

The Hewitt School
P.O. Box 9, 2103 B Street
Washougal, WA 98671-0009
Phone: (360) 835-8708 Fax: (360) 835-8697

October 2, 2003

EVALUATION FOR: John Doe, Grade 10, 2nd quarter, 2002-03

	QUARTER 1	QUARTER 2	QUARTER 3	QUARTER 4
ENGLISH 2	A	A		

The two versions of the conversation between Wangero and Asalamalikan are both very well done. The characters each have strong, and different, voices in the two versions. You certainly make them more likable in the second one than the first. I had very few changes here. The most important one is my suggestion to change “slowly pulled away” to “crept away.” This has to do with exchanging adverbs for strong verbs, and I’ll discuss that more when I talk about your short story, below.

Your paper on three of your ancestors is very well done. You provided a lot of good information about all of them. Avoid single-sentence paragraphs. A few times I combined a couple of these to give paragraphs with more meat. Of course, each paragraph needs one focus, but these combinations satisfy that requirement. Just remember that if something is worth mentioning, it’s worth elaborating on, so aim for paragraphs of between three and five sentences long. That’s certainly not a hard and fast rule, just a guide.

The research paper is very good. You focused well on the topic, and provided ample support. You had some comma splices in this paper, a problem I didn’t note elsewhere. Be on the look-out for these. Great job on the bibliography – you’ve conquered the formatting details.

Your story about your own conflicts is very well done. My only disagreement is I’m not convinced that this contains an internal conflict. An internal conflict indicates that the character has to make a decision, usually a difficult and important decision. But I don’t see any decision you have to make here. You’re forced to go to the new church, like it or not.

The outline of your short story is very good, but the story itself is terrific. You did such an impressive job on this. Again, you clearly have an aptitude for plot, character development, and conflict. You also do a great job in your first paragraph of setting the scene and the tone. I’m going to discuss several corrections and suggestions I have for this paper, but understand that these are not indicative of a poor paper. Rather, they’re to help you push your writing to the next level.

First, I encourage you to do at least one reading of your rough drafts where you only look for adverbs. Adverbs are the weakest of words, and you often want to eliminate them. In your second paragraph I indicated several adverbs – you probably weren’t aware that there were so many. Sometimes they’re unnecessary and can just be struck. Often they can be replaced with a stronger verb. (An example of that is the change I mentioned in your dialogue paper.)

Another reading of your rough drafts should be done to look for excess verbiage. The single best way to improve your prose is to remove unnecessary words. That’s true for all writers. If you can say the same thing in one word or four, always choose the one word. Look at page 9 of this story (anytime you write a paper over five pages long, please include page

numbers). At the top I wrote “wordy – see eval.” I decided it was better to talk about these sentences here than try to fix them on your paper. First, you start with a passive sentence, usually a bad idea. These three sentences could easily be rewritten more tightly, for example, “Daru and his young guard once discussed the reasons for his imprisonment in a brief conversation.” That simple sentence gives the same information your first three sentences give, but much more efficiently. In some other places I marked out extra words (for example, see p. 7), but more could be done with this. Like I said – this is an issue all writers have to worry about, and it’s very important for you to be aware of it.

Let me reiterate – I think this story is very well done. It shows terrific imagination and great attention to plot, conflict, and character. There are many great images. I think you have real potential as a short story writer and I encourage you to spend more time on this. Your work on your year-long short story looks good.

Your paper on *The Fellowship of the Ring* is very well done. You focused quite nicely on the theme of sacrifice with great examples from the book. The thoughts in your second paragraph would be better saved until the end. Focus on the book until then; in your conclusion you can tie the paper’s theme to real life if you wish.

John, you’re doing a great job. You’re a very talented and imaginative writer. Work on eliminating wordiness, and improvement will follow. You’re insightful in your summary of what you learned – a good writer must know what to leave out. The hard part, of course, is you have to figure out exactly what that is for every paper. Remember that most of writing is rewriting – and keep up the good work!

	QUARTER 1	QUARTER 2	QUARTER 3	QUARTER 4
WORLD HISTORY	B	A		

Your map is very well done. You chose an interesting topic and, in an improvement over last quarter, gave it a title and dates. It’s also very neatly drawn and labeled. Your timeline is also better than last time – this time you spaced events appropriately. Your choice of events shows thought on your part.

Nice job on the news report on Columbus’s landing. I enjoyed listening to it. The “interviews” showing various perspectives were a particularly nice touch. You obviously put a lot of work into this.

No doubt the news report benefited from the work you did on Columbus for your research report on him. This report is very good. Just as in your English research report you’ve provided excellent information and support. Your bibliography is much improved over last quarter, as well.

I like the game you created, Explore!, very much. There’s a lot of good history in the questions, and even in the way the game is played. You provided many basic facts of several important explorers and the time period. It’s also very attractively presented, and looks like it would be fun to play.

The time capsule is good but could be better. You have over two dozen items here – quite a few – but this would be better if each item was specific. Make it clear why each is historically important. For example, rather than simply a sword, what about a sword carried by Richard the Lionhearted on the Third Crusade.

Your book report on *Ivanhoe* is better than last quarter’s book report, but more could be done here. You focus nicely on the social status and treatment of Jews in Medieval Britain, and how Scott reveals this through Isaac and Rebekah, but sometimes you’re sloppy with the history.

You don't want to say that something "seems" historically accurate; if you're going to discuss it in your paper, you need to check. If your textbook does not address the issue, find other references – possibly an encyclopedia, another textbook, or the Internet.

Overall, you've done very well this quarter, and it's a definite improvement over first quarter. Keep working on the few things I mentioned.

	QUARTER 1	QUARTER 2	QUARTER 3	QUARTER 4
ALGEBRA 2	B	B		

You averaged 85% on the daily work and scored 87% on the final test. Your score for the term is 86%. Take time to recheck your answers; sometimes you were doing the process properly but computation errors or sloppiness gave you the wrong answer so I had to give you only partial credit.

	QUARTER 1	QUARTER 2	QUARTER 3	QUARTER 4
BIOLOGY	A-	A		

You did a very nice job on the labs. They're thorough and your drawings are quite neat. Thank you for following my instructions from last quarter. You averaged 92% on the module tests and scored 98% on the final test. Your test score for the term is 95%.

	QUARTER 1	QUARTER 2	QUARTER 3	QUARTER 4
WORK EXPERIENCE	A	A		

You reported another 20 hours which, added to your 20.5 hours left from last quarter gives you 40.5 hours. Your employer gave you a score of 94%. We'll carry the extra 3 hours to next quarter.

	QUARTER 1	QUARTER 2	QUARTER 3	QUARTER 4
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	P	P		

You had five hours left over from last quarter and submitted another 40 for a total of 45 hours. Your activities this quarter included biking, hiking, and skiing. You've earned another credit and have 7.5 hours left for next quarter.