MODEL ESSAY 1

DECONSTRUCT THE QUESTION

This quote uses keywords from the BOSTES English Stage 6 Prescriptions 2015-2020 for the AoS: Discovery. It is essential that you know the rubric well. When you are presented with an extract from the rubric as a stimulus statement, it is advisable to know the context of the quote. In other words, where does it appear in the rubric? And, what other statements or ideas does it relate to?

‘Discovery can encompass the experience of discovering something for the first time or rediscovering something that has been lost, forgotten or concealed.’ Evaluate this statement in relation to at least TWO of the Robert Frost poems set for study and ONE related text of your own choosing.

When you are asked to ‘evaluate’ it means you are being asked to judge how accurate or true this statement is in relation to the texts you have studied. You are being asked to make a judgement based upon criteria that you must establish yourself. This criteria should be comprised of two or three central points that you will elaborate upon in the body paragraphs of your response.

Make sure that you select a related text that relates to both the question as well as to the poems you have chosen. Better responses establish connections between and among texts. This is known as synthesis.

GETTING STARTED

Make sure you’ve read through Planning a response on p.15. Now that you’re ready to start, ask yourself:

- What first time discoveries will my essay explore?
- What rediscoveries will my essay explore?
- What are the consequences of making first-time discoveries and rediscoveries?

Let’s see how the model essay tackles the question. As you read, make notes or highlight/underline elements of the essay that demonstrate strong writing technique or salient points. The questions alongside the essay should get you thinking about how the essay addresses the question and meets the rubric.

MARK IT!

‘Discovery can encompass the experience of discovering something for the first time or rediscovering something that has been lost, forgotten or concealed.’ Evaluate this statement in relation to at least TWO of the Robert Frost poems set for study and ONE related text of your own choosing.

‘We are all humiliated by the sudden discovery of a fact which has existed very comfortably and perhaps been staring us in the face while we have been making up our world entirely without it.’

George Eliot, the intentionally androgynous non de plume of the esteemed Victorian novelist Mary Ann Evans, once asserted: ‘We are all humiliated by the sudden discovery of a fact which has existed very comfortably and perhaps been staring us in the private while we have been making up our world entirely without it.’ This captures very aptly that the process of discovery often pivots upon the realisation of information which has been ironically camouflaged from us in plain sight. Robert Frost’s ballad ‘The Tuft of Flowers’ explores the experience of discovering a spiritual solidarity between nature and humanity that had previously been concealed from the speaker. In the same way, Frost’s free-verse narrative

1. Do you think the introduction is successfully written? Give one reason why.

2. Why does this student repeat certain words from the question throughout their introduction? Suggest one reason.
poem 'Mending Wall' examines the universality of the human condition. It tells of the spring-time renewal of a relationship between two neighbours that had been dormant and forgotten through the intervening year. Similarly, Sujata Shalt's free-verse confessional poem 'The One Who Goes Away' explores 'the sudden discovery' of the meaning of 'home' through an existential examination of her spiritual connection to her homeland of Ahmedabad, India. All three poems explore the 'discovery of a fact' about ourselves and our relationship to the world that has been encountered 'for the first time', or the rediscovery of 'something... lost, forgotten or concealed', which may have been 'staring us all along'. "while we have been making up our [perspective of the] world entirely without it'.

First-time discoveries often precipitate a shift in, or even a transformation of, one's perspective. Frost's ballad 'The Tuft of Flowers' is composed in herculean couplets and tells the story of the speaker's discovery of his spiritual interconnectedness with both humankind and nature, despite his initial feelings of loneliness and ennui. Frost opposes life and death, with the metaphor of 'the dew' representing dormancy and death, and the pathetic fallacy of 'the sun' encapsulating renewal and resurrection. The poem opens with a mourning tone that lauds the solitary nature of the persona's existence: 'I must be, as he had been, - alone'. Here, the persona speaks to himself in order to offer comfort in his solitude, 'I said within my heart/Whether they work together or apart', which only serves to exacerbate his existential angst. However, this moment of despair is followed by a sudden tonal shift in the volta. 'But as I said it, swift there passed me by/On noiseless wing a wildered butterfly'. The discovery of the butterfly functions as the objective correlative of the persona's own burgeoning transformation. It presents the end result of its metamorphosis from a caterpillar (whose existence is characterised by larval infancy, parochialism and anticipation) to the maturity of a transcendental butterfly's 'flight' allowing for a deeper appreciation of nature's beauty and grandeur.

Subsequently, the persona 'awakes' from his 'slumber' to the metonymic 'The Tuft of Flowers' that represents the 'fact' of the beauty of life and of nature that is so often hidden 'in plain sight' by its own abundance and profusion within our milieu. Returning to Frost's recurring theme of the dialectical nature of human existence, the 'small tuft of flowers beside a brook' is revealed as a consequence of the destruction wreaked by 'the mower'. Hence, it is only when faced with mortality, standing in the 'shadow' of death and his weeping 'scythe', that the persona appreciates the 'leaping tongue of bloom... that had been spared'. Ultimately, this new discovery precipitates a transformation in the persona's perspective. The revelation of a spirit kindred to my own' allows him to appreciate the always-present but previously hidden 'brotherly' solidarity he feels with nature and his fellow man. This denouement attests to the veracity of Eliot's assertions about the 'discovery... without it'. It also highlights the human inability to appreciate beauty without a recognition of its fragility, or to appreciate the value of life without being reminded of death's imminent.

Just as a discovery has the power to evoke a new perspective on human relationships, it also has the potency to reignite a fading one. Frost's poem 'Mending Wall' further explores the universality of the
human condition through its allegorical narrative that focuses upon the springtime renewal of a relationship between two neighbours that has lain dormant and forgotten throughout the intervening year. Employing a free verse form in contrast to the strictly metered 'The Tuft of Flowers', 'Mending Wall' evokes a sense of the sudden and unexpected insights that often occur ad hoc as a consequence of rediscovering something lost, forgotten or hidden. Frost's poems both feature the recurring motifs of pathetic fallacy and the regenerative qualities of spring. For humans, springtime evokes a sense of the new and the potential for the future. Opening with a mischievous reference to a mysterious personified force that disassembles the wall between two farms ('Something there is that doesn't love a wall'), the persona's personality and disposition is quickly established as both cynical and progressive in nature. An impression further emphasized in his reference to the process of mending the wall as 'just another kind of out-door game' as well as facetious references to 'elves'.

Again using dualities in order to bring oppositional perspectives into conflict, Frost characterises the persona's neighbour as unquestioningly traditional in his beliefs and stoically resistant to the speaker's playful challenges to the neighbour's world-view. Frost uses the first-person voice of the persona to describe the neighbour disparagingly as 'an old stone savage' who walks in the metaphorical 'darkness' of mindless conformity and conservatism. While the persona perceives the 'wall' as unnecessary, the neighbour espouses an antithetical perspective that is encapsulated in the well-worn aphorism inherited from his father: 'Good fences make good neighbours'. As the poem progresses, the complex meaning of the poem's conceit of the wall and its mending becomes progressively more apparent. Through the vicarious experience of the persona, the reader comes to realize that a perspective exists that synthesizes the polarized perspectives of the neighbours. They are paradoxically divided by the 'wall', but also united by it, as there would be no other reason to convene in fellowship if there were not a wall to 'mend'. Through its very existence, the wall mediates their relationship. Ultimately, the persona rediscovers the hidden truths inherent in the seemingly clichéd statement 'Good fences make good neighbours'. This truth was concealed by the persona's instinctive and reactionary distrust of such a conservative perspective. Frost repeats the aphorism as the final words of the poem in order to convey that the persona has been changed by his interaction with the neighbour. The persona now appreciates that the divisions that permeate human societies can be perceived with both detrimental and beneficial consequences. Both 'The Tuft of Flowers' and 'Mending Wall' conclude with the 'humiliste[ing]' yet joyful anaphorization of the 'fact' that all humanity is enmeshed in Christian-Pantheist-inspired Natural Order that has been 'staring at us' all along whilst 'we', like the personas in these two poems, 'have been making up our [pessimistic or cynical] world entirely without it'.

Correspondingly, Bhatt's free verse, confessional poem 'The One Who Goes Away' follows a stream-of-consciousness narrative examining the significant emotional experiences that lead to the persona's discovery of a unique sense of 'home'. The poem is erratic and achronological in style in order to convey the sudden and unexpected nature of the insights gained.
throughout her life up until that point. It also achieves the effect of being disorienting in nature for the responder so as to forge an empathic connection, allowing for a vicarious experience of the fresh and intensely meaningful experiences the persona has had since departing for the first time from her formative milieu of Ahmedabad, India. The purpose of the poem is to present the notion of ‘home’ as something carried with you wherever you go—in my blood—with memories forming the foundation of identity. The persona’s experience of deciding to ‘go away’ is conveyed in the anaphora ‘I am the one who always goes away’. This evokes a sense of the circularity of ‘go away’ whenever she returns back to her initial point of departure. The persona has a moment of anagnorisis regarding the transformative nature of her commitment to continually embarking upon new processes of discovery, conveyed through the paradox ‘with my home intact but always changing’. This reconciliation of constancy and fluidity reveals to the responder that the persona is only able to appreciate the profundity of her spiritual connection to her homeland when she is not physically there. Being elsewhere allows her to maintain a love for her heritage by indulging her curiosity and sense of wonder about the world beyond it. Ultimately, the poem comes to a metaphoric denouement with: ‘my home ... does not fit with any geography’, presenting the persona’s metaphorical discovery that she is forever spiritually anchored to an ‘imagined country’, which will continue to ‘hide ... behind her heart.’ Like the personae in Frost’s ‘The Tuft of Flowers’ and ‘Mending Wall’, Bhatt’s confessional persona receives a ‘reality check’ that both challenges her perspective of herself and others, as well as affirming that when we ‘go away’ from ‘home’ we become open to the possibility of fresh and intensely meaningful insights that reshape the way we ‘make up our world’.

In conclusion, George Eliot’s contention that one must be willing to accept the ‘humiliation’ of the ‘sudden discovery’ that much has been transpiring in the world outside our comfort zone is undeniable. The experiences of both Frost’s personae in the narrative poems ‘The Tuft of Flowers’ and ‘Mending Wall’ and Bhatt’s persona in the existential ‘The One Who Goes Away’ indisputably demonstrate that we often ‘make up’ our perspective of ourselves and others ‘entirely without’ knowledge of essential ‘facts’. These ‘facts’ have the power to reveal to us either the universality of the human condition that binds all in a relationship of interconnectedness with our fellow men and with Nature, or what the true meaning of the concept of ‘home’ truly is. But, to make these meaningful and potentially life-changing discoveries, we must be willing to admit our folly or blind-sightedness and accept the ‘humiliation’ that the catalysts for these revelations were ‘staring at us’ all along.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. The student demonstrates detailed knowledge of their related text. Suggest two ways in which they achieve this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. What do you notice about the way in which the student has ordered their examples from ‘The One Who Goes Away’?</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. How has the student ensured that their essay makes connections between their prescribed text and their related text?</td>
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MARKER'S COMMENTS

1. This introductory paragraph is successfully written because it establishes a thesis and shows a conceptual understanding of discovery as it relates to the question. The student has clearly structured the introduction to move from the opening thesis statement (which shows their conceptual understanding) to an anchoring of each text to the thesis. This allows them to introduce each text in such a way as to further the thesis, which begins the process of sustaining the argument. This is a strong structural essay-writing technique that will help anchor your essay to the given question. However, you need to remember to keep asserting your thesis in the body paragraphs so that you continue to answer the question and make sure your conclusion reinforces your thesis.

2. The student has repeated keywords from the question for the following reasons:
   a. To indicate to the marker that they have read, understood and intend to answer the question.
   b. To assist in the expression of a thesis that is relevant to the question.
   c. To set the parameters of their thesis.

3. The student has used 'camouflaged' and 'dormant' as synonyms in place of question keywords in their introduction.

4. The student has ensured that their topic sentences relate to the question by including question keywords such as 'first-time' or appropriate synonyms, such as 'new'.

5. The examples drawn from each poem have been used in a logical order, representing the beginning, middle and end of the poem. This demonstrates that the student is familiar with the whole text.

6. The student presents a sophisticated conceptual understanding of discovery by making use of precise, accurate and persuasive vocabulary to present their analysis of each text. Using the analysis of 'The Tuft of Flowers', the marker can readily identify a strong conceptual understanding of discovery (Hence, it is only when faced with mortality, standing in the 'shadow' of Death and his reaping 'scythe', that the persona appreciates the 'leaping tongue of bloom' that had been 'spared'. Ultimately, this new discovery precipitates a transformation in the persona's perspective...). This is a logical construction of argument as examples from the poem appear in order, with the effect of techniques tied to the argument, and high modality language used to heighten the persuasive force of the argument. (This denouement attests to the veracity of Eliot's assertions...). It also highlights the human inability to...)

7. The student begins to draw conclusions from their analysis of the poem. Hence, it is only when... They also make use of key question wording such as 'hidden' and appropriate synonyms such as 'new'.

8. The student has used conjunctive adverbs such as 'also' and transitional phrases such as 'in contrast' and 'further explores' to maintain a cohesive line of argument.

9. The student has used their examples from the poem in order, from the beginning, middle and end. This has resulted in a clear and logical argument, allowing the student to build their point and connect it back to their essay thesis.

10. The student has demonstrated connections between and among texts by using phrases such as 'Both 'The Tuft of Flowers' and 'Mending Wall' conclude with...'.

11. The student has used the following phrases to connect their argument to the question and their essay thesis:
   - 'Just as a discovery has the power to evoke a new perspective on human relationships...',
   - 'Renewal of a relationship between two neighbours that has lain dormant and forgotten...'
   - 'The persona rediscovers the hidden truth...'
   - 'This truth was concealed...'

12. The student has used sophisticated vocabulary, a formal register and accurate terminology relating to poetry. This has resulted in a refined, precise and persuasive argument.

13. The student has started their related text paragraph with the conjunctive adverb 'Correspondingly' in order to maintain a cohesive argument.

14. The student demonstrates a high level of relevant textual knowledge and detail of their related text. Two ways that they have achieved this are as follows:
   a. Through their contextualisation of the text in relation to the concept of discovery, which reveals knowledge of the subject matter of the poem,
   b. Through drawing their evidence and quotations from the beginning, middle and end of the text, thus demonstrating familiarity with the whole text...

15. The student supports the development of their argument by selecting textual references and examples from across the text, and placing them in order from the beginning to the end of the poem. This improves the sophistication of their argument, making it stronger and more compelling.

16. The student has demonstrated connections between their prescribed text and their related text by making use of phrases such as '...in much the same way that both Frost's persona and...'

17. This conclusion is successfully written because it reiterates the student's thesis clearly and conclusively, it casts this thesis in terms of the George Eliot quote they selected as an 'umbrella statement' and brings the essay to a decisive close, making sound use of high modality language to improve the persuasive force of the essay.
USEFUL VOCABULARY

CONJUNCTIVE AVERBS AND TRANSITIONAL PHRASES

The primary purpose of any essay is to convince the reader of the validity of the writer's argument. To do this successfully, the reader must be able to move easily from one point to another. This is why making use of conjunctive adverbs and transitional phrases is so important! These parts of speech allow you to create complex relationships between ideas so that you can produce a clear, coherent, and cohesive argument.

As you write your practice essays, be sure to pick appropriate conjunctive adverbs and transitional phrases to connect your ideas together. This way you end up successfully walking the marker through your argument.

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<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Conjunctive adverbs/transitional phrases</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To add to or strengthen your argument</td>
<td>Furthermore, Moreover, Additionally, In addition, Also, Notably, Particularly, In particular, This is furthered, Subsequently</td>
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<tr>
<td>To sequence ideas or evidence</td>
<td>Similarly, Similar to, In a similar way, Like, Likewise, This is analogous to</td>
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<tr>
<td>To contrast, texts, characters or situations</td>
<td>By contrast, Contrastingly, Conversely, On the other hand, However, Nonetheless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To introduce evidence</td>
<td>For example, The example of, For instance, Firstly, This is established in, This is evident in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To draw conclusions</td>
<td>Therefore, Thus, Arguably, Evidently, Consequently, As a consequence, As a result, Hence, Undoubtedly, Ultimately, But, Therefore, As a result</td>
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ACTIVE ANALYTICAL VERBS

Besides making sure that the ideas within your essay are connected together, it is also important to make sure your textual analysis is as clear and compelling as it can be. To achieve this, you need to employ the active voice. In the active voice, the subject of the sentence performs the action denoted by the verb. This gives your writing greater logic and clarity.

- **Active voice example**—The nightmarish image of "shadowy figures . . . forking over rubbish on dampened fires."[subject] heightens [active analytical verb] the discoveries concerning the spiritual decay caused by living in a modern consumer world.
- **Passive voice example**—These discoveries concerning the spiritual decay caused by living in a modern consumer world are heightened by the nightmarish image of "shadowy figures . . . forking over rubbish on dampened fires."
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Active and Typical Verbs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Display</td>
<td>Represent</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Draw attention to</td>
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<td>Ignore</td>
<td>Capture</td>
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<td>Steal</td>
<td>Emphasise</td>
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<td>Healed</td>
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<td>Stress</td>
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<td>Suggest</td>
<td>Demonstrate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convey</td>
<td>Communicate</td>
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Exercise:
your analyses. Be sure to make use of a variety of active and typical verbs to improve the quality of your writing.

Active and typical verbs are the strongest of verbs and are very useful to the active voice. As you write...