**East of Eden- Paper 2 feedback**

\*Introduction needs to clearly imply the question- use the words from the prompt:

*-“aware of power of their works to shock reader”*

*-“literature as a vehicle for social criticism-compare and contrast ways”*

*-“challenges to authority and impact on reader”*

\*Remember that your introduction creates a first impression for the readers…..make it count. **First sentence must be a strong statement/assertion!** Too many essays began with a generalization that was a “throw away.”

\***Thesis must be *directed* by the assertion** and needs to include a theme- even if the prompt does not ask for it! Without theme, you either eliminate or limit the opportunity for analysis. Theme allows you to answer the “so what’? Many essays lacked a true thesis and thus real direction and organization of points/evidence.

\*Far more evidence is needed throughout. That is a suggestion on most students’ papers. You are not proving your points with evidence from the text… *(see below)*

\*You need **specific examples** from the text! Stop with the general evidence…..”Aron is always longing for a mother.” That is not evidence; that is an assertion which needs to be proven by specific evidence.

**\*And** **another thing with regards to evidence**- you can’t just pick and choose aspects of a character. Characters do not operate in a vacuum. You can’t discuss Kate only as a business woman. You can’t talk about Lee only as an immigrant who is stereotyped. You can’t talk about Cal only as being bad and learning to choose to be good. All of these characters are complex. That is what you should address.

\*Do not use generalizations or oversimplify ideas or concepts of the text. It implies a superficial understanding of the work.

*-As the novel continues, Kate begins to feel human emotion and is sad that she can’t connect with people.*

*-Cal learns “timshel” and realizes that he is combination of both good and bad.*

*-Timshel means “thou mayest”; a person can choose to be evil or good.*

*Do more with less. You do not have to discuss 3 different social criticism/commentaries. Choose one good one (or two at the most) and do a better job with analysis. Having well-chosen, specific evidence will help with better analysis and a stronger essay.*

Conclusion Paragraphs: do not **summarize** essay points. Discuss the implication/”so what?” of your assertion/thesis. Is there a message from the author about a greater global issue?

Also…

\*You must include context! That is part of Criterion A! You need to be thorough in your explanation of context. You can’t just say, “…people were more religious at this time.” That is too vague. Context should be part of the discussion. Review your context group chart/journal notes.

\*Watch your names- there were a lot of transposed names of characters….Abra believes Adam has created a picture of her as a perfect woman…. Charles takes Aron to see his mother…

**Specific question issues:**

* For Q1: the paper needs to be about the text and exploring *methods* /*techniques* that create the shock. Your paper should not be a list of plot points that shock.
* For Q2: if you identify a concept of social criticism you must be clear about the message of the author. Some of you wrote about issues but there was no real evidence from the text that Steinbeck was making any social statement.
* For Q3: You must discuss both the way the text reflected challenges to authority AND the *impact* of those challenges on the reader.

**Subject report:**

**Struggles:**

Some candidates seemed ill prepared to respond to works of literature. These candidates did not appear to **understand the texts** they had studied and often attempted to **engage in narrative retelling**. Their responses often simplified the question and identified examples of what was being asked without addressing how those examples led to any **understanding**/ or **implication**. These papers were often very short and undeveloped.

While candidates were often prepared to discuss context, for some the discussion of the historical context of a work, became a simplified biography of the author—with only vague references to the texts. As a result, some candidates, not fully understanding either the text or the question, retreated to **summary and descriptive narration.**

Struggling candidates had difficulty structuring and organizing their responses. They identified an aspect of the question in their introduction, but gave little sense of why their chosen texts reflected this aspect as the papers lacked a clear thesis. Conclusions in these papers were at times vague or going against their introductions.

**What was well done:**

Stronger essays were organized well, including an introduction which defined terms as well as a general introduction to the texts and their context. They established an argument around the given question and guided the reader through the entire process (although if the chosen **question was not clearly understood** the structure was often **directed at the works being discussed** and **not to the question being addressed).**

**What to do to get better:**

Practice with the questions—**understand what is being asked**, and the direction of the argument.

Practice organizing papers so that the arguments are clear and focused—**use the words of the question in the introductions and conclusions.**

**Practice avoiding generalizations** by giving evidence from the texts for all of the assertions that are made.

**For those whose handwriting is a problem,** double space your work.

* **Sample introductory paragraphs:**
* *Q6 With reference to at least two literary texts that you have studied, discuss the extent to which they reveal the prevailing values and beliefs of the periods and places in which the texts are written or set.*

Q6: As authors construct literary works, often the connection established with the audience plays on common knowledge and understanding of the contextual time period. In referencing such portrayal of an era, the author may then reflect favorably or disagree accordingly to aid in the development of a universal theme. For the novel, *East of Eden*, written by John Steinbeck, and the play, “Hamlet” by William Shakespeare, both authors challenge and reflect the societal spirits during their respective time periods. Ultimately, through the reflections and challenges, both literary works develop the motif of the human condition and the overall theme that each individual must internally battle conflicting dualities in the nature of choice (good or evil, action or thinking) before being able to reach a state of “grace” in being human.