



AP[®] English Literature and Composition 2008 Scoring Guidelines

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AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2008 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

(Keats's "When I Have Fears" and Longfellow's "Mezzo Cammin")

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 and the techniques each writer uses to explore his particular situation. Although these essays offer a range of interpretations and choose to emphasize different poetic techniques, they also 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. Although 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 an essay that earns 9 points, especially persuasive.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable comparison/contrast of the two poems and an effective analysis of the relationship between them and of the techniques each writer uses to explore his particular situation. Such essays demonstrate the ability to express ideas clearly with references to the text, although they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as those in the 9–8 range. They are less thorough or less precise in their discussion, and their analysis of the relationship between the two poems is less convincing. Essays scored 7–6 are generally well written, but those earning 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 their analysis. 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 minimally supported by references to the texts. There may be minor misinterpretations of one or both poems. These essays demonstrate control of language, but the writing may be marred by surface errors. They are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as those in the 7–6 range.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of the two poems. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant, or it 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 misreading and/or demonstrate inept writing.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of those in the 4–3 range. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the poems themselves. The essays may contain serious errors in grammar and mechanics, may offer a complete misreading, or may be unacceptably brief. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the poems.
- 0** These essays do no more than make a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.

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Question 2

(Anita Desai's *Fasting, Feasting*)

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 characterize Arun's experience as an exchange student. The essays make a strong case for their interpretation of the passage: they explore possibilities of character and situation; consider devices such as point of view, selection of detail, syntax, characterization, 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 those scored an 8.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of how the author uses literary devices to characterize Arun's experience. They reveal a sustained, competent reading of the passage, with attention to devices such as point of view, selection of detail, syntax, characterization, diction, and tone. Although these essays may not be error-free and may be less perceptive or less convincing than those in the 9–8 range, their ideas are presented 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 those 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 techniques to characterize Arun's experience. While exhibiting some analysis of the passage, implicit or explicit, the discussion of how literary devices contribute to Arun's experience may be slight, and support from the passage may be thin or tend toward paraphrase. Although these essays demonstrate adequate control of language, they may be marred by surface errors. Generally, essays scored a 5 lack the more effective organization and the more sustained development characteristic of those that received 7–6 points.
- 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 characterize Arun's experience. Often relying on plot summary or paraphrase, they may fail to articulate a convincing basis for understanding situation and character, or they may misread the passage. These responses 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 those in the 4–3 range. They may persistently misread the passage, be unacceptably brief, or contain pervasive errors that interfere with understanding. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the ideas are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the passage. Essays that are especially inept or incoherent are 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.

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2008 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 3

(Function of a Foil)

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 well-focused and persuasive analysis of how a foil or minor character emphasizes, by contrast or comparison, the distinctive characteristics and qualities of a main character. Using apt and specific textual support, these essays fully explore that relationship and demonstrate what it contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. Although not without flaws, these essays make a strong case for their interpretation and discuss the literary work with significant insight and understanding. Generally, essays scored a 9 reveal more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do those scored an 8.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of how a foil emphasizes, by contrast or comparison, the distinctive characteristics and qualities of a main character. They explore that relationship and demonstrate what it contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. These essays show insight and understanding, but the analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of those in the 9–8 range. Generally, essays scored a 7 present better-developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than do those scored a 6.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading, but they tend to be superficial or underdeveloped in analysis. They often rely on plot summary that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Although the essays attempt to discuss how the foil illuminates the distinctive characteristics and qualities of a main character and how the relationship contributes to the work as a whole, they may demonstrate a rather simplistic understanding of the work. Typically, these responses reveal unsophisticated thinking and/or immature writing. They demonstrate adequate control of language, but they may lack effective organization and may be marred by surface errors.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays offer a less than thorough understanding of the task or a less than adequate treatment of it. They reflect an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the work, or they may fail to establish the relationship between the foil and a main character. They may not address or develop a response to how that relationship contributes to the work as a whole, or they may rely on plot summary alone. Their assertions may be unsupported or even irrelevant. Often wordy, elliptical, or repetitious, these essays may lack control over the elements of college-level composition. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreading and demonstrate inept writing.
- 2–1** Although these essays make some attempt to respond to the prompt, they compound the weaknesses of those 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 ideas are presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Particularly inept, vacuous, and/or incoherent essays must be scored a 1.
- 0** These essays do no more than make a reference to the task.
- These essays either are left blank or are completely off topic.