

## Final Exam Practice: Text Analysis Response

**Your Task:** Read the passage below and write a well-developed, text-based response of two to three paragraphs. In your response, identify a central idea in the text and analyze how the author's use of *one* writing strategy (literary element or literary technique or rhetorical device) develops this central idea. Use strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis. Do *not* simply summarize the text. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response. Please type your response.

---

### Red Dress

"I am hitched to the living, still moved by their concerns. My spirit never abandons the Dakota people, though sometimes all I can do is watch. I was there when the army confiscated our horses to cut off our legs. I stood behind the Ghost Dancers, and when they fainted in desperate, useless ecstasy, I blew a refreshing wind into their faces. There have been too many soldiers and too many graves. Too many children packed into trains and sent to the other side of the country. Many times I ran alongside those tracks and waved at the bleak copper faces. *You are Dakota*, I called to them. *You are Dakota*. One time I stood in front of a chuffing engine and tried to keep it from moving forward, but it blasted through me. I saw the language shrivel, and though I held out my hands to catch the words, so many of them slipped away, beyond recall. I am a talker now and chatter in my people's ears until I grow weary of my own voice. I am memory, I tell them when they're sleeping. I prefer to watch the present unravel moment by moment than to look close behind me or far ahead. Time extends from me, flowing in many directions, meeting the horizon and then moving beyond to follow the curve of the earth. But I will not track the course with my eyes. It is too painful. I can bear witness to only a single moment of loss at a time. Still, hope flutters in my heart, a delicate pulse. I straddle the world and pray to Wakan Tanka that somewhere ahead of me, He has planted an instant of joy."

-Excerpt from *The Grass Dancer* by Susan Power p. 281-282