**Evidence-Based Selected Response Questions** - A Vindication of the Rights of Women

1a. What is the **controlling idea** of “A Vindication of the Rights of Women”?

1. That denying women an equal education to men harms women.
2. That women do not receive the same education as men do.
3. That women were intended to have a separate education from men.
4. That men decide the education for both men and women.

1b. Choose 2 examples to best support your answer to part A.

1. “I have sighed when obliged to confess, that either nature has made a great difference between man and man…” (3-4)
2. “I have turned over various books written on the subject of education, and patiently observed the conduct of parents…” (6-8)
3. “ – a profound conviction that the neglected education of my fellow-creatures is the grand source of misery I deplore;” (7-8)
4. “The conduct and manners of women, in fact, evidently prove that their minds are not in a healthy state;” (11-12)
5. “One cause of this barren blooming I attribute to a false system of education, gathered from the books written on this subject by men…” (15-17)
6. “like the flowers which are planted in too rich a soil, strength and usefulness are sacrificed to beauty;” (12-13)

2a. Which assumption does Wollstonecraft argue against in “A Vindication on the Rights of Women”?

1. The assumption that Wollstonecraft wanted the education for herself.
2. The assumption that a man must have written her essay.
3. The assumption that women do not want a more thorough education.
4. The assumption that women are intellectually inferior to men.

2b. Choose 2 examples of Wollstonecraft’s **counterarguments**:

1. “Men endeavor to sink us still lower merely to render us alluring objects for a moment;” (40-41)
2. “And which raise females in the scale of animal being, when they are comprehensively termed mankind” (50-51)
3. “My own sex, I hope, will excuse me, if I treat them like rational creatures, instead of flattering their *fascinating* graces” (54-55)
4. Susceptibility of heart, delicacy of sentiment, and refinement of taste, are almost synonymous with epithets of weakness…” (59-60)
5. “The education of women has, of late, been more attended to than formerly; yet they are still reckoned a frivolous sex” (63-64)
6. “It is acknowledged that they spend many of the first years of their lives acquiring a smattering of accomplishments” (66-67)

**Answer Key**

1a. A

1b. C, E

2a. D

2b. B, C