



## **AP<sup>®</sup> English Language and Composition 2005 Free-Response Questions Form B**

### **The College Board: Connecting Students to College Success**

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 4,700 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves over three and a half million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,500 colleges through major programs and services in college admissions, guidance, assessment, financial aid, enrollment, and teaching and learning. Among its best-known programs are the SAT<sup>®</sup>, the PSAT/NMSQT<sup>®</sup>, and the Advanced Placement Program<sup>®</sup> (AP<sup>®</sup>). The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities, and concerns.

Copyright © 2005 by College Board. All rights reserved. College Board, AP Central, APCD, Advanced Placement Program, AP, AP Vertical Teams, Pre-AP, SAT, and the acorn logo are registered trademarks of the College Entrance Examination Board. Admitted Class Evaluation Service, CollegeEd, Connect to college success, MyRoad, SAT Professional Development, SAT Readiness Program, and Setting the Cornerstones are trademarks owned by the College Entrance Examination Board. PSAT/NMSQT is a registered trademark of the College Entrance Examination Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Other products and services may be trademarks of their respective owners. Permission to use copyrighted College Board materials may be requested online at: <http://www.collegeboard.com/inquiry/cbpermit.html>.

**Visit the College Board on the Web: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).**

**AP Central is the official online home for the AP Program and Pre-AP: [apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com).**

**2005 AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS (Form B)**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION**

**SECTION II**

**Total time—2 hours**

**Question 1**

(Suggested time — 40 minutes. This question counts one-third of the total essay section score.)

The passage below is an excerpt from a lecture delivered in Boston in 1832 by Maria W. Stewart, an African American educator and writer. Read the passage carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze the rhetorical strategies Stewart uses to convey her position.

Few white persons of either sex, who are calculated for any thing else, are willing to spend their lives and bury their talents in performing mean, servile labor. And such is the horrible idea that I entertain respecting a life of servitude, that if I conceived of there being no possibility of my rising above the condition of a servant, I would gladly hail death as a welcome messenger. O, horrible idea, indeed! to possess noble souls aspiring after high and honorable acquirements, yet confined by the chains of ignorance and poverty to lives of continual drudgery and toil. Neither do I know of any who have enriched themselves by spending their lives as house-domestics, washing windows, shaking carpets, brushing boots, or tending upon gentlemen's tables. I can but die for expressing my sentiments; and I am as willing to die by the sword as the pestilence; for I am a true born American; your blood flows in my veins, and your spirit fires my breast.

I observed a piece in the *Liberator*<sup>1</sup> a few months since, stating that the colonizationists<sup>2</sup> had published a work respecting us, asserting that we were lazy and idle. I confute them on that point. Take us generally as a people, we are neither lazy nor idle; and considering how little we have to excite or stimulate us, I am almost astonished that there are so many industrious and ambitious ones to be found: although I acknowledge, with extreme sorrow, that there are some who never were and never will be serviceable to society.

And have you not a similar class among yourselves? Again. It was asserted that we were "a ragged set, crying for liberty." I reply to it, the whites have so long and so loudly proclaimed the theme of equal

rights and privileges, that our souls have caught the flame also, ragged as we are. As far as our merit deserves, we feel a common desire to rise above the condition of servants and drudges. I have learnt, by bitter experience, that continual hard labor deadens the energies of the soul, and benumbs the faculties of the mind; the ideas become confined, the mind barren, and, like the scorching sands of Arabia, produces nothing; or, like the uncultivated soil, brings forth thorns and thistles.

Again. Continual hard labor irritates our tempers and sours our dispositions; the whole system becomes worn out with toil and fatigue; nature herself becomes almost exhausted, and we care but little whether we live or die. It is true, that the free people of color throughout these United States are neither bought nor sold, nor under the lash of the cruel driver; many obtain a comfortable support; but few, if any, have an opportunity of becoming rich and independent; and the employments we most pursue are as unprofitable to us as the spider's web or the floating bubbles that vanish into air. As servants, we are respected; but let us presume to aspire any higher, our employer regards us no longer. And were it not that the King Eternal has declared that Ethiopia<sup>3</sup> shall stretch forth her hands unto God, I should indeed despair.

<sup>1</sup> An abolitionist newspaper

<sup>2</sup> The American Colonization Society was founded in 1817. The colonizationists were White Americans who advocated the return of free African Americans to Africa as a way of dealing with the issue of race.

<sup>3</sup> Biblical designation for Africans

**2005 AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS (Form B)**

**Question 2**

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts one-third of the total essay section score.)

In the following passage from *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America*, contemporary writer John M. Barry describes the complex mechanics of the Mississippi River. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Barry communicates his fascination with the river to his readers.

The river's characteristics represent an extraordinarily dynamic combination of turbulent effects, and river hydraulics quickly go beyond the merely complex. Indeed, studies of flowing water in the 1970s helped launch the new science of chaos, and James Gleick in his book on the subject quotes physicist Werner Heisenberg, who stated that on his deathbed he would like to ask God two questions: why relativity? and, why turbulence? Heisenberg suggested, "I really think God may have an answer to the first question."

Anything from a temperature change to the wind to the roughness of the bottom radically alters a river's internal dynamics. Surface velocities, bottom velocities, midstream and mid-depth velocities—all are affected by friction or the lack of friction with the air, the riverbank, the riverbed.

But the complexity of the Mississippi exceeds that of nearly all other rivers. Not only is it acted upon; it acts. It generates its own internal forces through its size, its sediment load, its depth, variations in its bottom, its ability to cave in the riverbank and slide sideways for miles, and even tidal influences, which affect it as far north as Baton Rouge. Engineering theories and techniques that apply to other rivers, even such major rivers as the Po, the Rhine, the Missouri, and even the upper Mississippi, simply do not work on the lower Mississippi, which normally runs far deeper and carries far more water. (In 1993, for example, the floodwaters that overflowed, with

devastating result, the Missouri and upper Mississippi put no strain on the levees along the lower Mississippi.)

The Mississippi never lies at rest. It roils. It follows no set course. Its waters and currents are not uniform. Rather, it moves south in layers and whorls, like an uncoiling rope made up of a multitude of discrete fibers, each one following an independent and unpredictable path, each one separately and together capable of snapping like a whip. It never has one current, one velocity. Even when the river is not in flood, one can sometimes see the surface in one spot one to two feet higher than the surface close by, while the water swirls about, as if trying to devour itself. Eddies of gigantic dimensions can develop, sometimes accompanied by great spiraling holes in the water. Humphreys observed an eddy "running *upstream* at seven miles an hour and extending half across the river, whirling and foaming like a whirlpool."

The river's sinuosity itself generates enormous force. The Mississippi snakes seaward in a continual series of S curves that sometimes approach 180 degrees. The collision of river and earth at these bends creates tremendous turbulence: currents can drive straight down to the bottom of the river, sucking at whatever lies on the surface, scouring out holes often several hundred feet deep. Thus the Mississippi is a series of deep pools and shallow "crossings," and the movement of water from depth to shallows adds still further force and complexity.

**2005 AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS (Form B)**

**Question 3**

(Suggested time — 40 minutes. This question counts one-third of the total essay section score.)

The passage below is from *The Medusa and the Snail* by biologist Lewis Thomas. Read the passage carefully. Then, drawing on your own reading and experience, write an essay that defends, challenges, or qualifies Thomas's claims.

Line  
5  
10  
15  
20  
25

Mistakes are at the very base of human thought, embedded there, feeding the structure like root nodules. If we were not provided with the knack of being wrong, we could never get anything useful done. We think our way along by choosing between right and wrong alternatives, and the wrong choices have to be made as frequently as the right ones. We get along in life this way. We are built to make mistakes, coded for error.

We learn, as we say, by “trial and error.” Why do we always say that? Why not “trial and rightness” or “trial and triumph”? The old phrase puts it that way because that is, in real life, the way it is done.

A good laboratory, like a good bank or a corporation or government, has to run like a computer. Almost everything is done flawlessly, by the book, and all the numbers add up to the predicted sums. The days go by. And then, if it is a lucky day, and a lucky laboratory, somebody makes a mistake: the wrong buffer, something in one of the blanks, a decimal misplaced in reading counts, the warm room off by a degree and a half, a mouse out of his box, or just a misreading of the day's protocol. Whatever, when the results come in, something is obviously screwed up, and then the action can begin.

30  
35  
40

The misreading is not the important error; it opens the way. The next step is the crucial one. If the investigator can bring himself to say, “But even so, look at that!” then the new finding, whatever it is, is ready for snatching. What is needed, for progress to be made, is the move based on the error.

Whenever new kinds of thinking are about to be accomplished, or new varieties of music, there has to be an argument beforehand. With two sides debating in the same mind, haranguing, there is an amiable understanding that one is right and the other wrong. Sooner or later the thing is settled, but there can be no action at all if there are not the two sides, and the argument. The hope is in the faculty of wrongness, the tendency toward error. The capacity to leap across mountains of information to land lightly on the wrong side represents the highest of human endowments.

(1979)

**END OF EXAM**