



AP[®] English Literature and Composition 2005 Scoring Guidelines

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Question 1

(William Blake's Chimney Sweeper Poems)

The score reflects the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, its style, its mechanics. Students are rewarded for what they do well. The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by 1 point above the otherwise appropriate score. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a 3.

- 9–8** These essays offer a persuasive comparison/contrast of the two poems and present an insightful analysis of the relationship between them. Although the students offer a range of interpretations and choose to emphasize different poetic techniques, these essays provide convincing readings of both poems and demonstrate consistent and effective control over the elements of composition in language appropriate to the analysis of poetry. Their textual references are apt and specific. Though they may not be error-free, these essays are perceptive in their analysis and demonstrate writing that is clear and sophisticated, and, in the case of a 9 essay, especially persuasive.
- 7–6** These competent essays offer a reasonable comparison/contrast of the two poems and an effective analysis of the relationship between them. They are less thorough or less precise in their discussion of the themes and techniques, and their analysis of the relationship between the two poems is less convincing. These essays demonstrate the student's ability to express ideas clearly with references to the text, although they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as the 9–8 essays. While essays scored 7–6 are generally well written, those scored a 7 demonstrate more sophistication in both substance and style.
- 5** These essays may respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of the two poems and their relationship, but they may be superficial in analysis of theme and technique. They often rely on paraphrase, but paraphrase that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Their comparison/contrast of the relationship between the two poems may be vague, formulaic, or inadequately supported by references to the texts. There may be minor misinterpretations of one or both poems. These students demonstrate control of language, but the writing may be marred by surface errors. These essays are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as 7–6 essays.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of the two poems. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, irrelevant, or may ignore one of the poems completely. Evidence from the poems may be slight or misconstrued, or the essays may rely on paraphrase only. The writing often demonstrates a lack of control over the conventions of composition: inadequate development of ideas, accumulation of errors, or a focus that is unclear, inconsistent, or repetitive. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreadings and/or demonstrate inept writing.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the essays in the 4–3 range. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the students' assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the poems themselves. The essays may contain serious errors in grammar and mechanics. These essays may offer a complete misreading or be unacceptably brief. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the poems.
- 0** These essays give a response with no more than a reference to the task.
- These essays either are left blank or are completely off-topic.

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Question 2

(Katherine Brush's "The Birthday Party")

The score reflects the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, its style, its mechanics. Students are rewarded for what they do well. The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by 1 point above the otherwise appropriate score. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a 3.

- 9–8** These essays offer a persuasive analysis of how the author uses literary devices to achieve her purpose. The students make a strong case for their interpretation of the story. They explore possibilities of character and situation; consider literary elements such as characterization, point of view, syntax, diction, and tone; and engage the text through apt and specific references. Although these essays may not be error-free, their perceptive analysis is apparent in writing that is clear, precise, and effectively organized. Generally, essays scored a 9 reveal more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do essays scored an 8.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of how the author uses literary devices to achieve her purpose. The students provide a sustained, competent reading of the story, with attention to literary elements such as characterization, point of view, syntax, diction, and tone. Although these essays may not be error-free and may be less perceptive or less convincing than 9–8 essays, the students present their ideas with clarity and control and refer to the text for support. Generally, essays scored a 7 present better developed analyses and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than do essays scored a 6.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of the passage but tend to be superficial or undeveloped in their treatment of how the author uses literary devices to achieve her purpose. While exhibiting some analysis of the story, implicit or explicit, the discussion of how literary elements contribute to the author's purpose may be slight, and support from the passage may be thin or tend toward paraphrase. While these students demonstrate adequate control of language, their essays may be marred by surface errors. Generally, essays scored a 5 lack the more effective organization and the more sustained development characteristic of 7–6 essays.
- 4–3** These essays offer a less than thorough understanding of the task or a less than adequate treatment of how the author uses literary devices to achieve her purpose. Often relying on plot summary or paraphrase, the students may fail to articulate a convincing basis for understanding situation and character, or they may misread the story. These essays may be characterized by an unfocused or repetitive presentation of ideas, an absence of textual support, or an accumulation of errors. Generally, essays scored a 4 exhibit better control over the elements of composition than those scored a 3.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the essays in the 4–3 range. They may persistently misread the story or be unacceptably brief. They may contain pervasive errors that interfere with understanding. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the student's ideas are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the story. Essays scored a 1 are especially inept or incoherent.
- 0** These essays make no more than a reference to the task.
- These essays either are left blank or are completely off-topic.

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Question 3

(Character with Tension between Outward Conformity and Inward Questioning)

The score reflects the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, its style, its mechanics. Students are rewarded for what they do well. The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by 1 point above the otherwise appropriate score. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a 3.

- 9–8** These well-focused and persuasive essays identify a character in a novel or play who conforms outwardly while questioning inwardly, and they demonstrate how that tension contributes to the work as a whole. Using apt and specific textual support, these essays fully explore that tension and how that tension contributes to the meaning of the work. Although not without flaws, these essays exhibit the student’s ability to discuss a literary work with significant insight and understanding; to sustain control over a thesis; and to write with clarity, precision, coherence and—in the case of a 9 essay—with particular persuasiveness and/or stylistic flair.
- 7–6** These competent essays identify a character in a novel or play who conforms outwardly while questioning inwardly, and they demonstrate how that tension contributes to the work as a whole. These works have insight and understanding, but the analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of the 9–8 essays. References to the text may not be as apt or as persuasive. Essays scored a 7 demonstrate more sophistication in substance and in style than those scored a 6, though both are generally well written and free from significant or sustained misinterpretations.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task, but they tend to be superficial in analysis. They often rely upon plot summary that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Although the students attempt to discuss the tension in the character and how that tension contributes to the work as a whole, they may demonstrate a rather simplistic understanding of the work. Typically, these essays reveal unsophisticated thinking and/or immature writing. The students demonstrate adequate control of language, but their essays lack effective organization and may be marred by surface errors.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays reflect an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the work, or they may fail to establish the nature of the tension in the character or how that tension contributes to the work as a whole. They may rely on plot summary alone. Their assertions may be unsupported or even irrelevant. Often wordy, elliptical, or repetitious, these essays lack control over the elements of college-level composition. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreadings and demonstrate inept writing.
- 2–1** Although these essays make some attempt to respond to the prompt, they compound the weaknesses of the essays in the 4–3 range. Often they are unacceptably brief or are incoherent in presenting their ideas. They may be poorly written on several counts and contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. The student’s remarks are presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Particularly inept, vacuous, and/or incoherent essays must be scored a 1.
- 0** These essays make no more than a reference to the task.
- These essays either are left blank or are completely off-topic.