The following writing samples are edited extracts (opening paragraphs) from student papers from a Montserrat seminar given in a previous year, with names removed to preserve anonymity. The writing prompts dealt with a book by Frederick Grinnell titled *Everyday Practice of Science,* which was one of the common readings of the Natural World cluster that year.

***Writing Sample 1 – prompt:***

***Grinnell makes a pretty convincing case that the things scientists do as they pursue their research are much more interesting and exciting than the dry descriptions of the***

***final results that make it into research articles and textbooks. Are there good reasons why there should be such a difference? Is there a distinction to be made between what research articles should look like and what textbooks should ideally look like? How do mathematical techniques like statistics fit into the picture?***

Grinnell makes a pretty convincing case that the things scientists do as they pursue their research are much more interesting and exciting then the dry descriptions of the final results that make it into research articles and textbooks. Grinnell would agree that finding the proof is much more interesting and exciting then simply writing it down. Others would disagree and say its boring and or writing down the proof is more exciting and interesting. From this, research articles and textbooks come into play. The scientists and mathematicians figure out the proof and then are displayed in research articles and textbooks for all to see. This is where they get their credit. From here, statistics are used to credit the source even more. They are used to show the proof and the information they are using through the studies. Scientists and mathematicians are more important on the “discovery” side of things.

***Writing Sample 2 – prompt:***

***Chapter 6 in Grinnell's book is called “Faith.” Grinnell says that he sees science and religion in a relation that he calls complementarity. What precisely does he mean by this? Give an example of what complementarity of viewpoints might mean by discussing some question Grinnell discusses or that we have considered. Does Grinnell’s view seem to you to be a reasonable way to reconcile these different aspects of human thought?***

Religion and science are most often at odds with each other. Rarely can they coexist without tension, let alone one help to support the other. Yet Grinnell suggests they can and should coexist with one always providing “different types of answers” to the questions both ask (Everyday Practice of Science, p. 182). This view says that as each field develops and learns more, these findings intertwine and combine “into a holistic yin-yang framework that cannot be harmonized or resolved further” (Everyday Practice of Science, p. 181). That is to say, those findings exist together and illuminate each other by looking at the world in different ways. However, this conception has a flaw. Religion has, for the most part, developed definitive answers to its questions in the form of belief systems and dogmas. Science, however, is rarely satisfied with its conclusions and is continuously accepting new ideas. It is through an understanding of how faith and science deal with knowledge that we can see Grinnell’s notion of complementarity cannot hold true.