

English 10
Training Papers
2007/2008

Reading: Making Connections

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Theme

***Our toughest struggles in
life can be with ourselves.***

In this passage, swimmer Marilyn Bell Di Lascio describes one of the greatest moments of her life.



The True Story of Lake Ontario

by Marilyn Bell Di Lascio

There were no stars at eleven o'clock that September night, and no moon. It was overcast and windy, and very, very black. Taking a deep breath, I dove in and so began the night that would change my life forever. When I surfaced and looked around, I couldn't see where the lake ended and the sky began. I couldn't see anything, so I just started swimming.

When I had said good-bye to my coach, Gus, earlier, I was very worried about finding him in the escort boat. I was nervous about getting lost in the dark and not nearly as brave as I've been portrayed. Gus just looked me in the eye and said, "When you dive in the water, keep your eyes open, and swim north, and *I will find you.*"

I believed him. Gus Ryder had been my coach and mentor ever since I joined Toronto's Lakeshore Swimming Club. Although I'd been swimming since I was nine—and always put my heart into it—I was never very fast and never very good. But I was so determined.

In 1948, when Barbara Ann Scott won the World and Olympic figure-skating championships, she captivated me. She became my role model, and I wanted to go to the Olympics and win a gold medal, swimming for Canada. When Toronto gave her a ticker-tape parade¹, I went by myself and stood on the corner of Bay and Queen. As she drove past sitting on the back of the convertible, I thought she was so wonderful—the perfect Canadian girl—and everything I wanted to be. After seeing her, I became even more determined.

- 5 When I was eleven, Gus had watched me finish a one-mile² race in freezing cold Lake Ontario. He introduced himself, saying, "Marilyn, you have so much determination and so much heart, if you work at it you'll be a fine swimmer." I started swimming for Gus, and was soon totally involved with the club. We trained for hours in open water, and every time I got into the lake, I had to deal with my fears. I was petrified of fish, of weeds, of whatever might be in there. I did it anyway, but no matter how hard I worked, I still came in third or fourth.

By 1952 it was clear I was never going to the Olympics, so I turned professional. I looked forward each year to the competition hosted by the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE), and

¹*ticker-tape parade*: a parade in which the spectators throw shredded paper in celebration

²*one mile*: 1.6 kilometres

I just knew I was ready to win. Then, in the winter of 1954, the CNE announced they had challenged the American long-distance swimmer Florence Chadwick to swim the thirty-two miles across Lake Ontario from Youngstown, New York, to Toronto. They also announced that the annual professional swims for Canadians would be cancelled. I was sixteen that year and bitterly disappointed.

In July of 1954, I swam the Atlantic City Marathon. There, I met a young lifeguard named Joe Di Lascio. Having never been in the ocean before, I was petrified. I said to Joe, “Excuse me, are there fish in here?” Like everybody else, Joe never expected me to win. But when the twenty-six-mile race was over, I had won the women’s championship—and Joe had won my heart!

Back in Toronto, there was a lot of controversy around the CNE challenging an American. That’s when Gus suggested I challenge Florence in a race across the lake. The idea had never occurred to me, but it had to Gus, and after Atlantic City, he had made up his mind.

The *Toronto Star* agreed to back me, in return for an exclusive. I really had no confidence about completing that swim, and the idea of swimming at night terrified me. But I wasn’t sure Florence could make it either. I figured if I could swim one stroke farther than her, it would be worth it. I would do it for Gus, and for me, but I would also do it for Canada.

- 10 We were to start Monday, September 6, from the Coast Guard station in Youngstown. The forecast was bad, so Florence postponed, and we all went into “waiting mode.” My team, along with the many *Star* reporters, waited at the Youngstown Yacht Club on the *Mona 4*, the yacht that would accompany me on my swim. The officials agreed to give us a two-hour notice of when Florence planned to start, allowing us plenty of time to get to the starting point. But, when word came at ten o’clock Wednesday night, there was a mad scramble. They had left us only one hour! There wasn’t enough time for me to go to the starting point with Gus in the escort boat. He had to leave immediately, knowing he wouldn’t get there in time to be beside me when I started. I would have to start alone. But when he left he said, “I will find you,” and I believed him.

Howie, one of the *Star* reporters, took me by car to the starting point. A few minutes after Florence started, he said, “Okay, Marilyn. Now it’s your turn.” Shortly after that, Winnie Roach, the other Canadian swimmer, began.

It was so dark; the only things I could see were the lights from the boats around Florence. So I did what Gus told me—swam straight out of the Niagara River and just kept going. After what seemed an eternity, I finally heard Gus’s voice—they had found me! With him were George, another *Star* reporter and Jack, the boatman. Gus had a big flashlight, and he shone it just ahead of my stroke, saying, “Marilyn, just swim to the light and I will get you across this lake.” For the rest of the night, each time I extended my arm for the next stroke, my hand was reaching into that beam of light.

Florence swam for about four or five hours before she quit. But it wasn’t until several hours later, when I was having difficulty, that Gus told me that Florence—and Winnie—were out. I was the only one left, and it was up to me to swim for Canada!

It was a long night. I had to deal with horrible lamprey eels, and my fear of the lake and the dark. Gus kept me going any way he could. But when I realized the dawn was coming, and

night was almost over, everything changed. It was the most glorious sunrise I've ever seen, and one of the most wonderful moments in my life. I thought to myself, *Perhaps I'll be able to do this after all.*

- 15 Now Gus began writing messages on a chalkboard to distract me and keep my thoughts positive. Once he wrote, "You know you can do it, you can do it for the team!" Another time he wrote, "All the Atlantic City lifeguards are pulling for you." This referred to Joe, of course. He even wrote, "If you give up, I give up."

Sometime in the morning, a flotilla of boats began to surround me. Interest in my swim had spread like wildfire all across Canada. When Gus held up the message, "All of Canada is rooting for you," I wondered, *How did all of Canada know I was in the water?* But they did!

At the CNE grounds in Toronto, people had started to arrive by the thousands to watch me come in. I knew nothing about that, however. I was just in the lake, in this little cocoon, moving along.

By midday I started falling asleep and veering away from the boat, so Gus brought out my close friend Joan in a water taxi and said, "Joan you've got to go and swim with her and get her attention back."

I heard a splash and suddenly Joan was right in my face saying, "I'm here to swim with you Marilyn. Come on!" She swam with me for a while, and I perked right up.

- 20 By now the boats that surrounded me were cutting in front of me, jockeying for space. The exhaust, oil and gas began to cause problems. My team fought quite a battle to protect my space. Eventually they were successful, because all the jockeying stopped.

Somewhere on the lake later in the day, I began to experience a very unusual, hard-to-describe spirit of unity and togetherness. For a short while, competing media or not, it felt like there were no divisions and everybody had only one goal, and that was to get me to Toronto. I learned later that my family and friends were all praying for me, and that the whole time I was swimming there was always a nun in my school chapel praying for my safety.

At 8:00 p.m., after twenty-one hours in the water, I began approaching the shore. I was suffering from sleep deprivation and not really "present," but my arms were still going. I later saw a film of the moment when I touched the break wall and an enormous roar went up from the crowd. But I don't remember that. I remember a lot of confusion, and finally, Gus's voice breaking through the haze. As they pulled me into the boat I said: "What happened? Did I do it?" And that's when I heard Gus say, "Oh Marilyn! You did it, you did it, you finished!" At that point I came out of the zone I'd been in and realized I had actually done it.

I was amazed because I hadn't really thought I could. I hadn't really thought anybody could!

I was stunned when I learned the CNE decided to award me the \$10 000 prize money. That night, among the many congratulatory telegrams I received was one that thrilled me to pieces—from Barbara Ann Scott!

The next night I was presented with the prize on the CNE Grandstand stage with the show headliners—Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, who had stopped their show the day before to pray

for my safety in the lake. On Monday, Toronto hosted a ticker-tape parade for me up Bay Street to city hall. It rained, but the people came out anyway. There were mounted police, marching bands and thousands of people crowding the streets—screaming and yelling and waving at me, while the ticker-tape streamed down from every window. Gus and I rode in a big Cadillac convertible, and sat up on the back, just the way Barbara Ann Scott had. When we stopped at the corner of Bay and Queen, the same corner where I had watched Barbara Ann Scott’s parade, I had a flashback. I saw myself standing there five years before—just a kid—with my dream of swimming for Canada.

- 25 For many years after my swim, when I returned to Canada, people would come up to me and say, “The day you swam that lake, I was with you.” I hear magnificent stories all the time when I’m home, from people who say things like, “My mother didn’t cook dinner that night. We had baked beans on toast by the radio, because my mother wouldn’t leave it. And we prayed for you.”

All these years later, I am still so deeply touched, and I really think that all *those* stories are the true story of Lake Ontario.

In this passage, Canadian Sharon Wood describes her experiences on Mount Everest.



Sharon Wood: No Limits

by Sharon Wood

There were times Wood was afraid. After all, people had died on that mountain.

“You need fear. It’s healthy. You just can’t let it kill you. If you get too much of it, it will kill you. If you get too little of it, it will kill you,” Wood said, admitting she had doubts several times during the climb whether she’d make it to the summit or not. “There were times I didn’t think I’d make it. We had very difficult conditions and it seemed like our odds were stacked against us.”

Due to the shortened preparation time, the climbers had to carry 30 kg loads of equipment they would otherwise have had placed ahead of them. Blanchard and Doyle were not up to the challenge and dropped out of the summit attempt.

“It took all we had to just maintain our balance from one move to the next. At these altitudes of 25,000 to 27,000 feet (about 7600 metres), you are inhaling four times faster than normal and you still aren’t getting enough oxygen,” wrote Sharon later.

- 5 Of the 13 climbers who began the journey, only Wood and her climbing partner, Dwayne Congdon, made it to the top, reaching the summit at 9:00 p.m., May 20, 1986.

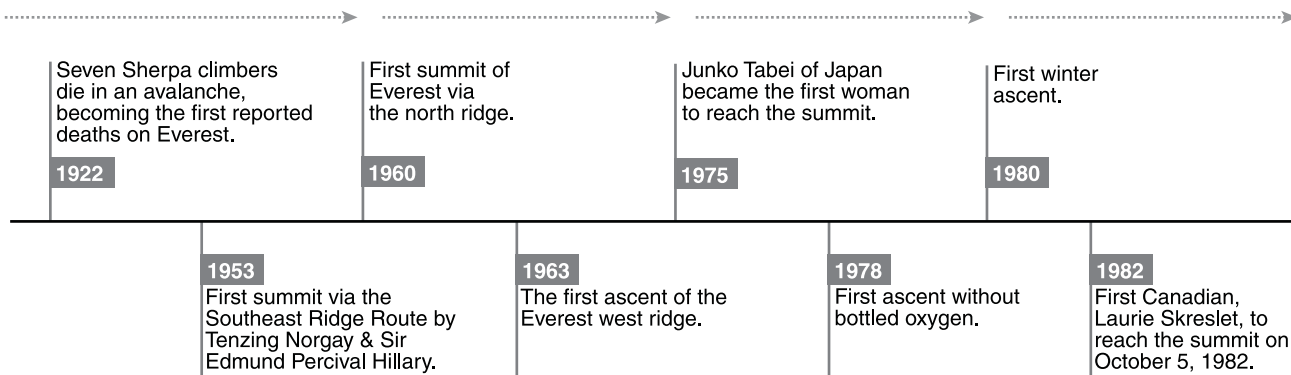
“At nine in the evening on top of Mount Everest, the sun can be seen setting over an awesome curving horizon. I am sure it was beautiful, but to us it meant something very different. We took our masks off and kneeled down, succumbing to the wind, our relief and our fatigue.”

With night fast approaching, there wasn’t much time for Congdon and Wood to celebrate. The climbing partners snapped a few pictures of each other—proof and memento of their victorious climb. But for Wood, it wasn’t just the two of them on that mountain.

“As far as I’m concerned, it’s the whole team [that made it to the summit].”

It was the first successful ascent on that route, a feat that’s been repeated only once or twice since. An awesome accomplishment, but now they needed what little resources they had left for the dangerous journey back down the mountain.

- 10 Wood says that mountaineers try to avoid descending a peak at night after a very long hard day, exactly the situation she and Dwayne found themselves in. “On Mount Everest, the slightest mistake could have disastrous consequences. Many have had the strength and will to get themselves to the top, but fewer have been able



to retrace their steps to safety.”

After 20 minutes at the top of Everest, Wood and Congdon started their descent to camp, short of oxygen and with night quickly approaching. Exhausted after 12 hours of strenuous climbing in the extreme altitude and knowing that their oxygen tanks would soon run out, Wood had doubts about their ability to safely descend. They lost each other in the gloom as Congdon fell behind. Wood reached the bottom of her first descent and couldn't see Congdon. She anxiously waited 30 minutes but Congdon didn't appear. Wood was concerned about his safety but she was cold, becoming delirious and was in no condition to climb back up to try to find him.

“As I leaned against the rock I nodded off and began to dream. I vividly [imagined] Dwayne's arrival over and over again. I awoke and strained to see his light high above me but slowly I realized it was just another illusion. I dozed off again.”

She snapped out of her stupor and regained the focus she needed to continue the descent to their simple tent site below. When she made it to the tent site's relative safety, darkness made it difficult for her to remember its layout. She fumbled her way to the tent, and, desperate for water, awkwardly started her propane stove.

Wood was aware that she'd abandoned her partner. “The thought haunted me. When I had left him I had not been aware that I was making this decision. I just knew that standing still on that mountain was going against a very strong self-preservation instinct. I must keep moving.”

- 15 Thankfully, Congdon made it back to camp safely 90 minutes later. Because his oxygen

tank ran out, he had had to slow his pace to repeatedly warm his fingers and toes and refocus his thoughts.



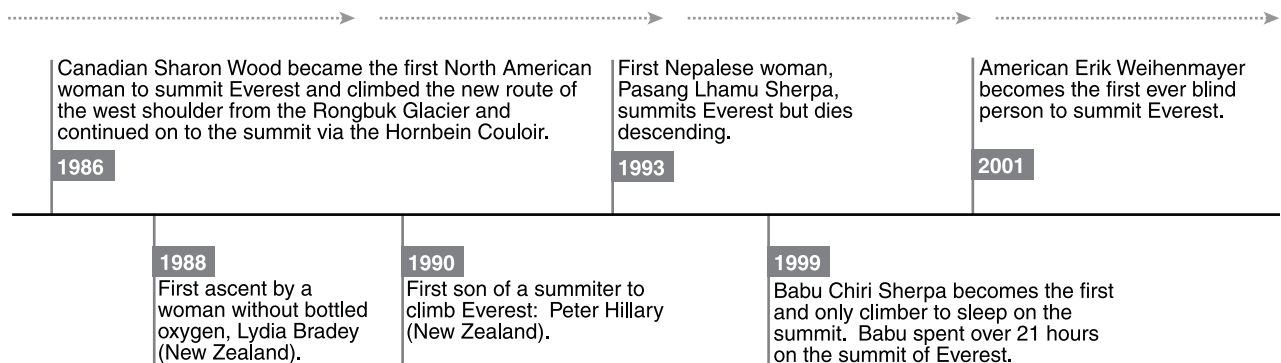
Wood and her partner made it back safely, but during that arduous journey, they learned important lessons. They learned the value of perseverance and perceived the truth that people design their own limitations. They learned that “impossible” is

a term defined by the values we give it. Self-discipline and drive to be the best we can be is, in many ways, what propels us through the tough times in life. In one of Wood's many presentations, she refers to an old Buddhist saying: “Once you reach the top of the mountain, keep climbing.”

“...When we reach and go beyond our perceived horizon or limitations...we are transformed. Transformed from being confined and defined by our limitations, to instead becoming more defined by our possibilities.”

Settling back into her life in Canada, her life was made larger by the birth of two children, Robin in 1989, and Daniel in 1992. When her eldest son was school age, Wood helped found a small, independent, non-denominational school in Canmore. Her dream was to create a safe learning environment that reflected the community values and beliefs of the families in the area.

For Sharon Wood, the unlimited possibilities shown to her on the slopes of Mount Everest have led to a world of public speaking, mountain guiding and the nurturing of her children.



List of Possible Responses

30. Who would be the better role model, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio or Sharon Wood?
In making your argument, you **must** discuss **both** passages.

Both women serve as role models in a number of ways. Although they are particular role models to women and athletes, their accomplishments reveal aspects of their character, which are equally inspirational to anyone. Students may present that either one or both may make effective role models. Students may also choose to present an argument that neither is an effective role model.

Students may make direct or indirect reference to these points for textual support. These points are a guideline only. Use the holistic rubric to assess the student response.

Marilyn Bell Di Lascio	Sharon Wood
<p>Positive role model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overcame fear (par 1, 2, 9, 14) • trusted others “Gus just looked me in the eye and said...‘I will find you’” (par 2) • determined (par 3 and 5) • realistic (par 6) • patriotic (par 13) • appreciative of the support of others (par 21 and 26) • acknowledges influences/values of others (par 24) • modest about her fame (par 22) • Marilyn did something no other woman had done before. • Marilyn’s victory is a triumph for her country. <p>Negative role model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fearful (par 2 and 5) • lacks confidence (par 9) • dependent on others 	<p>Positive role model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overcame fear (par 1 and 2) • strong physically (par 3 and 4) • appreciative of the support of others (par 8) • conscientious (par 14) • caring (par 19) • uses her fame to create the school and help others • determined—she forced herself to keep going when she was delirious (par 11 to 13) • perseverance (par 16) • self-discipline (par 16) • strength of emotions (par 11) • acknowledges her own limitations and faults (par 19) <p>Negative role model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • abandons her partner (par 11) • had doubts

Note: Students who do not discuss both passages will receive a maximum scale point of 4. However, students should not be penalized for focusing predominantly on one passage.

Note: Other answers are possible.

Reading: Making Connections – Training Paper #1

30. Who would be the better role model, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio or Sharon Wood?
In making your argument, you **must** discuss **both** passages.

The true story of Lake Ontario and Sharon Wood's No limits are irony, as in both stories, the author want to show something else. The way represent the stories are different but they have same theme.

Reading: Making Connections – Training Paper #2

30. Who would be the better role model, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio or Sharon Wood?
In making your argument, you **must** discuss **both** passages.

I think the better role model is Marilyn Bell Di Lascio. She is so brave and trust to her friend. She is brave, because she do no scared of the dark. She can finish the swimming.

Sharon Wood does not better, because she is fear of something.

Reading: Making Connections – Training Paper #3

30. Who would be the better role model, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio or Sharon Wood?
In making your argument, you **must** discuss **both** passages.

I think that both would be great role models, because they both achieved great goals. They both worked hard and had to be determined to achieve their goal. Although they would not have made it without the help of their team, they both worked hard physically and mentally.

Sharon Wood went through a lot to achieve her goal she had the extreme cold to deal with along with a very heavy bag, but she also had a lack of oxygen forcing them to carry large oxygen tanks. She also had a partner that she either had to wait for or try to keep up to.

Marilyn Bell Di Lascio is in my opinion the better role model though. She also had to deal with freezing temperature with less clothes. It would have been hard with the continued strain on the arm constantly, but she also had no sleep for almost one entire day. Starting in the dark was no help either, it is very hard to know where you are going when it is dark and there are no landmarks of any kind around you to help your sense of direction.

That is why I think Marilyn would be the best role model. Although they are both great role models.

Reading: Making Connections – Training Paper #4

30. Who would be the better role model, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio or Sharon Wood?
In making your argument, you **must** discuss **both** passages.

Marilyn Bell Di Lascio would be a better role model because she tries and tries, she had a lot of trust in her coach, and was very determined to win the swimming competition. Marilyn Di lascio kept practising and never gave up and since she did that she finally won.

Sharon Wood would be a good role model too but not as good as Marilyn Di Lascio is.

Sharon's dream is to create a safe learning enviroment that reflects in the community values and beliefs of the families in the area.

This is why Sharon Wood would be a good role model as well but Marilyn Bell Di lascio is a better role model. She shows commitment and is very hard working.

Reading: Making Connections — Training Paper #5

30. Who would be the better role model, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio or Sharon Wood?
In making your argument, you **must** discuss **both** passages.

I believe that Marilyn Bell Di Lascio from the story "the true story of Lake Ontario" would be a better role model than Sharon Wood from the story "Sharon Woods: No limits". Marilyn would be a better role model for people because she didn't leave anyone behind her in danger like Sharon did to her climbing partner.

Both people showed tremendous courage in their accomplishments, however I do believe that Marilyn would be a better role model than Sharon because during Marilyn's swim across Lake Ontario she was always determined to make her country proud, her coach proud and herself proud.

Sharon did a very hard thing by climbing Mount Everest, and this challenge was made harder by carrying her own equipment. Even though Sharon had to haul her own gear she was still able to stop and take a break were as Marilyn was not able to stop swimming at any time. Marilyn's challenge was made harder because she unexpectedly had to start in the dark without her coach and she also had to deal with all the media boats crowding her.

Although both tasks are very challenging I think that Marilyn would be a better role model.

Reading: Making Connections – Training Paper #6

30. Who would be the better role model, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio or Sharon Wood?
In making your argument, you **must** discuss **both** passages.

I think that the better role model between Marilyn Bell Di Lascio and Sharon Wood would be Marilyn Bell Di Lascio, because in my mind swimming all that way in the dark with the fish and the eals takes more heart than climbing a mountain. Don't get me wrong climbing a mountain is hard and takes a lot of heart and determination too, but you just look at all of the obsticles Marilyn had to do, and not just on that day. She had to train for this and she had swam many miles to get to where she was that day. She had to work for this event many years before this ever took place. Marilyn also had a dream when she was younger. She had set a goal for herself right from the beginning, "I wanted to go to the Olympics and win a gold medal, swimming for Canada. Marilyn may not have completed this goal but it all worked out in the end because she then challenged Florence Chadwick to race thirty two miles across Lake Ontario from Youngstown, New York, to Toronto. The story was inspiring because not only did Marilyn win, she won for Canada. She was an inspiration to many people in Canada. Sharon Wood also inspired many but I don't think her story was to inspirational because she didn't train for it many years back from when she was younger, I also think that swimming thirty two miles in the dark with living cretures in the water with you is harder than

climbing a mountain, But that's just my opinion. Both these story's
are inspirational and very rewarding.

Reading: Making Connections – Training Paper #7

30. Who would be the better role model, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio or Sharon Wood?
In making your argument, you **must** discuss **both** passages.

Marilyn Bell Di Lascio and Sharon Wood were two very extraordinary people, that faced challenges most of the us will never have to rise to. Realisticly speaking they were no different then you and me. They both had fears and challenges, dreams and determination. They knew what they wanted and went for it no matter what the odds were against them.

Personally, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio, would be a better role model for me, while Sharon Wood seems a good role model for my life partner. This is because we all lead different lives, thus learning life long lessons at different times. This also makes our challenges throughout life very different.

I relate more to Marilyn Bell Di Lascio in that I don't have very much confidence in myself. I don't garentee that I will succeed in everything I do, but instead that I will do my best. I believe that her story reflects the hardships all of us face day to day.

On the other hand, Sharon Wood, did present a very good point. "People design their own limitations", is something to know to be one of lifes forgotten truths. No body is going to make our dreams come true for us. It is of our own responcibility to persue our dreams, stick to our goals, and remain persistent and determind. Not to metion that in consistently working on the compleation of our goals one must face their fears.

Both these storys portray ordinary people completeing tasks, once thought to be impossible. In being that they are true storys, they inspire only the best out of people by telling of great morality. Most definatly both, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio and Sharon Wood, are inspirational in their own way. Both making good role models, by never giving up and over coming great obstickles.

Reading: Making Connections – Training Paper #8

30. Who would be the better role model, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio or Sharon Wood?
In making your argument, you **must** discuss **both** passages.

Out of Marilyn Bell Di Lascio and Sharon Wood, Sharon Wood would be the better role model. Both women had fears of their respective tasks, and they both doubted themselves. But as Di Lascio needed much support and motivation from her coach and the nation, Wood had only her team of “thirteen climbers who began the journey” and her own self-motivation to support herself. Wood’s challenge was much harder than the swimmer’s, seeing as Wood had to “carry 30kg loads of equipment” as she made her way up to the summit, and was “short of oxygen” on her way down. If she gave up on the mountain, it would mean she would die. Di Lascio had at least one boat near her as an escort most of her journey, and she feared that she “would have to start alone”. If she gave up, the escort boat could just pick her up and take her home easily. After her journey from Mount Everest, Wood “learned the value of perseverance”, found that “people design their own limitations” and “self-discipline and drive” are “what propels us through the tough times in life”. When Di Lascio finished her swim, she received media coverage, prize money, and stories about how other Canadians were involved with her swim, but she did not learn a life lesson herself. Both women had the drive to achieve what they had and are both people to look up to, but Sharon Wood is clearly the better role model.

Reading: Making Connections – Training Paper #9

30. Who would be the better role model, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio or Sharon Wood?
In making your argument, you **must** discuss **both** passages.

In this life, the human race is built upon finding your passion, and to pursue your dream despite fears and obstacles. In the short story, “The True Story of Lake Ontario” it explains, with perseverance and determination, the sky is the limit in anything that you do. Marilyn Bell Di Lascio was just a 16 year old girl who had a dream of making it big in the swimming world, just as her role model Barbra Ann Scott, World and Olympic figure-skating champion.

Throughout the story of Marilyn, she started off as a nervous swimmer and not very confident in her skills, to a national sensation for her determination to keep pushing herself to the fullest. This brings motivation and inspiration to the youth of our age, to not give up just because of obstacles; they will only make you stronger in the end.

“You need fear. It’s healthy. You just can’t let it kill you. If you get too much of it, it will kill you. If you get too little of it, it will kill you.” Sharon Wood puts in a confident manner. In the short story, “Sharon Woods: No Limit” she conquers the summit Everest despite complications and fear. She puts aside how fearful she is of dying and resorts to being self-motivated and keeps going.

Sharon Wood is a perfect example of a reason to give up. She has all odds against her, and not much room to think with a low level of oxygen. Wrong, Sharon could have been a perfect example of a reason

to give up, but she didn't let her fear of dieing cloud her way of thinking. The thought of completing a massive achievement partially by herself was evidently frightening, but that little something inside of her kept her going, kept her moving along and pushing for completing Everest.

For young teenagers today, motivation is a word that doesn't happy to often. People now aday's don't seem to believe in themselves. However, I believe that Marilyn Bell Di Lascio was a better role model. It is easier to relate to a person who has a similar problem at stake. At the age of eleven she was determined to swim in a mile of freezing cold water. Age 16, she really had a dream on the line, and as the years went by she kept pushing herself for her dream. She show's growth and realism to us, which is a very important concept for youth these days. Marilyn gives us a chance to believe and dream big about out future. For we are the ones who behold the future ahead of us.

Marilyn and Sharon both had dreams of making it big in their own way. The challenges that they both faced were different; however, the result of them achieving their goal was the same. Even though their hopes and dreams were on the line, with the help of others and knowing that there is hope in completing the impossible is moving. Prooving to the human race that, when you are passionate about something, all problems aside for that one moment in time.

Reading: Making Connections – Training Paper #10

30. Who would be the better role model, Marilyn Bell Di Lascio or Sharon Wood?
In making your argument, you **must** discuss **both** passages.

While both Marilyn Bell Di Lascio and Sharon Wood both make excellent role models, it is my opinion that Marilyn takes the cake. Marilyn started out her journey as a swimmer with a drive that is uncommon among people. She stated that even though she was never the best, she had the drive to keep going anyway. When the challenge to swim across Lake Ontario was presented to her, she accepted it. Even though she hated lakes and that the swim would have to be completed at night. While she was swimming she had to deal with sleep-deprivation, utter darkness, and media frenzy. Despite all that she kept going, while the others had given up. What struck me though, was the fact she did that all for herself, to prove that she could. It was only in the end did it become for her country. Sharon Wood is still an inspiration. Her battle to stay alive is amazing in of itself, never mind the fact that she had actually completed the Everest climb. An amazing feat not less, but Marilyn's story inspired me more. They both had physical elements to face of course, but Marilyn had to overcome self-doubt, her ability to actually finish. I believe that most teenagers can relate to that. As the younger generation we are often suppressed in our abilities simply because we don't believe we can do it. Most of us have a hard time looking past that. But Marilyn was literally able to swim out of that, achieve her dream, and inspire others along the way. That is true motivation for the adolescents of today and generations to come.

Rationales for *Reading: Making Connections* Training Papers

Training Paper #1 — Mark: 1

- Response is irrelevant and unacceptable
- Too short to meet the requirements of the question
- Significant misunderstanding of the texts
- *Student misunderstands the question*

Training Paper #2 — Mark: 2

- Response is inadequate and incomplete
- Little evidence of connections
- Underdeveloped, limited ideas
- *Sharon Wood statement unclear*

Training Paper #3 — Mark: 3

- All understanding is at a literal level
- Somewhat adequate response
- Simplistic assertions
- *A lot of support, but all at a literal level*

Training Paper #4 — Mark: 3

- Somewhat adequate response
- Understanding at a literal level
- Response lacks detail and incomplete
- Assertions are simplistic
- Ideas are developed unevenly
- *Only reference to Sharon Wood is a direct lift from the text, no mention of Mt. Everest*

Training Paper #5 — Mark: 4

- Competent in its discussion of ideas
- Demonstrates some understanding at an interpretive level
- Response is straightforward
- Misses subtle ideas

Training Paper #6 — Mark: 4

- Competent discussion of ideas
- Some understanding at the interpretive level

- Organized and straightforward
- Misses subtle and complex ideas
- *A lot of detailed support, but misses more complex ideas*

Training Paper #7 — Mark: 5

- Proficient synthesis of ideas
- Clear understanding at an interpretive level
- Support is convincing and relevant
- *The response improves in the second half*
- *Many errors, yet the ideas lift this response to an upper level*

Training Paper #8 — Mark: 5

- Proficient in depth of discussion and synthesis of ideas
- Clear understanding at the interpretive level
- Support is convincing and relevant
- Explicit support
- *Sophisticated assertion about life lessons*
- *Addresses both passages*

Training Paper #9 — Mark: 6

- Superior synthesis of ideas
- Insightful understanding at interpretive level
- Makes inferences
- Support is thoughtful and well-integrated
- Despite clarity, response need not be flawless
- *An attainable 6*

Training Paper #10 — Mark: 6

- A superior response in its depth of discussion and synthesis of ideas
- Insightful understanding of texts at an interpretive level
- Thoughtful and well supported
- Makes inferences
- *Conclusion demonstrates insight*
- *A succinct response demonstrating a lot of thought and clear insights*

PART C

Writing

Suggested Time: 50 minutes

- Write a multi-paragraph composition on the writing prompt below.
- Your writing may be persuasive, narrative and/or descriptive.
- You may agree or disagree with the writing prompt.
- You may use ideas based on your own experience, the experience of others, your reading, your imagination, or from any aspect of your life.
- Plan your ideas in the space provided on the following page.
- Write your response in the **Response Booklet** using **blue** or **black** ink.

Getting Ready to Write

We face many obstacles in life. They may be created by others or by circumstances beyond our control. Sometimes these obstacles are a result of our own doubts and fears.

Topic

31. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

Writing - Training Paper #1

31. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

We face many obstacles in life. They may be created by others or by circumstances beyond our control. Sometimes these obstacles are a result of our own doubts and fears.

Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves because

Writing - Training Paper #2

31. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

Most people would probably agree to this and say something like people stress themselves out and make them hate themselves for being fat or ugly. I disagree I think it is a bigger struggle with society. It is because for one people are stressed because they work and work and the government takes their money. And because people have no money some people do drugs because they are so stressed and it is the only thing that makes them feel relaxed and good about themselves. Other people have to steal things to make money and survive. And when something of yours is stolen from you it stresses you out even more.

In some sense though people do struggle with themselves but only because of other people. For example people struggle with themselves because they think they are too fat or too ugly, because of people on tv. But the Media would not have to put people like that on tv if guys and girls did not like the way they look. Guys like the girls on tv so the girls feel ugly but the girls think all the guys on tv are hot and regular guys feel ugly because of that.

The best thing to do in my opinion is to think positive. If you think you can do something then you can if not then you can not until you think you can. You are only as ugly as you think you are, or as old as you think you are, or as smart, successful, or talented as you think. That is why I think the toughest struggle is not with yourself as much as it is with everything else.

Writing - Training Paper #3

31. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves by having something going through our head, or it could be the stress we have with school, friends, and even could be with how we feel.

Some our toughest struggles with school could be the fact of knowing if we will pass or not or trying to get A's, or B's or just the fact that is hard and the matter of understanding the work.

Struggles with friends would be if a friend is mad at you or you are mad at them and you want to solve it but you just can't because you can't talk to them without getting yelled at.

The toughest struggles with what goes through our head could be that we think about what may happen in the future, how will I go on knowing something bad will happen. Something like that.

Writing - Training Paper #4

31. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

We face many fears in life but not all of them hurt you. Some fears and scares make you stronger and more respectful. But we face many obstacles in life. They may be created by others or by circumstances beyond our control. Sometimes these obstacles are a result of our own doubts and fears. But sometimes our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

Fear can be a very bad thing in life which can scare us or hurt us very badly, but it can help us get through life and help us accomplish things that we have never dreamed of doing. Because fear and doubt holds us back and makes it hard for us to go and do stuff out of our comfort zone. Because we only do stuff when we are comfortable and confident. But if we overcome or cross that safe zone we are capable of doing alot more because fear is not just about monsters or snakes it could be of public speaking or going swimming.

Fear can be an unusual Expierience because you could be scared of fish so then you get scared of water and so you never go swimmning and never will go skiing or tubing behind a boat because of your little scare of fish. But if you overcome your fears you wont be held back and will be able and are capable of doing much much more.

Writing - Training Paper #5

31. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

There was this girl named Sarah. Sarah was about 9 years old when she decided she wanted to be a rockstar so she and two of her friends decided to start a band. They were only 8 and 9 years old so they weren't very good. The singers voice was squeaky, the drums were off beat, and the guitars were out of tune. Sarah didn't tell any of her friends that she was in a band because she was afraid to admit that she was friends with Kyle and Jason (the two guys in her band). None of her friends really like Kyle and none of them knew Jason. Sarah didn't want to admit she was friends with them because she was afraid her other friends would stop hanging out with her. This was the dumbest thing ever because if they were really her friends they would accept Kyle and Jason. If Sarah had told her friends about this she would have made fans which would help her become famous. Eventually they found out and none of them cared. They all became friends with the two boys.

When it came time to play their first show, Sarah was petrified. She was ready to give up. The thought of being in the spot light with all of her friends and family watching her made her feel sick. She wasn't about to give up. She strapped on her guitar and played an awesome show. She pushed herself that little bit extra and overcame her stage fright. If she had given up she wouldn't be where she is today. She's still playing in the same band. They're a lot better than they used to be and she still keeps the crowd rocking and wanting more. If Sarah had given up she wouldn't be chasing after her goals. She may succeed at the smaller things in life but she would be giving up on her dreams.

Sarah often struggles to succeed because she worries too much about what people think. She often takes criticism too seriously and she doesn't take compliments seriously enough. One time she took all the courage she had and gave her demo tape to Chad Kroeger from the band Nickelback. It was a terrible recording but she gave it to him anyways. The next time she saw him he remembered who she was and still had her demo.

Sarah pushed herself to the limit and now she's daring enough to do almost anything. She went from a shy little girl to an outgoing young lady. She changed herself for the better. She may worry too much but she's always willing to try anything at least once. Sarah's worst critic is herself. She puts things in her head and she can't get them out. This also causes her to struggle but it's driving her towards success.

Writing - Training Paper #6

31. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

The toughest challenges in life are not just given to you. These are many things in life that must be understood before they can be defeated. Knowing who to trust, knowing who will support you and knowing how to challenge yourself can be the toughest challenges in life.

Knowing who to trust is not always easy. Trust is something that should be given in time because if you are too trusting people may try to take advantage of you. On the same side if you are not trusting enough people may view you negatively. Trust in people is one of the most challenging things you will do because you must balance your trust.

Support is essential for many people but it is not acquired easily. Support is hard to find because you need to know where to look. Support is also challenging because not only do you need to know who can support you but you must have trust in them in that they are looking out for you. These are many challenges in life to find support.

Many people do not know how to challenge themselves properly. Many people would rather do something easy instead of challenging themselves to do better. Bill Gates once said "life is what you make of it," and that is totally true because if you do not challenge yourself you will not receive the most success from your efforts.

In life the most challenging things are knowing who you can trust, knowing who can support you, and knowing how to challenge

ourselves. For trust you need balance and in support you need to know where to look, if you are to be able to challenge yourself and you can do this by setting a goal. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves, but only if we let it be.

Writing - Training Paper #7

31. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

“Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.” This statement means many different things to many different people. To me, this statement brings one thing to mind: popularity. Why must we struggle so hard to be popular? Why can't everybody be treated equally and not seperated into packs?

There is no single answer to this question. Everybody, deep down, wants to be popular. Some can control this urge, while others let it consume them. I have a prime example of this: my friend Jimmy. Ever since high school, Jimmy has strived to be popular. He has done any and everything to accomplish this. In elementary school, Jimmy was very anti-smoking, since his mother has lung cancer. But once in high school, he hooked up with the “cool” kids and his morals went straight out the window. Drugs, cigs, whatever they were doing, he wanted to be a part of. Now, 3 years later, Jimmy is addicted to everything from E to coke, homeless, and without his “cool” friends who got expelled. He lost his inner battle, and now is suffering the consiquences.

My ex-girlfriend, Jamie, tried hard to impress people around her. We were in a store one time and Jamie starts stealing clothes right in front of my eyes; even bragging about it! Obviously she got caught, and she got grounded from everything for 3 monthes. I asked her “what was going through your head?” She said “I was just trying to impress you.” That's when it hit me. Kids seem to get some sort of rush when doing something wrong. So I figure, why not make drugs legal but something like eating carrots illegal? Would the youth of tommorow be cutting class to go munch on some “orange”?

Youth should be more prepared for the emotional struggles they are going to have to face in high school. Although I agree that “kids have to learn on their own”, simple sessions about “this is what you’ll become if you _____” will do wonders.

The media portrays violent and wrong acts as “cool”, which confuses children and corrupts them. If parents don’t let the TV raise their child, the struggle to be popular will be more leaned towards positive outcomes straight “A”s, good behavior, and being nice to others will be glorified and not shunned like it currently is. Inner struggle is hard, but we don’t have to fight alone.

Writing - Training Paper #8

31. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

Overcoming life's heartaches would be a lot easier if we just removed one thing: ourselves. No, I don't mean that in a literal sense. The barriers we build for ourselves are most often the only thing that is stopping us. Be it self-doubt, fear, or anything else that we may think up. Life isn't as hard as it may seem. We just exaggerate problems to the point where things seem impossible. In order to really appreciate life, negative inhibitions need to be released.

Growing up and being pushed into the real world is a hard enough task as it is. Don't make it any harder by "psyching" yourself out. It's okay to be selfish about certain things in life. If you want to be a clown in a circus, by all means do it. If that's what makes you happy. Don't be afraid to achieve the things you want in life, just because your parents won't approve or your friends will think it's lame. They're not the ones living your life, you are. If a blind man can climb Mt. Everest then there's no excuse for the rest of us.

Writing - Training Paper #9

31. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

I got on that plane and left; I did not turn back or question myself, this was the first thing I was doing for myself and I could not be more excited. Had I known that coming home would become the most saddening struggle I've ever faced, would I have gotten on in the first place?

"New Zealand", I thought to myself as the plane descending into farmland, rolling hills, and glimmering rivers, "what will I find here?" The opportunity to travel to New Zealand and attend school there had landed in my lap on a frosty February morning, and I knew right away it was my chance, for pure independence.

The country changed me very quickly, when I started school I met people who were so lively. They lived to be themselves. There was no social pressure to fit to a certain mold, I embraced this fully and learn't quickly what it was like to for once be happy.

Sam came stumbling into my life the second week I was there. I'd seen him around the school, at first I didn't know that to think of him, he looked like a hippy with sholder length brown hair and scruffyness about him that said " I am what I am". He was the friendliest guy I had ever met, we got on the bus for our weekend trip to Queenstown strangers and got off friends. He made me feel happy with myself and confedent, something I had never completely felt back home with other guys. We spent every day and night talking about life. He learnt mine and I learn't his. Many of his stories saddened me, he had a hard life yet he was such a strong person. I began to love him and it scared me, more then I could ever thought possible.

New Zealand did not change me it merely brought out the part of me that had been suppressed by the endless pounding of “North American Society” ethics and ways of living into my head. At home I would constantly be mad; mad at my friends, family, society, and myself.

When I was not mad I was putting on a smile, always to please someone else. In New Zealand I was purely happy, I talked a lot, laughed even more, meant what I said and did what I wanted. I made friends from all around the world, who shared a little bit of themselves with me. I made better friends than I have ever had at home. The idea of leaving it all, that I had six weeks in this new life and then I must return upset me, and I dreaded that day. I cried a lot, more than I ever knew I could. I loved and left, smiled, and left, got to know myself, and left.

I learned though, and the struggles I faced during my last week there taught me everything I needed. I would lie in bed for hours just think, contemplating my life and how it developed how quickly I’ve learned so much. I realized that New Zealand would forever remain my backbone and although I must go home I will not be the same because I view life differently now, you must take advantage of every moment and opportunity, and act on every feeling. I learned that just because you are leaving something does not mean it is gone. With every experience brings a new opportunity and fortuitly for me my New Zealand trip presented me with endless opportunity and unextinguishable strength to pursue them. All I had to do was open up to myself to find them.

I know now it is not a person or a place that will make me happy but it is myself. I smile more now that I know this, I laugh and enjoy life taking everything as it comes, knowing that, like the kiwi’s, I am who I am.

Writing - Training Paper #10

31. Our toughest struggles in life can be with ourselves.

It was September of 2006: the start of a new school year. Anne had just moved to the neighbourhood and knew no one. As she made her way to school, her hands trembled with fear. She saw the huge high school in front of her. Students huddled in groups around the staircase, the door and the tables. They all stared at her as she walked by, or at least, so she thought.

Anne was terrified that she would not be accepted by the people at the school. She did not know what to do. In each class, she was introduced by the teacher as the new student in Grade 10. Afterwards, she would return to her desk in the corner. For a month, she went to classes and was top of the class, but still she had no friends. One day, she was called to the counsellor's office in the middle of her French class.

The counsellor wanted to know how Anne was getting along in school. She had noticed that she was incredibly smart, but her teachers were concerned about her lack of social activities. Anne told her counsellor how she feared of not being accepted, so she dared not go up to anyone and try to be their friend. The counsellor suggested her to join an interest club and try to make friends there. It was not that which puzzled Anne though. The counsellor's last words did.

Anne went down to the beach that day and watched the sunset. She watched as the water lapped onto the beach and receded. "Find yourself." Those words kept repeating in her mind. What did that mean? Those words were what the counsellor shouted out to her as she left the room. All of the sudden, it dawned on her. Anne was afraid of not

being accepted because she would not accept herself. She was afraid to believe in who she was. If she could not accept herself, who would?

Anne went home and wrote down a list of everything she loved. The list went on forever. She was a quirky, fun loving girl. She realized that there was nothing to be afraid of. She was who she was and if people do not accept her, it was their own loss. Her greatest struggle was her own fear and now she knew how to combat this beast before her.

The next morning, she went to school confident with her head held high. People noticed the change in her and when she went to talk with them, she was welcomed. By the end of the day, she had invitations to parties, sleepovers and movie nights. She was ecstatic. She had joined the cheerleading team and the student council along with her new friends.

Two years later, she was graduating, she was top of the class, president of the student council, and best cheerleader on the team. She had learned that she had to win the battle within before the battle outside. She was still afraid of tiny things. She was afraid that her marks would drop, afraid that she would not get into university, and afraid of change. However, she has learnt to deal with the greatest struggle; the struggle within. Fighting it is hard, but once that battle is won, the rest is easy. She knew challenges would keep coming her way, but she was ready for them.

Rationales for *Writing* Training Papers

Training Paper #1 — Mark: 1

- Ideas are not developed
- Too brief to accomplish the task

Training Paper #2 — Mark: 2

- Ideas are broad generalizations
- Colloquial vocabulary
- Weak sentence structure
- Frequent noticeable errors interfere with meaning

Training Paper #3 — Mark: 3

- Ideas are listed
- Limited vocabulary and sentence variety
- Structure is weak
- *Each paragraph is one sentence*

Training Paper #4 — Mark: 3

- Ideas are listed
- Limited vocabulary and sentence variety
- Errors distract
- Lacks a sense of audience

Training Paper #5 — Mark: 4

- Sense of purpose with support
- Basic vocabulary and sentence structure
- Attempts to engage the audience
- Errors do not impede meaning
- *Middle paper, personal narrative, lacks flair*

Training Paper #6 — Mark: 4

- Ideas generally straightforward and clear with some support and sense of purpose
- Basic vocabulary and sentences
- Attempts to engage
- Structure is formulaic

Training Paper #7 — Mark: 5

- Ideas are well developed and supported
- Clear sense of purpose
- Voice and tone does engage
- Writing demonstrates control
- *Unique voice and approach, but not consistent through response*

Training Paper #8 — Mark: 5

- Ideas are well-developed
- Clear sense of purpose
- Appropriate word choice
- Writing demonstrates control
- *Powerful conclusion*
- *Need further development of ideas*

Training Paper #9 — Mark: 6

- Ideas are fully developed and supported
- Maturity of thought
- Voice engages
- Effective word choice and sentence variety
- Structure is logical and effortless

Training Paper #10 — Mark: 6

- Ideas are fully developed and supported
- Accomplishes purpose with maturity
- Voice and tone engage
- Effective word choice and sentence variety
- Structure is logical
- *Tackles banal subject with maturity*
- *Effective conclusion*

Acknowledgments

“The True Story of Lake Ontario,” by Marilyn Bell Di Lascio as told to Janet Matthews. From *Chicken Soup for the Canadian Soul: Stories to Inspire and Uplift the Hearts of Canadians*. Health Communications, Inc. ©2001 Marilyn Bell Di Lascio. pp. 86–91.

“Sharon Wood: No Limits,” by Tamela Georgi and Lisa Wojna. From *Canadian Women Adventurers: Stories of Daring and Courage*. Folklore Publishing. ©2005. pp. 38–41.