**Pygmalion Response Guide**

**Student Directions:** You will be given a copy of George Bernard Shaw’s *Pygmalion*. You are to record annotations as we read.

**Act 1**

Read this dialogue:

THE NOTETAKER: You see this creature with her kerbstone English: the English that will keep her in the gutter to the end of her days. Well, sir, in three months I could pass that girl off as a duchess at an ambassador’s garden party.

Answer these two questions in a quick write.

● What does this boast say about the notetaker?

● What does it say about the flower girl?

Now, think about your own experiences. Have you ever felt dismissed or judged by someone who does not know you because of your language, appearance or actions? Write a description of that experience.

**Act 2**

As you read Act 2, we will be annotating for significant attributes, or characteristics, for each of the characters. Consider the following elements of dramatic characterization:

● What they say (dialogue)

● What they do (actions)

● What they think (monologue)

● What others say about them (dialogue)

After reading: In your discussion groups, consider your preliminary responses to the questions below in preparation for collegial discussion. Come to the discussion group with well ­reasoned ideas and evidence from the text to support your responses.

● Are Higgins and Pickering the gentlemen that they appear to be?

● How is Eliza made to conform at Professor Higgins home?

● Does social class play a significant role in characterization? Explain.

● Is Eliza devalued? Explain.

**Act 3**

Continue reading Pygmalion. Your purpose in reading continues to be to identify characters, and define the conflicts.. Here are some items you might want to annotate:

● What does Eliza say that is offensive?

● How do the other characters react to her comments?

● How does Eliza’s embarrassing experience contribute to the plot and her character development?

● What do her comments say about the relationship between Higgins and Eliza?

After reading:

● If you are Eliza what are you feeling now? What about if you are Higgins?

**Act 4**

Continue reading Pygmalion. Your purpose in reading continues to be to identify characters and define the conflicts.

**After reading**: Eliza asks, “Where am I to go? What am I to do? What’s to become of me?” What are Eliza’s options, given the setting of the play? List Eliza’s options and the pros and cons of each.

Now that you have read Act 4, you have a clear picture of Higgin’s and Pickering’s attitudes toward their “project.” Think about what Eliza should do next. Take a position and offer a claim and supporting evidence to support your ideas. Consider each of the three characters­: Higgins, Pickering, and Eliza­ and pose your ideas from each of their perspectives. Be sure to:

● Define what you think Eliza’s steps should be.

● Address the three character’s perspectives.

● Support with textual evidence.

The end of the play represents the transformation of the major characters in the play. Continue reading Pygmalion. Your purpose in reading continues to be to identify characters and define the conflicts.

**After reading**: Answer the questions below after closely reading the end of Pygmalion (beginning when Pickering and Doolittle exit for the wedding, leaving Higgins and Eliza alone).

When is Higgins in control?

How does he get control?

How does he use his control?

When is Eliza in control?

How does she get control?

How does she use her control?