

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2014 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 2

(Edward P. Jones' *The Known World*)

The score should reflect the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, style, and mechanics. **Reward the students for what they do well.** The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by one 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 Jones reveals the character of Moses through literary elements. The essays make a strong case for their interpretation of how the character is revealed. They may consider literary elements such as point of view, selection of detail, and imagery, and they 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 and effectively organized. 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 Jones reveals the character of Moses through literary elements. The writers provide a sustained, competent reading of the passage, with attention to literary elements such as point of view, selection of detail, and imagery. Although these essays may not be error-free and are less perceptive or less convincing than 9–8 essays, the ideas are presented with clarity and control and the text is referenced for support. 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 they tend to be superficial or thin in their discussion of how Jones reveals the character of Moses through literary elements. While containing some analysis of the passage, implicit or explicit, the discussion of how literary elements contribute to the revelation of character may be slight, and support from the passage may tend toward summary or paraphrase. While these essays demonstrate adequate control of language, they 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 passage. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant; the essay may ignore how Jones reveals the character of Moses or may ignore the use of literary elements. These essays may be characterized by an unfocused or repetitive presentation of ideas, an absence of textual support, or an accumulation of errors. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreading, demonstrate inept writing, or both.
- 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 some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the ideas are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the passage. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the passage.
- 0** These essays give a response that is completely off topic or inadequate; there may be some mark or a drawing or a brief reference to the task.
- These essays are entirely blank.

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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.

The balance of man between nature and society is often a fine line, difficultly straddled. The character of Moses from Edward P. Jones' novel The Known World, ~~is~~ elects to reject this balance, ^{almost} completely and immerse ^{near} fully in the wonders of nature. For him, the power of nature overwhelms his bond with his fellow man, overriding any need to socialize and be with others. If there was ever a man who knew where he truly belonged, it ~~was~~ is Moses.

At the beginning of the excerpt, Moses' dedication is made clear. Even on "The evening his master died he worked again well after he ended the day for the other adults" (Lines 1-2), showing that Moses takes more solace in his work in the field than with the company of others. The end of the day is his time to commune with nature, while for others it is time to satiate the "hunger and tiredness" (Line 3-4) that Moses has sent them home with. Moses's



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appreciation for nature is displayed through the narrator's, albeit third person, description of the setting sun as "a five-inch-long memory of red orange laid out in still waves across the horizon" (Lines 11-13). This imagery's beauty can only be rivaled by the ~~the~~ true experience Moses has due to its sheer vividness. ~~The~~ Almost taking this sunset as a signal, Moses begins his meditation with nature.

The first step in ~~the~~ Moses' ritual is the consumption of soil. The author's intent here is likely to demonstrate just how attached Moses is to the world around him. He eats the dirt as "if it were a spot of cornbread" (Lines 19-20), displaying a high level of familiarity and comfort. It what most would call an odd activity - His reason in the act is that doing so enables him "to discover the strengths and weaknesses of the field" (Lines 28-29) at a base level, paralleling his drive for work. However, more importantly, the process "tied him to the only thing in his small ~~the~~ world that meant almost as

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much as his own life" (Lines 30-31), plainly highlighting his devotion to nature. His wife and children pale in comparison to the ~~majesty~~ ^{majesty} of nature. ~~The~~ The first portion complete, Moses moves on to ^{the next} phase.

Moses's journey with nature continues; ~~with~~ "with the sun gone and no moon and the darkness having taken a more hold of him" (Lines 40-41). ~~The~~ Jones's choice of the word "nre" likely serves to contrast Moses's opinion of darkness with ^{the} normal perspective. While many people fear darkness, Moses welcomes ~~its~~ ^{its} embrace. The ~~dark~~ depiction also personifies the darkness, lending more power to nature. Clearly in tune with nature, Moses next "Concels the coming of rain" (Lines 47-48). He lets the ~~air~~ air "surge through him" (Line 49), accepting, ~~the~~ after the fall; another fragment of nature within. Then, neglecting the "sound of playing children" (Lines 61-62), Moses chooses to hear "the last bird of the day as it evening chirped"

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(Lines 63-64). His rejection of the children and refusal to return to his wife and eat dinner, instead venturing to the forest, ~~then~~ reveals ~~that~~ that Moses's true allegiance lies with nature, not civilization.

As the rain begins, Moses enters the forest, alone. He proceeds to "collect] water that he [crushes] over his face" (lines 80-81), cleansing himself of society's sins. Then he "[addresses] down to his nakedness and [lies] down" (lines 81-82), eschewing the last vestiges of artificiality and returning to the pure form with which he entered the world. He "[loses] himself completely" and "[doesn't] come to until morning, covered with dew" (lines 88-91), having given himself ~~to~~ to nature and ~~to~~ been reborn, ~~as~~ like a child emerging from the womb covered in fluids. The profound imagery encapsulates Moses' connection with nature. It \Rightarrow his mother, his father, his everything. ~~It~~ It completes him more than his real family. ~~When~~ When Moses is in nature, then and only then, is he at peace. #

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Edward Jones introduces Moses as one in the same with Nature. He ~~introduces~~ ^{implements} great detail & literary devices to show how worldly of a man Moses is, and his appreciation for the earth even when he has not much for himself.

Jones doesn't introduce Moses for a few sentences, though. First describing the kind of life he lives. The author pays close attention, at first, to their lives of intensive labor, long work days, hunger & tiredness. Then, we begin to see the character of Moses. Jones begins with using imagery, to describe the beautiful scenery of the sunset & its "red-orange laid out in still waves", how it's surrounded by mountains. Here, we can tell ~~that~~ ^{by} Jones' close attention to the detail of the sunset, that this passage will be closely focused on nature & its impact on the character. Jones then ~~describes Moses eating the soil.~~ ^{describes Moses eating} the soil.

~~Of the~~ it's such an odd act, and it catches your attention. It is not a normal thing to do, eat soil.

Jones tells that only the women (pregnant) eat it for some "incomprehensible" reason, insinuating that it's unnecessary. However, he says that Moses eats the soil mainly ~~by~~ because it tied him to the only thing in the world with meaning to him, other than his own life. From here



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We can infer that ~~the passage~~ he is talking about the earth & that it takes precedence over work, family, friends, etc. This ~~is further~~ ^{is further} confirmed later on in the passage when Moses ~~doesn't~~ ^{sees} his family waiting for him to come to supper & he turns to walk further into the ~~the~~ forest, ~~and he~~ ^{to not} return until the next morning. Jones writes this with a very intimate & close relation to Moses. He writes from a 3rd person point of view, but it's ~~almost~~ as if he's right there in Moses' mind with him, and it makes it feel as though Moses is telling about his intimate relationship with nature himself. Jones describes ~~how~~ in great detail the changing of the soil & by the seasons & uses imagery to describe the taste of the "sweetened metal" of July, or the "sour moldiness" of fall and winter. As the passage goes on, ~~the~~ Moses's ~~relationship~~ connection with nature is revealed a little ~~stronger~~ more & a little more intensely. Jones describes the powerful scene of Moses being able to smell the rain, feeling it "surge" through him; he ~~describes~~ ^{conveys} it in a way that it seems as if it is Moses's drug, and he is getting some sort of insane high from it. ~~When~~

When Moses's attention turns to his wife



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and kids, Jones ~~use of lack of~~ ^{lacks detail} in then ~~also~~ explaining Moses's home life of simply the cabin "home and food and rest". Nothing compared to the amount of detail he ~~used~~ ^{uses} when ~~he~~ writing about the experiences Moses has with nature. ~~the~~

The ^{1st} ~~end of the~~ final paragraph is by far the most intense. Here, we get a much deeper understanding of the level of ~~intimacy~~ intimacy Moses has with the earth. Jones allows us to understand this through his point of view as the author. He describes to us exactly what Moses is feeling, about becoming old & feeling chained, because he just lost himself under the rain & trees for so many nights. The descriptive detail however, and intense imagery in these last few sentences are really what characterizes Moses. The fact that the "rain came in torrents" and Moses "undressed to his nakedness and laid down" and then "didn't come to until morning, covered with dew" shows us that this connection Moses has with the world is ~~was~~ indescribable. It is so intense, and he ~~annexes~~ ^{basically} sees himself as one with nature. Jones allows us to see this relationship clearly through his



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2B
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use of ^{detailed} imagery, and his own relationship to Moses
in telling the story.

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2

This passage from the novel "The Known World" by Edward P. Jones shows and ^{reveals} Moses' life as a slave. This passage is told ~~from~~ ^{from} a third person point of view, ~~and~~ this speaker is able to reveal the love of work and hard work Moses has.

It is first revealed that Moses is a hard working slave in the first paragraph of the passage: "Moses, finally freed himself of the ancient and brittle harness that connected him to the oldest mule his master owned" (1. 8-10). This shows us that not only is Moses a slave, but he had very hard and tiring work. We know he was a hard worker because it is mentioned in the passage that he had been in the fields for more than fifteen hours that day.

Moses' hard work came from his passion and connection to work. Moses valued his work more than anything else in his life. "Moses closed his eyes bent down and took a pinch of the soil and ate it with no more thought than if it were a spot of cornbread" (1. 17-20). The passage later on goes on to say: "because the eating of it tied him to the only thing in his small world that meant almost as much as his own life" (1. 29-31). From that we can



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2C
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interpret that Moses ate the dirt because he had a deep connection to it and valued it because of his work. The passage also uses imagery to describe the taste of the dirt in certain months throughout the year. "July dirt tasted even more like a sweet petal than the dirt of June or May." ^(1.32-33) This imagery allows the reader to create a taste of the dirt and emphasize that Moses ate this dirt.

Moses, ~~didn't~~ anything as a slave, didn't take anything for granted and he found the joys in life even through his hard times. When it started to rain on Moses he used the water to cleanse himself and he simply laid on the ground and enjoyed the rain shower. "Moses stopped and held out his hands and collected water that he washed over his face. Then he undressed down to his nakedness and lay down" ~~1~~ (1.79-82) These lines show the simplicity of Moses and the life of a slave.

Imagery is the most common literary device used in this passage. It creates images for the reader and allows them to see what Moses can. The intense imagery helps reveal a somber tone and Moses' attitudes.



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2

2C
(3 of 3)

"The patch of woods of no more than three acres did yield some soft, blue grass that no animal would touch and many trees that no one could identify" (1.72-75). This is just one example of the many lines of imagery used.

Moses is revealed to us as a virtuous man who works hard because of his burning passion to work. He is also ~~viewed~~ viewed as a ~~simple~~ simplistic character who simply takes life as it comes to him and ~~try~~ tries to find the joys in it.

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2014 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 2

Overview

Students were asked to carefully read a passage from Edward P. Jones' novel *The Known World* and to write a well-organized essay on how the author uses literary elements to reveal the character of Moses.

Students were provided with another opportunity to analyze how literary devices are employed by an author to present and develop a character. In the case of Moses, a careful reading of the passage shows him to be a complex character, one who is aware of and sometimes attuned to nature, but who charts his own course of action and derives knowledge and experience in different ways. Students were offered the suggestions of point of view, selection of detail, and imagery as possible literary elements for analysis; many chose one or more of these as the basis for their analysis of character revelation, but often students ventured beyond this suggested list. Ultimately, the question was designed to assess students' ability to read closely, to glean details in context, and to write clearly and knowingly about their discoveries.

Sample: 2A

Score: 8

This clearly upper-level essay makes a sophisticated and compelling claim that “the power of nature overwhelms [Moses'] bond with his fellow man.” Allowing the chronology of the passage to structure the essay, the student argues that the “end of the day is [Moses'] time to commune with nature” and that this communion brings solace. Using implicit analysis of literary devices (notably imagery, symbolism, and personification), the essay explains why Moses' foray into the woods is a spiritual experience. It successively characterizes Moses' deliberate actions as “meditation” and “ritual” and reads Moses' taking of natural elements into his body as a kind of sacrament: “[Moses] lets the air ‘surge through him’ . . . accepting, after the soil, another fragment of nature within.” Remaining tightly focused on its argument, the essay speaks of Moses' figurative baptism as he ritually “cleans[es] himself of society's sins . . . eschew[s] the last vestiges of artificiality and return[s] to the pure form with which he entered the world.” The essay convincingly argues that once Moses has given himself up to nature and “been reborn like a child emerging from the womb,” nature is “his mother, his father, his everything. It completes him more than his real family.” The strength of this essay lies not only in the persuasiveness of its tight argument but also in the smooth incorporation of well-chosen references to the passage in its analytical sentences. While the essay uses rich, evocative diction to create a nuanced and carefully evidenced argument, its prose is sometimes less consistently controlled (e.g., “[t]he balance of man between nature and society is often a fine line, difficultly straddled” and “His reason in the act is that doing so enables him to discover”) so that this essay earned a score of 8 rather than 9.

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Question 2 (continued)

Sample: 2B

Score: 6

This upper-half essay makes the reasonable claim that “Jones introduces Moses as one in [*sic*] the same with Nature,” but it goes about its argument much less adroitly than the essay scored an 8 does. The essay’s attempts to analyze imagery, detail, and action in the second paragraph yield some interesting ideas (its reading of “incomprehensible”; its discussion of third person point of view), but in general its insights are less perceptive than those typical of a higher-scoring essay (e.g., “we can tell by Jones’ close attention to the detail of the sunset that the passage will be closely focused on nature”). The last third of the essay references the text but offers less perceptive analysis, in language that is at once more colloquial (“it seems as though [the smell of the rain] . . . is Moses’ drug, and he is getting some sort of insane high from it”), less specific (“[t]he end of the final paragraph is by far the most intense”), and less consistently in control of the elements of effective composition (“[h]e describes to us exactly what moses [*sic*] is feeling, about becoming old & feeling chained, because he just lost himself under the rain & trees for so many nights”) than one expects to see in essays scored a 7.

Sample: 2C

Score: 4

This lower-half essay presents a simple claim: “Moses ate the dirt because he had a deep connection to it and valued it because of his work.” But the essay is partial in its analysis, repetitive, and provides insufficient evidence to support its claim. When the student attempts to offer evidence for the claim (e.g., “[w]e know [Moses] was a hard worker because it is mentioned . . . that he had been in the fields for more than fifteen hours that day”), he or she remains locked in the concrete details of the passage, both echoing it and interpreting even figurative language literally. For example, imagery showing how the dirt tastes to Moses during different phases of the agricultural cycle yields the overly simple assertion that “imagery allows the reader to create a taste of the dirt and emphasize that Moses ate this dirt,” and imagery “creates images for the reader and allows them [*sic*] to see what Moses can.” The description of the woods is handled with a similarly undirected observation: it constitutes “just one example of the many lines of imagery used.” Although the language of the essay is sufficient to communicate these simple ideas (thereby helping to distinguish this essay from what one might expect of an essay scored a 3), the essay is not well written — as shown both in the examples given above and in such unwieldy sentences as “This speaker is able to reveal the love of work and hard work moses [*sic*] has.” Cumulatively, these features of the essay result in an inadequate and unconvincing treatment of the passage.