

2020

AP<sup>®</sup> CollegeBoard

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# AP<sup>®</sup> English Literature and Composition

Scoring Commentaries - Packet 1

Prose Fiction Analysis Question - Eng

**AP English Literature and Composition  
Prose Fiction Analysis Free-Response Question  
2020 Scoring Commentaries**

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<b>Sample Reference</b>	<b>Row A</b>	<b>Row B</b>	<b>Row C</b>
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B	1	4	0
C	1	3	1
D	1	3	0
E	1	2	0
F	1	1	0
G	0	1	0

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**Sample A**

**Score: 6/6 points (A1 – B4 – C1)**

**Row A: 1/1**

This response earns the point in Row A because it responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the passage: “By utilizing intimate conversations between Philip and Aunt Mei, beautiful imagery and depictions of nature, and the symbolic role of the fountain, the author illustrates the anger and resentment which our narrator feels, as well as the sense of peace and reconciliation which he experiences toward the conclusion of the passage” (paragraph 1).

**Row B: 4/4**

The response earns all of the four points in Row B because its thorough use of specific textual evidence consistently supports a clear line of reasoning. The presentation of the essay’s robust argument begins in paragraph two with the observation, “From the outset of the passage, it is apparent that Philip Hutton has not traveled to this house under positive pretenses. There is a sense of sadness and despair, as well as intense longing which one can feel from the emotional initial conversations which Philip engages in with his Aunt Mei, which is how the reader can begin to understand the reason for our narrator’s trip” (paragraph 2). The focus on the conversation between Philip and Aunt Mei helps to create the persuasive argument the essay makes; for example, the essay notes the “somewhat awkward tone of their conversation” (paragraph 2). Furthermore, the essay organizes and supports an argument about the complex and shifting emotions of the narrator, again relying both on specific evidence from the passage and commentary that consistently connects the evidence to the thesis. After quoting part of the conversation between the father and grandfather, the writer goes on to explain, “The emotions of regret and sorrow are easy to understand, given the situation: a father had banished his daughter from his family, and she died without any sort of reconciliation. However, the emotion of hope is recognizable, and this is what gives Philip hope as well for a future with his forebear” (paragraph 3). Additionally, the essay explains how two literary techniques (tone and symbolism) contribute to the interpretation of the passage. The essay’s consideration of the significance of the fountain—“This particular structure is immensely symbolic; it encompasses all of the joy, peace, and beauty of his mother’s childhood” (paragraph 3)—enhances the student’s interpretation of the passage. The clear organization of the essay strengthens the persuasive nature of the argument.

**Row C: 1/1**

This response earns the point in Row C because of its consistently vivid and persuasive style as evidenced by sophisticated word choice and deft turns of phrase: “His feelings are justly intense” (paragraph 2), “Philip believed that by spewing his hatred of his grandfather and his decisions at him, then this would make him feel more at peace with his mother’s passing” (paragraph 2), and “Clearly, the pair of matching fountains at each house is not simply an

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architectural cut-and-paste” (paragraph 3). The concluding sentence, “By the end of the passage, Philip is no longer an angry and resentful young man traveling to his grandfather’s house to relieve his wrath, but rather is a man at peace with his family’s checkered past, accepting of his present situation, and embracing the opportunities of a future with his newly-discovered family,” is evidence of an understanding of the complex feelings the narrator experiences upon visiting his mother’s childhood home.

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**Sample B**

**Score: 5/6 points (A1 – B4 – C0)**

**Row A: 1/1**

The response earns the point in Row A because it responds to the prompt with a defensible thesis in the introductory paragraph: “The author uses vivid imagery, subtle characterization, and deeply personal anecdotes to describe how Philip is more open to forgiving his grandfather for the past than he may realize.”

**Row B: 4/4**

The response earns the four points possible in Row B because it provides specific evidence to support the claim in its line of reasoning. For example, the essay closely examines the fountain in the garden, the conversation between the narrator and his grandfather, and the significance of the dragonflies. The essay then builds upon the textual evidence through commentary that thoroughly connects the evidence to its line of reasoning: “By bringing the fountain to life and describing it in terms that make it sound beautiful and alive, the narrator and his grandfather have something to bond over” (paragraph 2), and “Since Philip is able to sense that his grandfather is a calm and collected person who feels remorseful for what he did to his daughter in the past, he feels less angry at his grandfather and is more willing to sit down and talk about the past instead of telling him off and going home” (paragraph 3). The commentary provides support for the thesis in a cogent manner. Additionally, the essay aptly explains how the imagery of the fountain, the characterization of the grandfather, and the details about the dragonfly contribute to the meaning of the passage.

**Row C: 0/1**

The response does not earn the point in Row C because the complexity of argumentation is inconsistent. For example, paragraph two focuses more on the appearance of the fountain as opposed to how the imagery of the fountain supports the claim about Philip’s feelings toward his grandfather. The response states, “The author’s use of vivid imagery when describing the fountain turns into something that is almost alive,” and, “When the narrator describes the fountain, they use words that give it life and more of a personality” (paragraph 2). Additionally, the style of writing is not consistently vivid.

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**Sample C**

**Score: 5/6 points (A1 – B3 – C1)**

**Row A: 1/1**

The response earns the point in Row A because it responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the passage. The thesis, the last sentence in the introductory paragraph, states, “The author uses imagery pertaining to all senses, unrevealing dialogue, and symbolism of the fountain- the epicenter of the time capsule that Hutton must confront- to convey how complex emotions are necessary in order to reach inner harmony and understanding.”

**Row B: 3/4**

The response earns three of the four possible points in this row because it uniformly provides evidence in support of its claim. The textual evidence is effectively integrated into the response: “The ‘birds [that] whisted and chirped outside and the strong smell of frangipani’ only become noticeable once the author has slept on the conversation he had with his Aunt Mei the previous night” (paragraph 2), and “Yet the most important reference to the senses comes from Hutton, as he tells his grandfather that ‘the fountain at home is very similar. It even sounds the same,’ cementing the positive power of nostalgia” (paragraph 2). The response also provides commentary that explains how the evidence supports the line of reasoning. For example, in paragraph three, the writer explains, “But since the relationship between the grandfather and Hutton is strained by the invisible hand of the past, unlike Aunt Mei and Hutton, such blunt dialogue could have brought out the angry and remorseful side of emotion that Hutton was battling.” Also, the response explores multiple literary devices, such as sensory details from the setting in paragraph two, dialogue among the family members in paragraph three, and symbolism of the fountain in paragraph four. However, the commentary in paragraph four fails to support a key claim, hinging on a misreading of the grandfather’s having built the replica fountain for his mother: “The fountain was the grandfather’s nonverbal way of forgiving his daughter.”

**Row C: 1/1**

The response earns the point in Row C due to its style that is consistently vivid and persuasive. From the introductory paragraph of the response (“Ambiguous emotions can cause internal confusion, but are often necessary to one’s inner journey of enlightenment and forgiveness.”) to its concluding paragraph (“This action, of sitting whilst Hutton still stands above, shows the true remorse and honesty of the grandfather’s actions. ANd this small act of sitting on the fountain was what granted Hutton the ability to understand the validity of his complex emotions.”), the response explores the complexity and tensions within the passage.

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**Sample D**

**Score: 4/6 points (A1 – B3 – C0)**

**Row A: 1/1**

This response earns one point in Row A because it responds to the prompt with a defensible thesis: “Utilizing tranquil imagery and slowing syntax the author reveals Philip’s dynamic thought towards his grandfather, his mother’s old home, and his complex battle with his own emotions” (paragraph 1).

**Row B: 3/4**

This response earns three of the points possible in Row B because it uses specific evidence from the passage to examine the “serene and calm nature” of the grandfather’s home as a point of contrast with Philip’s complex emotions: “‘Birds whistled and chirped outside and the strong smell of frangipani came in from the garden and sought refuge in the room.’ The tranquil imagery of the scene is depicted as much less anxious than Philip himself” (paragraph 2). The third paragraph of the essay focuses on the syntax of the passage and offers examples of narration and description: “For example, when Philip says, ‘I circled the fountain that my mother had loved so much, crouching to examine the carvings of birds and trees that ran around its wall and the plump angel that stood poised with a jug in the center,’ the added clauses in the thought serve to convey Philip’s hesitant approach to the conversation and slow down the progression of the story to give insight on the character’s thoughts, emotions, and observations” (paragraph 3). This textual evidence supports a line of reasoning focused on the dynamic nature of Philip’s thoughts and feelings by revealing how his initial anxiety, bitterness, and “reactionary” intentions in paragraph two evolve into his “hesitant approach” to conversation with his grandfather in paragraph three. In places, however, the commentary is unclear in its support of the thesis: “To slow down and soften the atmosphere of the story, the syntax of the passage uses many short apostrophe clauses” (paragraph 3).

**Row C: 0/1**

This response does not earn the point in Row C because it does not develop a complex literary argument. While pointing out the dynamic nature of the relationship between Philip and his grandfather, the response does not fully explain Philip’s “complex battle with his own emotions” (paragraph 1).

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**Sample E**

**Score: 3/6 points (A1 – B2 – C0)**

**Row A: 1/1**

This response earns the point in Row A because it presents a defensible thesis in response to the prompt: “Feelings of both anger and resentment towards his grandfather, along with feelings of remorse and emptiness from the loss of his mother, in other words, the visit seems to resurface the sadness and memories of losing his mother” (paragraph 1).

**Row B: 2/4**

The response earns two of the four points in Row B because it does offer some specific, relevant evidence. For example, the writer uses the descriptions of Philip’s mother’s room: “High wooden shutters opened out to a narrow balcony, which curled over a garden hidden” (paragraph 2), and Philip’s planned reaction to his grandfather: “I would express to him my disappointment,” and “I would leave the next day” (paragraph 2). The commentary, however, does not support the student’s argument, and no clear line of reasoning is established, e.g., word choices of “shutters,” “curling,” or “things” do not relate to the claim about the mother. The response presents a simplistic argument: “...he sees her as beautiful and graceful, and connects her into that when describing her room and balcony” (paragraph 2). The response focuses more thoroughly on the boy’s mother instead of his complex feelings upon visiting her childhood home: “These components allude to his mother in the way that they’re poised, graceful and seem to be almost heavenly – which represent his mother, along w/ her death” (paragraph 4). The simplistic and repetitive nature of the commentary does not support a line of reasoning.

**Row 3: 0/1**

The response does not earn the point in Row C due to its simplistic and repetitive explanations. It does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument.



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**Sample F**

**Score: 2/6 points (A1 – B1 – C0)**

**Row A: 1/1**

This response earns the point in Row A because it presents a simple, defensible thesis that responds to the prompt: “It is shown throughout the reading the feelings of resent of the narrator towards their grandfather and understanding of their mother’s past” (paragraph 1).

**Row B: 1/4**

The response earns one of four possible points in Row B. The response relies primarily on description of the passage as its textual evidence: “The author also uses the outdoor setting to show that the narrator feels relief as they step inside out of the hot and dry air” (paragraph 2). While the response mentions setting and tone, it offers little explanation of their connection to the thesis or a line of reasoning. For example, the statement, “The author also utilizes tone to highlight their character’s takeaway from the experience” (paragraph 3) does not lead to an interpretation of the text. Some of the commentary is not adequately explained and therefore does not strengthen the argument, such as, “Furthermore, the house and the dragonflies the author depicts in the excerpt ultimately make the author feel nostalgia from when they were younger and explained their mother’s disdain from their past” (paragraph 2).

**Row C: 0/1**

The response does not earn the point in Row C because it does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument. The complexities of the passage are oversimplified, e.g., “The narrator feels the serene garden and begins to see their grandfather’s regret and turns their resentful attitude into understanding towards their experience from the visit” (paragraph 3).

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**Sample G**

**Score: 1/6 points (A0 – B1 – C0)**

**Row A: 0/1**

This response does not earn a point in Row A because there is no thesis. The response mentions literary devices, but it does not present a defensible interpretation of the passage.

**Row B: 1/4**

This brief essay earns one point in Row B because it does make textual references; however, the references are too general (“in paragraph 3”) to provide meaningful evidence. The response summarizes the text without offering an explanation of how the summary supports an argument or a line of reasoning. An attempt to make a connection between summary and commentary is unclear and reflects a misreading: “To sooth the tension between the grandfather and the narrator. The grandfather built an exact replica of the fountain from the narrator’s mother’s youth” (paragraph 3).

**Row C: 0/1**

This response does not earn the point in Row C due to its lack of sophistication of thought and lack of a complex literary argument.