**Process Analysis Sample - “Flunking with Style”**

Reprinted from *Canadian Content* (2nd Ed), Sarah Norton & Nell Waldman, Harcourt Brace Canada, 1992, pp. 112-114.

People often remark that succeeding in school takes plenty of hard work. The remark implies that failure is a product of general idleness and zero motivation. This is an opinion I'd like to challenge. My long and checkered past in numerous educational institutions has taught me that to fail grandly, to fail extravagantly, to go down in truly blazing splendour, requires effort and imagination. To fail your year in the grand style, you must antagonize your teachers, disdain your studies, and cheat on your work. Keep the following guidelines in mind.

 The first step, antagonizing your teachers, isn't difficult if you keep in mind what it is that teachers like: intelligent, interested, even enthusiastic faces in front row centre. Show that you're bored before the class begins by slouching in a desk at the back of the room. Wear your Walkman, and don't forget to turn up the volume when that teacher starts to talk. Carry on running conversations with your seatmates. Aim an occasional snort or snicker in the teacher's direction when she's putting a complex point on the board. Above all, never volunteer an answer and respond sullenly with an "I dunno" if the teacher has the nerve to ask you a question. Before long, you'll have that teacher bouncing chalk stubs off your head. Once you've earned the loathing of all your instructors, you'll be well on your way to a truly memorable failure.

The second step, disdaining your studies, is easy to master; they're probably B-O-R-I-N-G anyway. First, don't buy your books until close to midterm and keep them in their original condition; don't open, read, or note anything in them. Better yet, don't buy your texts at all. Second, never attempt to take notes in class. Third, stop going to class completely, but have lots of creative excuses for missed assignments: "My friend's aunt died;" "My gerbil's in a coma;" "My boyfriend was in another car wreck;" "My dog ate the lab report;" "I've got mono." You can bet your teachers will be really amused by these old stand-bys. By now, you are well on your way to disaster.

The third step, cheating, will deliver the coup de grace to your academic career. Should an instructor be so sadistic as to assign a research paper, just copy something out of a book that the librarian will be happy to find for you. Your instructor will be astonished at the difference between the book's polished, professional prose and your usual halting scrawls; you're guaranteed a zero. During your exams, sit at the back and crane your neck to read your classmate's paper. Roll up your shirt-sleeves to reveal the answer you've tattooed all over your forearms. Ask to be excused three or four times during the test so you can consult the notes you've stashed in the hall or the washroom. Be hold! Dig out your old wood-burning kit and emblazon cheat notes on the desk. If you want to ensure not just failure but actual expulsion, send in a ringer --- a look-alike to write the exam for you!

If you follow these guidelines, you will be guaranteed to flunk your year. Actively courting failure with verve, with flair, and with a sense of drama will not only ensure your status as an academic washout but will also immortalize you in the memories of teachers and classmates alike. The challenge is yours! Become a legend --- pick up the torch and fall with it!

Questions for Further Discussion:

1. Would the message for this essay work if it were serious? How might the sarcastic tone of this essay be more effective?

2. The author lists several steps in order to fail grandly. Add two more possible options that will help students fail in style.

3. On your document

 a) highlight the thesis in yellow

 b) highlight the outline / parameters in pink

 c) highlight each of the introductory and concluding sentences in the body in blue

4. Brainstorm the outline for the opposite argument to this essay: ie. Passing with Style.