

MeTEOR Performance Task

English II

English Language Arts
Prince of Tides



**PLOT
TWIST**

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CONNECTING THE DOTS

3. Based on the prologue, what is the emerging theme of the text? What specific details support this theme?

4. Consider the structure of the text. How does the author create a sense of tension and mystery over the course of the prologue? Provide textual evidence to support your answer.

5. Conroy is known for his sensory images. Identify at least four images and analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on the meaning and the tone of the text.

Part B:

6. Write an explanatory essay in which you convey to your audience the author's purpose in writing the prologue. **What is the Southern Way?** Explore how characters are introduced and how they interact with other characters. How do the setting, characters and introduction to the plot advance the theme of the novel?

ARTICLES/STUDENT MATERIALS/RUBRICS

“Prologue from The Prince of Tides” (Pat Conroy)

My wound is geography. It is also my anchorage, my port of call.

I grew up slowly beside the tides and marshes of Colleton; my arms were tawny and strong from working long days on the shrimp boat in the blazing South Carolina heat. Because I was a Wingo, I worked as soon as I could walk; I could pick a blue crab dean when I was five. I had killed my first deer by the age of seven, and at nine was regularly putting meat on my family's table. I was born and raised on a Carolina sea island and I carried the sunshine of the low-country, inked in dark gold, on my back and shoulders. As a boy I was happy above the channels, navigating a small boat between the sandbars with their quiet nation of oysters exposed on the brown flats at the low watermark. I knew every shrimper by name, and they knew me and sounded their horns when they passed me fishing in the river.

When I was ten I killed a bald eagle for pleasure, for the singularity of the act, despite the divine, exhilarating beauty of its solitary flight over schools of whiting. It was the only thing I had ever killed that I had never seen before. After my father beat me for breaking the law and for killing the last eagle in Colleton County, he made me build a fire, dress the bird, and eat its flesh as tears rolled down my face. Then he turned me in to Sheriff Benson, who locked me in a cell for over an hour. My father took the feathers and made a crude Indian headdress for me to wear to school. He believed in the expiation of sin. I wore the headdress for weeks, until it began to disintegrate feather by feather. Those feathers trailed me in the hallways of the school as though I were a molting, discredited angel.

"Never kill anything that's rare," my father had said.

"I'm lucky I didn't kill an elephant," I replied.

"You'd have had a mighty square meal if you had," he answered.

My father did not permit crimes against the land. Though I have hunted again, all eagles are safe from me.

It was my mother who taught me the southern way of the spirit in its most delicate and intimate forms. My mother believed in the dreams of flowers and animals. Before we went to bed at night as small children, she would reveal to us in her storytelling voice that salmon dreamed of mountain passes and the brown faces of grizzlies hovering over clear rapids. Copperheads,

she would say, dreamed of placing their fangs in the shinbones of hunters. Ospreys slept with their feathered, plummeting dreamselfes screaming through deep, slow-motion dives toward herring. There were the brute wings of owls in the nightmares of ermine, the downwind approach of timber wolves in the night stillness of elk.

But we never knew about her dreams, for my mother kept us strangers to her own interior life. We knew that bees dreamed of roses, that roses dreamed of the pale hands of florists, and that spiders dreamed of luna moths adhered to silver webs. As her children, we were the trustees of her dazzling evensongs of the imagination, but we did not know that mothers dreamed.

Each day she would take us into the forest or garden and invent a name for any animal or flower we passed. A monarch butterfly became an "orchid-kissing blacklegs"; a field of daffodils in April turned into a "dance of the butter ladies bonneted." With her attentiveness my mother could turn a walk around the island into a voyage of purest discovery. Her eyes were our keys to the palace of wildness.

My family lived in splendid isolation on Melrose Island in a small white house my grandfather had helped build. The house faced the inland waterway, and the town of Colleton could be seen down the river, its white mansions set like chess pieces above the marsh. Melrose Island was a lozenge-shaped piece of land of twelve hundred acres surrounded on four sides by salt rivers and creeks. The island country where I grew up was a fertile, semitropical archipelago that gradually softened up the ocean for the grand surprise of the continent that followed. Melrose was only one of sixty sea islands in Colleton County. At the eastern edge of the county lay six barrier islands shaped by their daily encounters with the Atlantic. The other sea islands, like Melrose, encarved by vast expanses of marshland, were the green sanctuaries where brown and white shrimp came to spawn in their given seasons. When they came, my father and other men like him were waiting in their fine and lovely boats.

When I was eight I helped my father build the small wooden bridge that linked our lives to a narrow causeway through the marsh that connected to the much larger St. Anne's Island, which itself was linked to the town of Colleton by a long steel drawbridge across the river. It took five minutes for my father to drive his pickup truck from our house to the wooden bridge; it took him another ten to drive into the town of Colleton.

Before we built the bridge in 1953, my mother would take us to school in Colleton by boat. No matter how bad the weather, she would steer us across the river each morning and be waiting for us at the public dock each afternoon. It would always be a faster trip to Colleton by Boston Whaler than it would ever be by truck. Those years of taking us to school by water turned my

mother into one of the finest pilots of small craft I have ever seen, but she rarely entered the boat once the bridge was built. The bridge only connected us with our town; it connected my mother with the world beyond Melrose Island, so inconceivably rich with promise.

Melrose was the one notable possession of my father's family, a passionate but unlucky clan whose decline after the Civil War was quick, certain, and probably inevitable. My great-great-grandfather, Winston Shadrach Wingo, had commanded a battery under Beauregard that fired on Fort Sumter. He died a pauper in the Confederate Soldiers' Home in Charleston and refused to speak to a Yankee, male or female, until the day he died. He had won Melrose Island in a horseshoe game near the end of his life, and that island, uncleared and malarial, passed down through three generations of declining Wingos until it came to my father by default. My grandfather had tired of owning it and my father was the only Wingo willing to pay the state and federal taxes to keep it out of the government's hands. But that horseshoe game would assume celebrated dimensions in our family history and we would always honor Winston Shadrach Wingo as our family's first athlete of note.

I do not know, however, when my mother and father began their long, dispiriting war against each other. Most of their skirmishes were like games of ringolevio, with the souls of their children serving as the ruined captured flags in their campaigns of attrition. Neither considered the potential damage when struggling over something as fragile and unformed as a child's life. I still believe that they both loved us deeply, but, as with many parents, their love proved to be the most lethal thing about them. They were remarkable in so many ways that the gifts they bestowed almost equaled the havoc they so thoughtlessly wreaked.

I was the son of a beautiful, word-struck mother and I longed for her touch many years after she felt no obligation to touch me. But I will praise her for the rest of my life for teaching me to seek out the beauty of nature in all its shapes and fabulous designs. It was my mother who taught me to love the lanterns of night fishermen in the starry darkness and the flights of brown pelicans skimming the curling breakers at dawn. It was she who made me take notice of the perfect coinage of sand dollars, the shapes of flounders inlaid in sand like the silhouettes of ladies in cameos, the foundered wreck near the Colleton Bridge that pulsed with the commerce of otters. She saw the world through a dazzling prism of authentic imagination. Lila Wingo would take the raw material of a daughter and shape her into a poet and a psychotic. With her sons she was gentler, and the results took longer to tally. She preserved for me the multiform appearances of my life as a child, the portraitures and still lifes visible through the blooming window of time. She reigned as the queen of exquisite imagery in the eye of a worshipful son, yet I cannot forgive her for not telling me about the dream that sustained her during my childhood, the one that would cause the ruin of my family and the death of one of us.

Constructed Response Rubric

Score Point	Descriptor
3	<p>The 3 response fully accomplishes the task requirements. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes a complete interpretation that goes beyond the text, • has clear logic or reasoning, and • provides specific, relevant support from the text.
2	<p>The 2 response adequately accomplishes the task requirements. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes an adequate interpretation, • may have minor flaws in logic or reasoning, and • provides general but relevant support from the text.
1	<p>The 1 response minimally accomplishes the task requirements. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes a minimal interpretation, • may have gaps in understanding or flaws in logic or reasoning, and • may provide sparse or irrelevant support from the text.
0	<p>The 0 response does not accomplish the task requirements. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may provide no support from the text, • may be limited to information copied directly from the text and presented as the student's own ideas, and • may be incorrect or illogical.

Informative/Explanatory Writing Rubric

Purpose and Forms: “Informational/explanatory writing conveys information accurately. This kind of writing serves one or more closely related purposes: to increase readers’ knowledge of a subject, to help readers better understand a procedure or process, or to provide readers with an enhanced comprehension of a concept.”

Informative/ Explanatory	Advanced 4 90-100	Proficient 3 70-89	Basic 2 60-69	Below Basic 1 50-59
<p>Ideas/Purpose: The writing is focused and conveys information accurately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas, concepts and information are consistently clear, on topic, and focused • Ideas are complex or well-developed 	<p>Ideas, concepts and information are consistently clear, on topic, and focused</p>	<p>Ideas, concepts and information are sometimes unclear, off topic, or lack focus</p>	<p>Ideas, concepts and information are inconsistent, unclear, off-topic or lack focus</p>
<p>Organization: The writing has a clear and effective organizational structure creating unity and completeness.</p>	<p>Ideas, concepts and information are organized into clear categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skillful and varied use of transitions • Logical progression of ideas from beginning to end • Purposeful introduction and conclusion • Strong connections among ideas 	<p>Ideas, concepts and information are organized into clear categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate use of transitions with some variety • Adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end • Evident introduction and conclusion • Adequate connections among ideas 	<p>Ideas, concepts and information are inconsistently organized into categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some use of transitions • Inadequate progression of ideas from beginning to end • Ineffective introduction and conclusion • Weak connections among ideas 	<p>Ideas, concepts and information are inconsistently organized into categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no use of transitions • Confusing progression of ideas • Missing introduction and/or conclusion • No connections among ideas

<p>Elaboration of Evidence: The topic is developed and supported with evidence (i.e., relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides comprehensive support/evidence for the main idea • Presents well-chosen evidence (sources, facts, and details) • Skillfully integrates evidence with correct citations • Analyzes and draws strong conclusions from evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides adequate support/evidence for the main idea • Uses relevant evidence (sources, facts, and details) • Integrates evidence from sources with generally correct citations • Analyzes and draws logical conclusions from evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides inadequate support/evidence for the main idea • Uses some irrelevant, repetitive, or inadequate evidence (sources, facts, and details) • Limited integration of evidence from sources with some attempt at citations • Inconsistently analyzes evidence • Conclusions drawn are sometimes not logical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides little or no support/evidence for the main idea • Frequently uses irrelevant, repetitive, or inadequate evidence (sources, facts, and details) • Does not integrate evidence from sources or lacks citations • Fails to analyze evidence • Conclusions drawn are not logical or are missing
<p>Language and Vocabulary: The writing uses precise and topic-specific language and maintains a formal/appropriate style.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses precise, academic language • Use of topic-specific vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose • Establishes and consistently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a mix of precise with more general language • Use of topic-specific vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses simplistic language • Inconsistent use of topic-specific vocabulary • Lacks a consistent formal/appropriate style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses limited or vague language • Lacks topic-specific vocabulary • Lack of formal/appropriate style shows little sense of

	maintains a formal/ appropriate style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and generally maintains a formal/ appropriate style 		audience and purposes
Conventions: The writing demonstrates a command of conventions and assigned format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal errors/patterns of error in usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, spelling and format Skillful use of sentence structure enhances meaning 	Minimal errors/patterns of error in usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and format	Frequent errors/patterns of error in usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and format	Severe errors/patterns of error in usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and format interfere with understanding

0=no evidence/missing



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