AP® English Literature
2003 Sample Student Responses

The materials included in these files are intended for use by AP teachers for course and exam preparation; permission for any other use must be sought from the Advanced Placement Program®. Teachers may reproduce them, in whole or in part, in limited quantities for noncommercial, face-to-face teaching purposes. This permission does not apply to any third-party copyrights contained herein. This material may not be mass distributed, electronically or otherwise. These materials and any copies made of them may not be resold, and the copyright notices must be retained as they appear here.

These materials were produced by Educational Testing Service® (ETS®), which develops and administers the examinations of the Advanced Placement Program for the College Board. The College Board and Educational Testing Service (ETS) are dedicated to the principle of equal opportunity, and their programs, services, and employment policies are guided by that principle.

The College Board is a national nonprofit membership association whose mission is to prepare, inspire, and connect students to college and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 4,300 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves over three million students and their parents, 22,000 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®, the PSAT/NMSQT®, and the Advanced Placement Program® (AP®). The College Board is committed to the principles of equity and excellence, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities, and concerns.

For further information, visit www.collegeboard.com

Copyright © 2003 College Entrance Examination Board. All rights reserved. College Board, Advanced Placement Program, AP, AP Vertical Teams, APCD, Pacesetter, Pre-AP, SAT, Student Search Service, and the acorn logo are registered trademarks of the College Entrance Examination Board.

AP Central is a trademark owned by the College Entrance Examination Board. PSAT/NMSQT® is a registered trademark jointly owned by the College Entrance Examination Board and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Educational Testing Service and ETS are registered trademarks of Educational Testing Service. Other products and services may be trademarks of their respective owners.

For the College Board’s online home for AP professionals, visit AP Central at apcentral.collegeboard.com.
People's attitudes toward Eros, the Greek god of love, often mirror their own opinions about love itself. Thus, since many are perplexed and frustrated by love, they have mixed feelings about Eros. Both Robert Bridges and Anne Stevenson express this confusion in their poems addressed to Eros; however, they have different underlying assumptions about love.

Bridges begins his poem, ERIS, with a question. This pointed inquiring, "why hast thou nothing in thy face?" sets the tone of the entire poem—one of curiosity. Bridges has difficulty reconciling Eros's seemingly conflicting characteristics, as evidenced by his calling him "tyrant of the human heart." The human heart is supposed to be sensitive, whereas "tyrant" connotes brutality and apathy toward emotion. However, after this attack on Eros, Bridges calls him "an image of eternal Truth." By capitalizing truth, Bridges indicates his reverence for the god of love. Bridges returns to an attitude of wonderment in the second stanza, noting that "shadows neither love nor guile—thy unchristened smile." Thus, by using the metaphor of shadows on Eros's face, Bridges illustrates the
God's moral ambiguity—shadows "neither last nor guide" him. Bridges demonstrates that his question has not been answered by repeating a similar one at the beginning of the third stanzas: "What is thy thought?" Bridges again brings up Eros's contradictory nature by speaking of "the I victim of grace." The lord "victim" carries many negative connotations, while "grace" connotes godliness. Thus, Bridges ends EPZ as curious as he began it.

Stevenson, too, questions Eros from the start. She is not nearly as complimentary of Eros's appearance as Bridges was; she calls him a "thug with a broken nose and squinty eyes." Not only does the word "thug" bring to mind many negative connotations, it is also slang. Using slang in addressing a god obviously brings him down in the reader's eyes. The speaker then addresses Eros as "my bully boy," continuing the casual tone which has so far characterized the poem. Eros responds to her question about his appearance by saying, "the brute you see is what long otherwise has made me. By reference to himself in the third person, Stevenson
shows that Eno can no longer relate to himself, let alone other people. He doesn't even seem to believe in love, blaming his current state on the "flaws I then just delivered." Clearly, Eno doesn't see people (or at least the speaker) as capable of true love—only "lust." In addition, the end of the stanza is a forced rhyme ("sum" and "one") indicating Eno's feelings about his duties—one of obligation. Eno shows the speaker why he is needed, however, at the end of the poem by presenting the alternatives to him: "love dissolves in lots or left to rot." This negativity and bleak imagery seems to mirror the author's feelings about love and the love god himself.

While both Bridges and Stevenson question the god of love, they have differing attitudes toward him, and love itself. Bridges seems to demonstrate honest curiosity, but Stevenson seems bitter and mocking in his questions. In the end, the poets seem as unsatisfied as they began.

#
Stevenson and Bridges present Eros in different ways but with similar methods. While Bridges' poem "Eros" is a more classic praise of Eros' endurance, "Eros" is a modern criticism of what humans have done to love. Therefore, while both poems evoke sympathy for the god of love, Bridges' "Eros" focuses on praising Eros's immortality and "Eros" now criticizes the way humans have abused love.

In "Eros" Bridges moves from an attitude of awe and praise to a more sympathetic attitude toward the unappreciated god of love. His praise begins with the paradox presented in lines 2 and 3: "the idea that Eros is both an "idol" and a "tyrant" gives..." provides a feeling of respect for the god. He is seen as someone people worship and fear, which emphasizes this idea of respect. The respectability of Eros, in turn, emphasizes Bridges overall awe toward Eros. Bridges continues his praise with very praiseworthy and spiritual diction, like "flower of fabled youth" "exuberant flesh so fair" and "image of eternal Truth." These phrases evoke a sense of wonder in the reader and elevate Eros above the human realm. This elevation is another key element in expressing Bridges overall praise of Eros. Additionally, Bridges uses Eros's smile as a symbol for "shameless will and power immense, in secret sensuous innocence." This symbol and the diction describing it again evokes
Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

an image of great power and might. Such an image demands reverence from the reader. This reverence and respect is exactly what Bridges uses to convey his overall attitude of praise and awe.

In addition to his praise of Eros, Bridges also evokes sympathy for Eros as does Stevenson in her poem. The abrupt syntax that ends Bridges poem is abrupt and unsatisfying which mirrors its message that Eros is not satisfied in his appreciation. Bridges describes those who have yearned for love do not even bother to look at Eros's face when he brings love before them. This suggests the underappreciation Eros feels when people do not appreciate his gift. This, in turn, evokes sympathy from the reader. This sympathy is mirrored in Stevenson's poem. Stevenson presents an image of Eros as a battered and beaten immortal "slave". Throughout her poem, Stevenson creates this image to portray the pain Eros has suffered. In turn, this pain evokes sympathy from the reader for the Greek god. Therefore, both poets strive to show the reader that Eros has a thankless and dangerous job and that he deserves sympathy for doing it.

Stevenson, however, continues this sympathy into criticism of people for treating Eros like this. She uses an imagined conversation between the speaker and Eros so that the reader can directly see the thoughts of Eros. In this conversation, Eros expresses his thoughts about how human lust has delivered blows
to him "one by one". This shifts the tone from a sympathy for Eros's suffering to an accusation and criticism of human abuse of love. Additionally, Eros's final comments show the reader that Eros continues to survive and aid humans which not only evokes sympathy for the enduring god, but worsens the criticism of humans. Not only have humans continued to abuse love, but Eros still attempts to help them. This finalizes Stevenson's criticism of humans.

Both poems evoke a great deal of sympathy for Eros. But Bridges takes a more classic view, however, and shows a great deal of praise for Eros. Stevenson, on the other hand, focuses more on criticizing humans for treating love the way they have.
Robert Bridges' "Eros" and Anne Stevenson's "Eros" both depict the god of love in Greek mythology. Eros; however, Bridges' and Stevenson's depiction of the god differ greatly. Eros in Bridges' poem is described more as a god—he is perfect, while in Stevenson's poem, Eros is described as an overused source for people.

One of the differences of the poems is in the author's writing style. Bridges' poem is titled "EROS," that Ero's name written in Greek; Stevenson decides to use simply "Eros."

The language used by Bridges is much more formal than the language used by Stevenson. Bridges opens his poem with, "Why shoot thou nothing in thy yoke?," while Stevenson chooses to use modern English throughout "Eros."

In Bridges' poem, the speaker discusses Eros with great admiration. Eros is thought to be so perfect that "With thy exuberant flesh so fair, that only Pheidias might compare."

The speaker believes that the people do not appreciate Eros and the joy he brings to them. Bridges writes "None who ever long'd for thy embrace, Hath cared to look upon thy yoke."

The speaker of Bridges' poem believes that Eros is innocence, "The flower of lovely youth thou art," and "But shameless wol and power immense, In secret sensuous innocence."

The speaker of Stevenson's poem depicts Eros...
much very differently than the speaker of
*Bringen* poem does. Eros, in Stevenson's
poem, is described as a god who is just being
used and who is not appreciated. The speaker
describes Eros as "This thug with broken
nose and squinting eyes, and with boxer
clips and patchy wings askew." In the
poem Eros defends himself with "Know the
brute you see is what long over use has made
of me. My face that so offends you is the sum
of blows your lust delivered One by one." Eros
is not the beautiful god that the caller, "Madam,"
expected to find. The speaker writes that although
Eros is battered and does not look beautiful
anymore, he should still be greatly appreciated
because he does not ever give up and leave
and leave love to not