

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION
2006 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 2

(Oscar Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan*)

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 playwright reveals the values of the characters and the nature of their society. The students make a strong case for their interpretation of character and situation, developing the relationship between language and values. The students consider literary and dramatic elements such as characterization, diction, and tone, engaging 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 playwright reveals the values of the characters and the nature of their society. The students provide a sustained, competent reading of the passage, with attention to literary and dramatic elements such as characterization, 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 analysis 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 playwright reveals the values of the characters and the nature of their society. While exhibiting some analysis of the passage, 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 papers.
- 4–3** These essays offer a less than thorough understanding of the task or a less than adequate treatment of how the playwright reveals the values of the characters and the nature of their society. Often relying on summary or paraphrase, the students may fail to articulate a convincing basis for understanding the relationship between language and the values of the characters and the nature of their society. They may misread the passage or may present an unfocused or repetitive reading characterized by 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 papers in the 4–3 range. They may persistently misread the passage or be unacceptably brief. They may contain pervasive errors that interfere with understanding. Although an attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the students' ideas are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the passage. Essays scored a 1 are especially inept or incoherent.
- 0** These essays make no more than a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.

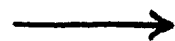
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Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

2A,

By the use of a mundane situation, Wilde sheds light on both the characters' underlying ideals and the sort of society that the three of them live in. ~~Both of these~~ These are most clearly demonstrated in both the way the characters interact with each other and their opinions.

~~Each~~ Lady Windermere, Lord Darlington, and the Duchess of Berwick each hold a different set of values, though the Lady's and the Duchess' are closer to each other's than the Lord's. Lady Windermere is chiefly concerned with resolutely leading an upright life. She makes this clear with her steadfast adherence to her high standard for letting others come into her home. However, it also becomes apparent that she feels more strongly about women's morality than that of men, as she consents for Lord Darlington to come to her birthday party, though only on the condition that he not speak so rashly as he might at any other occasion. Lord Darlington signifies his acceptance of her terms by telling her she is "beginning to reform [him]," which shows that he is not as much of a ruffian as the two women say he is.



Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

2.

2A2

~~He~~ He actually seems to be more of a playful intellect than a "wicked" man (as the Duchess calls him). In discussing marriage, he calls it a "game" and then proceeds to make a ~~very~~ ^{clever} comparison to the playing of cards. His good-natured teasing of the women amuses them, ~~but~~ but they both verbally condemn him because ~~of his~~ his comments tend to be less than propriety in their terms. The most direct example of this is when Lord Darlington jokingly insinuates that husbands should be called "odd tricks" (a pun on his earlier cards metaphor). Duchess Berwick, as a married woman, promptly derides him as "thoroughly depraved." Whereas ~~he~~ ^{Lord Darlington} feels cynical towards the institution of marriage, the Duchess holds ^{uplifting} marriage as one of her principal values. She also feels that appearances and reputation are important, as is evidenced by her prejudice against Lord Darlington and her gossip about how horrid Lady Markby's tea ~~was~~ was just before she came to meet Darlington and Lady Windermere.

Such gossip is only one example of how trivial their high English society really can be. The Duchess' praise of Lady Windermere's practice of having extremely exclusive parties is another.



2

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

2A3

Also, the women's perception of Lord Darlington as a disreputable person merely because he says unexpected and ~~discon~~ mildly disconformist things highlights the shallow and critical nature of the society the characters live in.

Overall, the characters' values ~~illum~~ and the way they play against each other illuminates the audience to a society of ~~money, reputations,~~ social functions, reputations, and shallow criticism.

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Dialogues reflection of society and value
from Lady Windermere's Fan

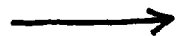
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23.

2

The playwright from Lady Windermere's Fan, a by Oscar Wilde, reveals the values ^{of the characters} and nature of society through the dialogue between Lord Darlington, Lady Windermere and the Duchess of Berwick. Lord Darlington proved himself to be a worthy and honourable man while the Duchess and Lady Windermere appear to ~~be~~ be rude, obnoxious individuals.

The values of Lord Darlington ~~appear to~~ ^{are to} be open and welcoming to all of society. He does not wish to judge others based on scandals ^{their} or class/title in the world. Lord Darlington takes a very comical approach when voicing these opinions to the Duchess and Lady Windermere. Just as Lady Windermere says she will not allow anyone at her party with whom there is any scandal, Lord Darlington says "Oh, don't say that, Lady Windermere, I should never be admitted." Lord Darlington believes life should not be talked about seriously ~~as~~ he states in lines 61-63. Lord Darlington believes that women focus solely on the importance of society and marriage and spend far too much time talking of scandal. Lord Darlington is a ~~humorous~~ humorous character who adds wit and wonder to the play.



The Duchess of Berwick and Lady Windermere on the other hand believe in the importance of dividing class and the strict rules of poise and propriety. These two ladies can be referred to as one seeing ~~these~~ ^{their} identical views on refinement cause them to lose their individuality. It is evident that the Duchess and Lady focus on wealth and class as their values for they judge others who have their tea-supplied by someone as common as their son-in-law. Duchess of Berwick: "We have just had tea at Lady Markby's. Such bad tea too... I wasn't at all surprised. Her own son-in-law supplied it." (lines 14-16). The Duchess of Berwick also seems very annoying and persistent as she claims she has the legal right to nag her husband, and she demands to know the meaning of Lord Darlington's ~~speech~~ speech. Lady Windermere proves herself no better as she tells Lord Darlington to "not to say foolish, insincere things to people" (72-73). Yet in truth Lord Darlington is being sincere as he speaks to them on his views of society.

In conclusion, Lord Darlington views society as a something to be ridiculed just as he jokes about it and himself. Lady Windermere and the Duchess of Berwick view society (only the upper class though) in the highest opinion and reverence.



2

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

2B3

The dialogue between characters properly displays this contrast as ~~there~~ the personalities of higher class vary based on value. The values being evident through satirical comments and rights to ~~both~~ judge, society is dominated by a view of propriety.

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Upon reading *Lady Windermere's Fan*, a play by Oscar Wilde, one can infer values the character possesses. Like a famous quote states: People have one thing in common, we are all different; in this play the characters are unique in thought.

Duchess of Berwick values her status in society. She is aware that she is part of a much more respected class and needs to always feel safe. She states that, "The most dreadful people seem to go everywhere." (lines 29-30) and wonders what society is coming to. She ~~always~~ also enjoys to be a nagging wife. She claims this is her role or else husbands would really forget the wives existence. ~~Lastly,~~

Lord Darlington ~~she~~ thinks marriage as a game, which is slowly going out of fashion. This insinuates that in society people don't value marriage anymore. It's simply a "game of cards" - "the wives hold all the honours and invariably lose the odd trick." (lines 48-49) He also values



Question 2

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~~Lord Darlington~~ has lost the value of life, for he believes "life is far too important a thing ever to talk seriously about it." (line 61-63)

The nature of this play's society symbolizes today's society. Marriage, for one is becoming part of the shadows and life is now taken for granted. People are changing society and the coming generations only learn from what is seen. I claim that the play's society differs no other than ours. The world is not a safe place. It never was or will be, unless the people who inhabit it choose to make it.

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AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2006 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 2

Overview

Students were asked to read carefully an excerpt from *Lady Windermere's Fan*, a play by Oscar Wilde, produced in 1892. Then, in a well-organized essay they were to analyze how the playwright reveals the values of the characters and the nature of their society. Although the prompt deviated from recent practice in that it came from a play, nevertheless the materials were present for students to delineate character, interpret situation, apply analytical skills to representative nineteenth-century literary language, and link their close-reading skills to a discovery of theme.

Sample: 2A

Score: 8

This essay's strong analytical diction marks it as a sophisticated, perceptive analysis. The student asserts that all three characters "hold a different set of values," understanding, however, that the two women's values "are closer to each other's" than to Lord Darlington's. Lady Windermere is correctly viewed as "resolutely leading an upright life," while Lord Darlington is seen to be "more of a playful intellect than a 'wicked' man (as the Duchess calls him)" when he "signifies his acceptance of her terms by telling her she is 'beginning to reform [him].'" These deft and persuasive comments show us an insightful, confident student at work. The essay maintains an advanced level throughout, with the student providing many apt examples—such as the playing cards as a metaphor for marriage—and understanding that the verbal playfulness and gossip contribute to a picture of "how trivial . . . high English society really can be." There are a few small lapses ("disconformist," "illuminates the audience to a society") but nothing that would keep this essay from making a strong case for the student's interpretation of character and situation.

Sample: 2B

Score: 5

While correctly seeing in the passage a contrast between Lord Darlington's "comical approach [sic]" and the women's observance of "poise and propriety," this student misses many nuances in the situation that the more solid essays in the upper half of the scoring range tend to see. Overstated or vague claims—such as the Duchess and Lady Windermere appearing "to be rude, obnoxious individuals," and Lord Darlington serving as someone "who adds wit and wonder to the play"—keep the essay from demonstrating the control of language and sustained development characterizing essays scored 7 or 6. The passage is more than a verbal standoff; the student would be better served by making fewer assertions and developing and supporting these claims more carefully.

Sample: 2C

Score: 3

This student never really understands the nature of the task, writing little more than a page before transitioning to a shallow, unfocused discussion of "today's society." The response begins with a contrast between the Duchess of Berwick and Lord Darlington. She is seen as valuing "her status in society"; he is seen as having "lost the value of life" when he claims that "'life is far too important a thing ever to talk seriously about.'" Unfortunately, this student misses Lord Darlington's love of satire in speaking and supplies no evidence to support the claim about the Duchess. When the student then takes off on a tangent and asserts that "The world is not a safe place. It never was or will be, unless the people who inhabit it choose to make it," we have left the world of literary analysis and entered the realm of polemics. Overall, then, the student fails to articulate a convincing basis for understanding the relationship between language and the values of the characters in the passage from *Lady Windermere's Fan*.