

Criterion A: Fulfilling the requirements of the reflective statement

- To what extent does the student show how their understanding of cultural and contextual elements was developed through the interactive oral?

Note: The word limit for the reflective statement is 300–400 words. If the word limit is exceeded 1 mark will be deducted.

Marks	Level Descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Reflection on the interactive oral shows superficial development of the student’s understanding of cultural and contextual elements.
2	Reflection on the interactive oral shows some development of the student’s understanding of cultural and contextual elements.
3	Reflection on the interactive oral shows development of the student’s understanding of cultural and contextual elements.

Knowledge and Understanding:

- Know a work’s contexts and its significance

Examples)

Question: How was your understanding of cultural and contextual considerations of the work developed through the interactive oral?

Work Used: *Fathers and Sons* by Ivan Turgenev (Word Count = 321)

During the discussion, several articles were presented to the class. The subjects brought to light were the Russian economy during the 1850s, serfdom, and the question of whether Turgenev was obsolete or not. The articles on the Russian economy explained the state of transition the Russian economy was in during the mid-1850s. Prior to this period, there were members of the society called serfs. These were essentially slaves who worked on the fields of rich peasants, or the upper class. However, at this time Russia began to move away from serfdom.

After this discussion, it would appear Turgenev places great importance on the time, place, and culture of his novel, as serfdom and the existence of social classes are a predominant feature in *Fathers and Sons*. I found this discussion interesting, as it clarified some aspects of the novel. For example, in *Fathers and Sons*, Nikolai is a relatively well-off land owner, and he ‘owns’ many serfs. However, as the system begins to evolve, the serfs and their owners have some trouble adjusting to the new system of land ownership. The serfs are misbehaved and irresponsible, and these aspects of the culture and context form the setting of the novel.

The article on the ‘Turgenev Question’ was interesting as well, because it highlighted some of Turgenev’s techniques, and what he’s famous for. According to the article, the art of Turgenev is in understatement: he manages to capture large philosophical, social, and historical movements as manifested in everyday life.

This can indeed be seen in *Fathers and Sons*. Turgenev paints a picture of commonplace Russian life with characters like Nikolai Arkady, Pavel, Bazarov and Fenichka, using barely any overly dramatic devices. Yet, through the characters' thoughts and interactions with each other Turgenev explores ideas such as familial relationships. Furthermore, he portrays other aspects of Russian life, including the wide gap between social classes and the idea of young people rejecting all authorities.

Marks and Comments:

The length of the statement is 321 words. It is clear that, after listening to the discussion on the articles that were presented, the student has furthered to some extent his understanding of the cultural and contextual elements of the novel. The student has tried to include rather a lot of quite complicated information and ideas, which takes the sharpness off the reflection, but there is no doubt that he has at least started to think about issues in the novel in a different way as a result of the interactive oral. That would place the reflective statement in the middle range of the descriptors for criterion A: fulfilling the requirements of the reflective statement receiving a 2.

Work Used: *A Chronicle of a Death Foretold* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

I was really glad that the second interactive oral on our translated works went further into the issue of honor in Latin American cultures. It was useful that John pointed out, first, that "Latin American Culture" is in itself an over-simplified label and that the Colombian context of this novel is not that of the Argentinean culture of Borges. Honor is one thing in a Colombian village, but the honor among the gauchos of Borges is not quite the same.

Honor in this Colombian novel became, in this presentation, much more clearly connected for me to the terms "marianismo" and "machismo" that we heard a little about in the first presentation on "Chronicle." It's worth seeing that while Angela's mother is deeply connected to family honor, to the older ideas of women being like the virgin Mary, and the need for everyone in the family to protect the honor of their women, Angela doesn't really buy into those ideas completely. She and her friends know ways to fake virginity, which itself says something about how much they are impacted by the previous generation's ideas. They don't seem particularly worried about honor even though that's what leads to Santiago's death.

And I found it useful to see that even the "machismo" (supposedly) of Angela's brothers was really undermined by the author, (is this irony?) even though the ending was a bloody macho event in defense of honor. I can see that all these terms can be used a bit too loosely, as Melody showed with her three statements including the terms, all of which could be questioned and misinterpreted. I'm seeing I need to be careful about using these terms if I use them at all when I write my essay.
(Word count: 289)

Marks and Comments:

Although the reflective statement ranges, perhaps, a little too widely, there is clear development of thinking here, and deepened understanding of some elements of the culture and context of this novel. Terms are clearly undergoing a process of refinement, and a more judicious attitude about using them is

developing. The aside—“is this irony?”—may possibly be the most useful phrase, possibly promising an angle for an essay. In spite of the breadth, there is an inherent connection among all the perceptions of this reflective response, and the writing merits the mark of 3.