For this unit, I read the book *Eat Pray Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert. It is a memoir about Gilbert’s trip of self-inquiry around the world following her difficult divorce. This book is an international best seller and is very popular. It was on my to-read list for a long time because it seems like a very interesting book. It involved India, which was enticing for me, because I like to read about India. I also knew that it was a memoir written more as a story, and that was very appealing to me, since straight non-fiction is not an easy read for me. I liked this book very much. It was extremely well written, funny, and insightful. I found that it was very easy to stick with, and I finished the book, from cover to cover (except I did not read the two full pages of praise). However, this was the only book I read for the unit because it was fairly long, and I created a timeline of how much to finish each week, so as to not overwhelm myself with pages, but to stay on track also. My bookmarking was done well also. I chose to mark up my book, because I like to look back and see the things I wrote right next to the text. I stayed fairly
consistent, except in the last part of the book, I started to not bookmark as frequently. I still met
the requirements, but was not doing it as much as I was before. I do not think I would do
anything differently if I had to do it over. I liked the way I approached this unit and I liked the
book I read.

Liz Gilbert has many, many themes in her book, centering around religion, personal
discovery, pleasure, and balance. But I found that the most important theme to me was her self-
acceptance. Gilbert had, before this trip, a long, complicated life. She has already felt a lot and
experienced a lot. She had happiness, but sadness too. She had sorrow, shame, regret, anger, all
these negative emotions that weighed her down and made her mind heavy. She talked about how
she learned to accept that, to accept whatever was unattractive about her. She gave each bad
memory, emotion or characteristic a place in her heart. The way she described this
transformation, this acceptance and this process of moving forward stuck with me. It hit me
stronger than any other part of the book. I took that with me, and I tried it. I didn’t get very far,
because it obviously is not a one-time thing, but it made me feel different. All throughout her
journey, Gilbert is learning about herself, figuring out who she is, and then accepting that and
dealing with it. She talks about trying to change herself and how futile that is, that she should not
think she needs to change herself in any way, and that even if she tries, she can not change. She
understands that she is what she is, and she must learn to love that. I loved that she learned that.
I love how across the book she talks about trying to change herself but then failing every time.
When she finally understands that it cannot be done, she reaches peace. It is amazing to watch
that transformation, and it makes me want to learn that too.

Gilbert has a very purposeful structure with her book. She divides the book into three
different parts, and each part is about a different country she went to and a different underlying
concept that ties back to her main theme of self-acceptance. In Italy she learns to, “Say it like you eat it,” or simplify her complicated life, and just say what she wants to say, be what she is. She learns to just do it, to be simple, and not over-complicate herself and her words. In India, she learns that trying to change herself is futile. It is what it is, and it is not changing. In Bali, she learns to balance the different parts of her life that she has discovered on this trip. Gilbert’s structure of the book shows the stages of her learning, and helps the reader to understand greater what her purpose of the book is.

**Teacher’s Final Summative Comments:**

The prompt for this metacognitive response is often a challenge for students. They ask questions about what, exactly, constitutes “insight.” Even more challenging for students is verbalizing how an author “connects details across the text to promote that central idea, and explain how the author uses a single element or structure of autobiography, biography, or memoir to establish the insight.” For a sophomore, this student is highly proficient at thinking about her own reading, about the insight she gained from reading, and how the writer of the memoir developed a theme. She begins with a general introduction about how the unit “went” for her and addresses her reading habits. She identifies an insight gained from reading the memoir. Finally, she specifically cites the structure of the memoir (the three sections corresponding to the three countries to which she travels) to show that she recognizes how Gilbert develops a thematic concept of acceptance across the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highly Proficient</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Attempting to Meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Addresses all aspects of prompt with a highly focused and detailed response.</td>
<td>Addresses prompt with a focused response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Accurately presents and applies information relevant to the prompt with specific examples from the text.</td>
<td>Presents and applies information relevant to prompt with general accuracy and sufficient detail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Presents detailed information in order to answer questions and solve problems. Concisely explains key information with detail.</td>
<td>Presents information in order to answer questions and solve problems. Explains key information with some detail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Applies appropriate structure(s) to analyze.</td>
<td>Applies a generally effective structure to analyze.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventions</td>
<td>Demonstrates a well-developed command of standard English conventions and cohesion; employs language and tone appropriate to audience and purpose.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a command of standard English conventions and cohesion; employs language and tone appropriate to audience and purpose.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comment [10]:** The writer recognizes how Gilbert structures her text and gives examples. She could have given more quotes from the text here.

**Comment [11]:** The writer’s theory is that Gilbert structures the text in these three, distinct parts with the intent to show her stages of learning.