wardle foamed with rage and excitement. He roared out scoundrels and villains by the dozen, clenched his fist and shook it expressively at the object of his indignation; but Mr. Jingle only answered with a contemptuous smile, and replied to his menaces by a shout of triumph, as his horses, answering the increased application of whip and spur, broke into a faster gallop, and left the pursuers behind.

Mr. Pickwick had just drawn in his head, and Mr. Wardle, exhausted with shouting, had done the same, when a tremendous jolt threw them forward against the front of the vehicle. There was a sudden bump—a loud crash—away rolled a wheel, and over went the chaise.

After a very few seconds of bewilderment and confusion, in which nothing but the plunging of horses, and breaking of glass could be made out, Mr. Pickwick felt himself violently pulled out from among the ruins of the chaise; and as soon as he had gained his feet, extricated his head from the skirts of his greatcoat, which materially impeded the usefulness of his spectacles, the full disaster of the case met his view.

Old Mr. Wardle without a hat, and his clothes torn in several places, stood by his side, and the fragments of the chaise lay scattered at their feet. The post-boys, who had succeeded in cutting the traces, were standing, disfigured with mud and disordered by hard riding, by the horses' heads. About a hundred yards in advance was the other chaise, which had pulled up on hearing the crash. The postillions, each with a broad grin convulsing his countenance, were viewing the adverse party from their saddles, and Mr. Jingle was contemplating the wreck from the coach window, with evident satisfaction. The day was just breaking, and the whole scene was rendered perfectly visible by the grey light of the morning.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 10** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A Which sentence **best** states the theme of the text?

- (A)** All wicked villains must be punished.
- (B)** Foolish haste may quickly lead to disaster.
- (C)** The thrill of the chase is better than the reward.
- (D)** One must show sympathy for enemies in defeat.

Part B Which details **best** support the theme of the text? Select **all** that apply.

- (A)** "The countenance of Mr. Jingle, completely coated with mud thrown up by the wheels, was plainly discernible at the window of his chaise . . ."
- (B)** ". . . the motion of his arm, which was waving violently towards the postillions, denoted that he was encouraging them to increased exertion."
- (C)** "Fields, trees, and hedges, seemed to rush past them with the velocity of a whirlwind, so rapid was the pace at which they tore along."
- (D)** "Old Mr. Wardle without a hat, and his clothes torn in several places, stood by his side, and the fragments of the chaise lay scattered at their feet."
- (E)** ". . . Mr. Jingle was contemplating the wreck from the coach window, with evident satisfaction."

- 11** Which detail **best** supports the development of the theme?

- (A)** "Had Mr. Pickwick been alone, these multiplied obstacles would have completely put an end to the pursuit at once..."
- (B)** "... it was hard upon one o'clock already; and nearly two hours were consumed in getting to the end of the stage."
- (C)** "Old Mr. Wardle foamed with rage and excitement."
- (D)** "... Mr. Jingle only answered with a contemptuous smile . . ."

- 12 Read the paragraph from the text.

. . . The boys were sleeping with such mysterious soundness, that it took five minutes a-piece to wake them. The hostler had somehow or other mislaid the key of the stable, and even when that was found, two sleepy helpers put the wrong harness on the wrong horses, and the whole process of harnessing had to be gone through afresh. Had Mr. Pickwick been alone, these multiplied obstacles would have completely put an end to the pursuit at once, but old Wardle was not to be so easily daunted; and he laid about him with such hearty good-will, cuffing this man, and pushing that; strapping a buckle here, and taking in a link there, that the chaise was ready in a much shorter time than could reasonably have been expected, under so many difficulties.

What effect does the word mysterious have on the first paragraph?

- (A) It sets a formal tone.
- (B) It sets a spirited tone.
- (C) It sets a foreboding tone.
- (D) It sets a depressing tone.

- 13 Read the paragraph from the text.

The interest was intense. Fields, trees, and hedges, seemed to rush past them with the velocity of a whirlwind, so rapid was the pace at which they tore along. They were close by the side of the first chaise. Jingle's voice could be plainly heard, even above the din of the wheels, urging on the boys. Old Mr. Wardle foamed with rage and excitement. He roared out scoundrels and villains by the dozen, clenched his fist and shook it expressively at the object of his indignation; but Mr. Jingle only answered with a contemptuous smile, and replied to his menaces by a shout of triumph, as his horses, answering the increased application of whip and spur, broke into a faster gallop, and left the pursuers behind.

What effect do the words rush, velocity, rapid, and tore have on the text?

- (A) They give the reader a sense of mystery.
- (B) They give the reader a sense of the chase.
- (C) They tell the reader why Mr. Jingle is a villain.
- (D) They tell the reader why Mr. Pickwick is in a hurry.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 14** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A Read the sentence from the text.

Had Mr. Pickwick been alone, these multiplied obstacles would have completely put an end to the pursuit at once, but old Wardle was not to be so easily daunted; and he laid about him with such hearty good-will, cuffing this man, and pushing that; strapping a buckle here, and taking in a link there, that the chaise was ready in a much shorter time than could reasonably have been expected, under so many difficulties.

What is the meaning of the word daunted?

- ☐ (A) discouraged
- ☐ (B) disgusted
- ☐ (C) uneasy
- ☐ (D) unsettled

Part B Which word from the paragraph **best** supports your answer in part A?

- ☐ (A) obstacles
- ☐ (B) pursuit
- ☐ (C) good-will
- ☐ (D) buckle

Read the texts. Then answer the questions.

A Flawless Performance

When the school posted the cast list for the school play, *Romeo and Juliet*, Rita waited calmly in line with her friends to see which parts everyone would play. She observed the students as they walked away, some high-fiving friends, wide grins on their faces, some with heads down in disappointment. As she approached the list, she scanned through to see that Robert had gotten the part of Tybalt, Anna had earned the part of Lady Montague, and Sarah would play Juliet. Then, toward the bottom of the list, she saw her own name next to the part of Lady Capulet. This has to be a mistake, she thought, panicking; she only wanted a minor part with no lines, or better yet, to be part of the stage crew.

Although Rita was terrified of acting in front of an audience, she had joined drama club because her best friend, Julie, persuaded her to do so. Over time, she grew to love how acting made her feel, enjoying the exercises they would do after school, but the thought of being in an actual play still frightened her.

Once the students dispersed, she approached the drama teacher, Mrs. Nelson. "I think there has been some mistake," Rita said somberly. "I can't be in *Romeo and Juliet*."

But Mrs. Nelson shook her head. "There has been no mistake, Rita. Your acting skills are impressive, and you earned the part."

Rita protested, but Mrs. Nelson was unrelenting. "Come to rehearsal and practice the part. We must conquer our fears, or they will conquer us."

The next day, all Rita could think about was how it would feel to embarrass herself in front of her parents, her teachers, and all her peers. When the final bell rang, she reluctantly went to the theater for rehearsal.

"What's wrong?" asked Julie when she saw Rita's dour look. "You're not your usual smiling self today—did you not do well on the math test?"

"The math test was fine," Rita assured her. "It's the play I'm worried about."

"I saw you got a part in your first big play, congratulations! But why aren't you excited?"

"You know how I feel about crowds—I'll forget my lines and everyone will laugh."

"Just picture everyone in the audience in silly costumes and then you will be the one laughing at them," Julie reassured her. "Seriously though, everything will be fine."

Rita attended rehearsal over the next few weeks and practiced her lines at home in front of her cat, who sometimes watched attentively but more often napped on the bed.

Mrs. Nelson praised Rita for her quick memorization of lines and the increasing confidence she projected in her delivery during each rehearsal. However, as the opening night of the play approached, Rita's fears and insecurities crept up on her once again. The night before the play, she tossed and turned in her bed, imagining the whole school laughing as she stumbled over her lines and turned bright red; her face felt flush just thinking about it.

The next day, her parents drove her to the school and wished her luck before she went backstage to join the rest of the cast. As the curtains drew open, Rita watched the members of the Capulet household deliver their lines to the audience, a soft applause following the first act.

When the scene changed, Mrs. Nelson nudged Rita onto the stage. Bright lights shone in her face, and in the blackness, she saw a full theater. Rita panicked trying to recall her lines in what seemed like an eternity. Then she imagined all the faces melting away and pictured her bedroom with her cat sitting on the bed, curled up on a blanket and staring attentively.

"Nurse, where's my daughter? Call her forth to me." announced Rita clearly and flawlessly.

The nurse responded and Rita confidently continued with her lines, not stumbling once.

When the play was over, Rita's parents and Julie were waiting for her backstage with flowers.

"We are all so proud of you!" her dad said. "You were perfect, a natural!"

Rita smiled, her teary eyes sparkling, delighted to have conquered her fear in pursuit of something she loved. She couldn't wait until they announced the next school play.

Follow Your Dreams

Passion is the driving force behind all successful endeavors. When a person is passionate about something, they dedicate themselves fully and pursue their goals despite whatever obstacles may be in the way. Without passion, and without dreams, we would simply be going through the motions. Imagine the boredom of waking up every day and doing something you are not passionate about. While we may still be able to accomplish goals this way, our successes will not be as great or as fulfilling. Only when we pursue our true passions can we achieve excellence.

Historically, the people we look back at who have achieved great things, have all done so because they pursued their passions. Martin Luther King Jr., Jesse Owens, and Margaret Thatcher all overcame obstacles in pursuit of a passion to achieve their dreams and create positive change in the world.

Martin Luther King Jr. was passionate about justice and equality. He put all of his efforts into seeking change through policy and grassroots movements. He helped organize the March on Washington in 1963, where he delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. He is known as one of the greatest orators in history, and he received a Nobel Peace Prize for his lifelong pursuit of racial equality through nonviolence. Jesse Owens was passionate about running and trained hard every day, eventually becoming the first American to win four Olympic track and field gold medals in one Olympics. Margaret Thatcher became the first female Prime Minister of Great Britain in 1979, setting a precedent for women in politics around the world. While in office, Thatcher sought to reverse the trend of unemployment and recession by introducing flexible labor markets and reducing the influence of trade unions. Originally a research chemist, Thatcher worked hard to pursue a political career so that she could influence the economy and society of Britain in a positive way. Each of these people was able to achieve what they did because they followed their dreams and pursued their passions.

When we are passionate about something, it is all we can think about. We have a strong desire to learn more, do more, and achieve our goals. If you have ever had a goal, whether it be to become a better soccer player, get straight As, or improve upon your musical skills, you know that getting there takes a lot of hard work. If your goal is to go to the Olympics for track and field like Jesse Owens did, it will take a lot of dedication to the sport of running, including hard training, proper nutrition, good coaching, and a healthy lifestyle. But on top of all these things, it

will also take the drive and passion to dedicate yourself to the sport despite losses, failures, and sacrifices. The end goal would be well worth all sacrifices made along the way to get there.

Reaching goals is not always easy. When we have a dream in mind, we may have a clear plan, but obstacles will inevitably get in the way. Margaret Thatcher faced many obstacles in her political path to becoming the first female Prime Minister. She herself thought she would never see a female Prime Minister in her lifetime, but she pursued her passion anyway. Therefore, she achieved great success.

Pursuing a passion and achieving it takes hard work and perseverance. But in the end, achieving one's dream is well worth all the hard efforts. Every great humanitarian leader to fight for social justice, each record breaking athlete, and each successful writer and artist in history was successful because they chased down their dreams without letting obstacles get in their way.

Answer these questions about "A Flawless Performance."

- 15 What theme is emphasized through the events of the text? Support your answer using details from the text.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 16** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A How does Rita's character develop over the course of the text?

- ☐ (A) Rita learns to ask for help from others.
- ☐ (B) Rita learns the importance of friendship.
- ☐ (C) Rita learns that hard work leads to success.
- ☐ (B) Rita learns how to make her anxiety go away forever.

Part B Which lines show how Rita's character development advances the theme? Select **two** options.

- ☐ (A) "Although Rita was terrified of acting in front of an audience, she had joined drama club because her best friend, Julie, persuaded her to do so."
- ☐ (B) "'There has been no mistake, Rita. Your acting skills are impressive, and you earned the part.'"
- ☐ (C) "Mrs. Nelson praised Rita for her quick memorization of lines and the increasing confidence she projected in her delivery during each rehearsal."
- ☐ (D) "Rita panicked trying to recall her lines in what seemed like an eternity."
- ☐ (E) "'We are all so proud of you!' her dad said. 'You were perfect, a natural!'"

- 17** Which statements **best** describe how the word conquer impacts meaning in the text? Select **all** that apply.

- ☐ (A) The word implies that acting is important.
- ☐ (B) The word implies that Rita is embarrassed.
- ☐ (C) The word implies that Mrs. Nelson is angry.
- ☐ (D) The word implies that there is hard work ahead.
- ☐ (E) The word implies that Rita has a lot to overcome.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer these questions about “Follow Your Dreams.”

- 18** What evidence does the author offer to support the overall point of view and purpose of the text? Support your answer using evidence from the text.

- 19 Read the paragraph from the text.

Passion is the driving force behind all successful endeavors. When a person is passionate about something, they dedicate themselves fully and pursue their goals despite whatever obstacles may be in the way. Without passion, and without dreams, we would simply be going through the motions. Imagine the boredom of waking up every day and doing something you are not passionate about. While we may still be able to accomplish goals this way, our successes will not be as great or as fulfilling. Only when we pursue our true passions can we achieve excellence.

To which idea does the central idea of the paragraph link the pursuit of passion?

- (A) happiness
- (B) intellect
- (C) success
- (D) weariness

- 20 Underline the sentence from the paragraph that **best** states the central idea of the text.

Martin Luther King Jr. was passionate about justice and equality. He put all of his efforts into seeking change through policy and grassroots movements. He helped organize the March on Washington in 1963, where he delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. He is known as one of the greatest orators in history, and he received a Nobel Peace Prize for his lifelong pursuit of racial equality through nonviolence. Jesse Owens was passionate about running and trained hard every day, eventually becoming the first American to win four Olympic track and field gold medals in one Olympics. Margaret Thatcher became the first female Prime Minister of Great Britain in 1979, setting a precedent for women in politics around the world. While in office, Thatcher sought to reverse the trend of unemployment and recession by introducing flexible labor markets and reducing the influence of trade unions. Originally a research chemist, Thatcher worked hard to pursue a political career so that she could influence the economy and society of Britain in a positive way. Each of these people was able to achieve what they did because they followed their dreams and pursued their passions.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 21** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A Read the sentences from the text.

Martin Luther King Jr. was passionate about justice and equality. He put all of his efforts into seeking change through policy and grassroots movements. He helped organize the March on Washington in 1963, where he delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. He is known as one of the greatest orators in history, and he received a Nobel Peace Prize for his lifelong pursuit of racial equality through nonviolence.

What does the word orators mean?

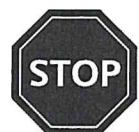
- ☐ (A) clever teachers
- ☐ (B) public speakers
- ☐ (C) historical figures
- ☐ (D) respected scholars

Part B Which word from the sentences **best** supports your answer in part A?

- ☐ (A) equality
- ☐ (B) speech
- ☐ (C) history
- ☐ (D) pursuit

Name: _____ Date: _____

22 Which text is **more** helpful in explaining why working hard helps people achieve success? Explain why, and support your answer with at least **two** pieces of evidence from **each** text.

[illegible]

Explanatory Performance Task

Task

You have been learning about explanatory writing in class. Explanatory, or informative, writing tells a central idea about a subject and supports the information with details.

For this task, you will be writing an explanatory essay related to the topic of working toward achieving one's dreams. Before you write your essay, you will review two sources that provide information about experiences with slavery in the history of the United States.

After you have reviewed these sources, you will answer some questions about them. Briefly scan the sources and the three questions that follow. Then, go back and read the sources carefully to gain the information you will need to answer the questions and write an essay.

In Part 2, you will write an explanatory essay on a topic related to the sources.

Directions for Part 1

You will now read two sources. You can re-examine both sources as often as you like.

Research Questions

After reading the sources, use the remaining time in Part 1 to answer three questions about them. Your answers to these questions will be scored. Also, your answers will help you think about the research sources you have read, which should help you write your explanatory essay.

You may refer to the sources when you think it would be helpful. You may also refer to your notes. Answer the questions in the space provided.

Source #1: Frederick Douglass

Frederick Douglass is an excellent example of a man who overcame obstacles in pursuit of a dream. Douglass achieved many great things after overcoming slavery and oppression. He proved that an African American man and a former slave could become one of the most well-educated, well-spoken, and influential people of his time. Douglass's work in various human rights movements during the mid-1800s was vital to achieving the dream of equal rights for all people.

Because he was born into slavery, Douglass did not learn the alphabet until age twelve. His master's wife taught him, despite the fact that educating slaves was against the law. Slave owners feared that educated slaves would begin to rebel and desire freedom. With this basic building block of knowledge, Douglass taught himself to read and write in secret by reading newspapers and pamphlets. He also began teaching other slaves to read and write. In 1838, Douglass successfully escaped slavery by boarding a train and arriving in New York—a state where slavery was illegal.

Douglass became a well-known writer, orator, social reformer, and leader of the abolitionist movement, proving his former slave owners wrong by becoming so accomplished. His best-known work is his autobiography: *Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845). Many people at the time questioned how a black man could produce such an eloquent piece of literature, but the book had great success and was translated into French and Dutch. His earnings from this book allowed Douglass to finally gain his legal freedom. In the wake of the book's publicity, Douglass traveled abroad to Ireland and England where he was amazed at the lack of discrimination against African Americans. "I employ a cab. I enter the same door. I am shown into the same parlor . . . and no one is offended," said Douglass of his time abroad in *My Bondage and My Freedom*.

Upon returning to the United States, he began publishing an abolitionist newspaper, *The North Star*. Through this paper, he published many articles speaking against slavery and fighting for the equality of all people. He published an open letter to his former master, Thomas Auld, where he criticized the way he and his family had been treated by Auld. This letter was graphic, controversial, and effective. The bold and brazen letter was proof of Douglass's willingness to stand up for his beliefs no matter how radical he may have seemed, and despite the potential backlash and consequences.

Because he believed that education was a crucial part in racial equality, Douglass was an early supporter of the desegregation movement in schools. Douglass's success was a testament to the importance of education for self-improvement and the furthering of social justice.

Frederick Douglass fought for the rights of all people, including African Americans, Native Americans, women, and immigrants. He was a supporter and spokesperson for the women's suffrage movement, attending the Seneca Falls Convention in upstate New York for women's rights. He was the only African American present at the convention. At this convention, he called for women and black men to unite for universal suffrage. Here, he met notable feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, an incredibly intelligent and ambitious woman herself. Stanton fought for a resolution in favor of women's suffrage, which was supported by Douglass. He believed that the world would be a better place if women were more involved in politics.

Despite his humble beginnings, Douglass was able to become an incredibly influential writer, orator, and activist in pursuit of a dream. His drive and personal sacrifice paved the way for other civil rights leaders who came after him.

Source #2: The Underground Railroad

The Underground Railroad, a secret network of safe houses that helped slaves escape to free states and Canada, was an integral part of the fight against slavery in the United States. During this time in history, many African Americans, especially those in the South, were slaves. Abolitionist leaders and allies strongly believed that these people had the right to freedom, rather than being treated as property. Because of these beliefs, they were willing to make sacrifices in pursuit of justice and equality.

Thousands of abolitionists and escaped slaves risked their lives to fight for the dream of freedom for all people through the Underground Railroad.

The Underground Railroad was formed in the early nineteenth century.

Technically the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793 required state officials to return slaves who had escaped to free states. However, many citizens and free state governments ignored this law during the time of the Underground Railroad and provided aid to the slaves until they could attain freedom.

Railroad terminology and biblical references were often used as code in order to maintain secrecy, and details were communicated by word of mouth. Canada was referred to as the "Promised Land," because once slaves were across the border, they were free. "Conductors" transported fugitives from station to station, often pretending to be slaves themselves to gain entry into a plantation. These conductors might be former slaves, free-born blacks, or white abolitionists. Slaves usually traveled at night to a series of "stations" or "depots," which might be located in barns, under church floors, or in hollowed-out riverbanks, amongst other places. While fugitives rested at these stations, a message would be sent to the next station to prepare for their arrival. The fugitives would rest at these stations during the day and travel at night, usually in small groups. Routes were often indirect in order to confuse anyone who might be tracking them. Women and children in particular had a difficult time escaping, as much of the traveling was done on foot, which made it more difficult for some to keep up. Additionally, women were often unable to get away from the plantation as often as male slaves were. Because of this, some men sacrificed being with their families, at least temporarily, in pursuit of their own freedom.

Because slaves were regarded as property during this time, those hiding slaves and aiding in their escape were taking a major risk, as were the slaves themselves. Advertisements in newspapers often offered large rewards for the return of escaped slaves, and bounty hunters pursued many slaves as far as the Canadian border. If returned, escaped slaves would often be punished severely through whipping or other brutal physical punishment in order to deter them and the other slaves from attempting escape again.

Without the help of abolitionists and allies, the Underground Railroad would not have been as successful as it was. One of the most notable workers and an escaped slave herself, Harriet Tubman, helped to free over 70 people. Many church groups, especially Quakers, aided escaped slaves as well. Quaker Levi Coffin and his wife Catherine helped more than 2,000 slaves to freedom. Although the overall number of slaves who escaped by means of the Underground Railroad was relatively small, the psychological effect on slaveholders made an impact, furthering the cause of the abolitionist movement.

Following the Union victory in the United States Civil War, Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, legally outlawing slavery. The dream of those who fought hard against slavery through the Underground Railroad had finally been actualized.

23 Which statements **best** support a central idea common to both texts? Select **two** options.

- ☐ (A) Sacrifices are required in order to pursue a dream.
- ☐ (B) It helps when people work together to pursue a dream.
- ☐ (C) Achieving equal rights for all people is a worthwhile dream.
- ☐ (D) Education is important to achieving equal rights for all people.
- ☐ (E) The best way to draw attention to a subject is to write about it.
- ☐ (F) People who pursue their dreams set an example for future generations.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 24** In each text, what are the **most important** details each author uses to develop important ideas? Support your answer using evidence from **both** texts.

- 25** What is each author's purpose in the texts, and how does each author advance that purpose? Support your answer using evidence from **both** texts.

Directions for Part 2

You will now review your sources, take notes, and plan, draft, revise, and edit your explanatory essay. You may use your notes and refer to the sources. Now read your assignment and the information about how your explanatory essay will be scored; then begin your work.

Your Assignment

Write a multi-paragraph explanatory essay in which you compare and contrast “Frederick Douglass” and “The Underground Railroad” based on their central ideas, supporting details, and author’s purpose. In your essay, clearly state your main ideas, supporting each key point with evidence from both sources.

Explanatory Scoring

Your essay will be scored using the following:

- 1. Central Idea and Organization:** How clearly did you express a central idea on the topic? How well did you maintain your focus on the topic? How well did your ideas flow from the introduction to the conclusion? How often did you use effective transitions?
- 2. Elaboration of Evidence:** How well did you support your central idea with evidence from the sources? How well did you use relevant evidence from both sources to support your central idea?
- 3. Conventions:** How well did you follow the rules of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

Now begin work on your explanatory essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can plan, write, revise, and edit the final draft of your essay. Write your response on a separate piece of paper.

