

**AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION**  
**2008 SCORING GUIDELINES (Form B)**

**Question 3**

(Portrayal of Childhood or Adolescence)

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 persuasive essays describe a representation of childhood or adolescence in a novel or play and explain how this representation shapes the meaning of the work as a whole. Selecting apt and specific examples, they describe a childhood or adolescence and cogently argue for its significance. Given that the prompt called for a discussion of a conception of childhood, students should not be penalized for selecting more than one character to illustrate this representation. These essays need not be flawless. Nonetheless, they exhibit the ability to sustain a thesis while discussing a literary work with understanding and insight. The best essays demonstrate the ability to compose with clarity and sophistication.
- 7–6** These competent essays present a representation of childhood or adolescence in a novel or play and coherently discuss its contribution to meaning. Although these essays have some insight, the analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of ones in the 9–8 range. References to the text may not be as apt or as persuasive. These essays demonstrate the ability to express ideas clearly, but they do not exhibit the same level of mastery, maturity, or control as the very best responses. They are likely to be briefer, less incisive, and less well supported than those in the 9–8 category.
- 5** These essays, though plausible, are characterized by superficiality. They may refer to a depiction of childhood or adolescence and offer some discussion of its significance; however, these essays do not accomplish one or both of the tasks in sufficient depth or with sufficient development. They may rely on unsubstantiated generalizations, or the significance to the meaning of the work may not be soundly addressed. Discussion, though not inaccurate, tends to be thin and may rely on plot summary more than essays in the 7–6 range do. These essays typically reveal unsophisticated thinking or immature writing. Although the writing is adequate to convey ideas and is not marred by distracting errors, these essays are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as those in the 7–6 category.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays reveal an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the meaning of the work or of the task itself. They may fail to link the representation of childhood to the larger meaning of the text. Their assertions may suggest a misreading (that is, the interpretation may be implausible or irrelevant), or the work may be poorly chosen for the question. These essays may rely almost entirely on plot summary. Often wordy and repetitious, the writing may reveal uncertain control of the elements of college-level composition and may contain recurrent stylistic flaws. Essays that contain some misreading and/or inept writing should be scored a 3.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of those in the 4–3 range. They may seriously misread the work. Often they are unacceptably brief. Although some attempt may be made to answer the question, the observations are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the text. These essays may be poorly written on several counts and may contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Especially inept, vacuous, and/or unsound essays must be scored a 1.
- 0** These essays do no more than make a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.

William Golding's Lord of the Flies possesses a very different portrayal of childhood than the commonly accepted notion of marked innocence. Whenever this belief is held, the question remains of when this innocence is lost remains. Golding presents his view that children are never innocent, only constrained by the limitations of societal expectations, in his novel Lord of the Flies.

In Lord of the Flies a group of stranded British school kids inhabit an island (without the supervision of adults) after their plane crashes. A microcosm of adult society, the children's actions (and inactions), decisions (and indecisions) parallel the adult world despite their youth. For example, Ralph holds the conch, a manifestation of the children's idea of power; therefore, Ralph becomes the leader even though the smarter and more qualified choice of leadership is Piggy, the object of humiliation and



Q3

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

3A  
2013

Scorn, ~~and~~ Ralph attempts to maintain order but human nature gets in the way as factions form, disagreements blaze, and eventually tribal warfare erupts. Ironically, as the children sink deeper into their ~~own~~ <sup>fighting</sup> ~~own~~, the adult world is completely distracted by their own world war.

The similarities between the children on the island and the adults of the world give frightening insight on the nature of human beings. When left alone, the children do not play nicely as their parents would hope, nor do they follow the rules of society when they have no one to enforce them. The older children terrorize the younglings, indulge in a disgusting, sexual slaughter of a mother pig, and eventually murder Simon, a fellow child on the island. Ironically, Simon is the only ~~boy~~ <sup>boy</sup> on the island that can ~~see~~ insightfully see ~~the~~ the root of their troubles.



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

Q3

3A  
3 of 3

and fears. He eventually understands that the only monster on the island is the boys themselves, ~~emerging~~ creeping out from inside, ~~and~~ stalking their conscience, and playing <sup>on</sup> ~~with~~ their fears.

Golding presents the ~~boys~~ childhood of the boys as terrifying as they are in a situation that allows their inner monster to emerge. The presumed innocence of youth evaporates when the boys find themselves outside the limits of "civilized" society. Golding's ironic truth, made apparent by the downward spiral of the boy's concept of right and wrong, is that ~~and~~ children possess the same capacity for evil as adults. All men, children and adults alike, share an innate depravity, kept in check only by institutionalized ideas of ~~and~~ morality. ~~Goldings uses~~

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The majority of Holden Caulfield's ~~life~~ childhood, in Catcher in the Rye, by J.D. Salinger, was not magnificently spent under blue skies.

~~His~~ The turmoil and sadness in this character's life can be traced back to his troubled childhood. Specifically, Holden's tribulations can be traced back to the death of his brother, Allie. By representing Holden's childhood as one of trouble, J.D. Salinger shaped the meaning of the work as a whole.

~~As an individual's~~ An individual's childhood appears to have vast impact on an adult, as Holden's childhood not only destroys him, but also ~~saves~~ <sup>as a teenager</sup> saves him. The dark representation of Holden's childhood depicts the importance of growth during that time period, and ~~no matter~~ <sup>proving</sup> ~~the fact that~~ how bad the experience was, it can never truly ruin an individual.

Holden's troubling childhood shapes the ~~entire~~ ~~story~~ ~~of~~ ~~Catcher~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~Rye~~ ~~the~~ ~~entire~~ ~~story~~ of Catcher in the Rye. Because

childhood is ~~properly~~ <sup>shown as</sup> represented as being ~~and~~ <sup>shown as</sup> ~~struggles~~ <sup>Holden's struggles</sup> ~~throughout~~ the entire novel ~~the~~ ~~struggle~~ ~~at~~ ~~first~~ makes Holden weak. Eventually, his



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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 exam.

3B  
2012

mother's death saves him. As he is going to leave his sister Phoebe, she gives him his red hunting cap back to wear. ~~She~~ Holden does not want Phoebe to have to hold on to that hat as the only memory of her older brother in the way that he had to hold on to Allie's baseball bat. His brother's death, in fact, saves Holden's life.

Holden's dark childhood shapes the meaning of the ~~text~~ literary work as a whole. Without his troubling childhood, Holden would not be the same person he ~~became~~ became. T. D. Sallenger depicts the fact that every childhood has vast impact ~~on~~ on each individual's adult life, which is the true meaning of Catcher in the Rye.

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#3

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

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In Society today being a teen can be the toughest thing in the world for some. It is a time of change and responsibility. No longer are you a child, but yet you are not an adult.

Constantly ~~are you~~ your being tossed around, handling more responsibilities than you may be capable of, and trying not to fall short of people's expectations while at the same time trying to follow your own. Teenage adulthood is the climax in one's life.

The story "Romeo and Juliet" clearly defines the ~~hardships~~ conflicts between society and you, in which many teenagers face all the time. "Romeo and Juliet" written by William Shakespeare is about two teenagers in love that come from two families in war with each other (Montague and Capulet). Both Romeo and Juliet would like to make their families proud by supporting them but they must follow their hearts. That is why they got married but families' expectations got in their way and tried to pull them apart.

This forced Juliet to fake her death by putting herself into a deep coma for three days. In the meantime Romeo was supposed to receive a note stating what she had done and in three days they will run away together and people will think she is dead. However Romeo did not get this letter and upon seeing Juliet dead he killed himself. When Juliet awakes she finds Romeo dead and she killed herself with a dagger.



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

# 3

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Later on ~~the~~ both families find out that their children are dead and they realise that their conflicts and pressure is what caused the teenagers to commit suicide.

The sad truth is this type of thing happens everyday. Teenagers can't handle the constant pressure from society, parents, and peers that their only option in their mind is to end their <sup>life</sup> ~~life~~, the lives of others, or cause pain.

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**AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION  
2008 SCORING COMMENTARY (Form B)**

**Question 3**

**Sample: 3A**

**Score: 7**

This essay is a competent discussion of the social commentary presented in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. It does well in developing a representation of childhood distorted by circumstances and coherently discusses the contribution of this experience to the meaning of the work as a whole. Although some textual detail is presented, the analysis is less sophisticated and incisive than that of essays in the 9–8 range. The student demonstrates a firm grasp of the novel in general but offers no sparkling insight. Despite its very accurate and thoughtful reflections on human nature and on Golding's revelation of the dark side of children once they are placed "outside the limits of 'civilized' society," the essay provides only the most obvious observations about the children's misadventures. This response to the prompt does not exhibit the same level of effective writing as do those in the top category.

**Sample: 3B**

**Score: 5**

This essay chooses an appropriate text, *Catcher in the Rye*, but deals with it only superficially. Though the student asserts on more than one occasion that Holden Caulfield had a "troubling," "troublesome," or "troubled" childhood, no specifics are provided to indicate what was troubled or troubling. It is a shallow and repetitious effort, almost definitive of the superficiality that characterizes an essay with a 5 score. There is a slight discussion of Phoebe and the brother whose death saves Holden's life, but that too is an underdeveloped detail. The essay's reasonably good quality of writing keeps it out of the lower half of the scoring range but does not allow it to rise into the upper half.

**Sample: 3C**

**Score: 3**

A banal analysis of *Romeo and Juliet*, this essay goes little further than reading the play as just an account of teenage love. Its control of language is questionable, and it is less an analysis than it is a recounting of the sad story of *all* teens, as represented by one case: "The sad truth is this type of thing happens everyday."