



## **AP<sup>®</sup> English Literature and Composition 2004 Free-Response Questions**

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FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

Question 1

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

The poems below are concerned with darkness and night. Read each poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, compare and contrast the poems, analyzing the significance of dark or night in each. In your essay, consider elements such as point of view, imagery, and structure.

Unfortunately, we have been denied permission to reproduce Emily Dickinson's poem, "We grow accustomed to the Dark," on this Web site.

The poem was reprinted from *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, ed. Thomas H. Johnson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951).

Acquainted with the Night

I have been one acquainted with the night.  
I have walked out in rain—and back in rain.  
I have outwalked the furthest city light.

*Line* I have looked down the saddest city lane.  
5 I have passed by the watchman on his beat  
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet  
When far away an interrupted cry  
Came over houses from another street,

10 But not to call me back or say good-by;  
And further still at an unearthly height,  
One luminary clock against the sky

Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.  
I have been one acquainted with the night.

—Robert Frost

"Acquainted with the Night" from  
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Question 2

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

The following passage comes from the opening of “The Pupil” (1891), a story by Henry James. Read the passage carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze the author’s depiction of the three characters and the relationships among them. Pay particular attention to tone and point of view.

Line  
5 The poor young man hesitated and procrastinated:  
it cost him such an effort to broach the subject of  
terms, to speak of money to a person who spoke only  
of feelings and, as it were, of the aristocracy. Yet he  
was unwilling to take leave, treating his engagement  
as settled, without some more conventional glance in  
that direction than he could find an opening for in the  
manner of the large, affable lady who sat there  
10 drawing a pair of soiled *gants de Suède*\* through a  
fat, jewelled hand and, at once pressing and gliding,  
repeated over and over everything but the thing he  
would have liked to hear. He would have liked to hear  
the figure of his salary; but just as he was nervously  
about to sound that note the little boy came back—the  
15 little boy Mrs. Moreen had sent out of the room to  
fetch her fan. He came back without the fan, only  
with the casual observation that he couldn’t find it. As  
he dropped this cynical confession he looked straight  
and hard at the candidate for the honour of taking his  
20 education in hand. This personage reflected, some-  
what grimly, that the first thing he should have to  
teach his little charge would be to appear to address  
himself to his mother when he spoke to her—  
especially not to make her such an improper answer  
25 as that.

When Mrs. Moreen bethought herself of this  
pretext for getting rid of their companion, Pemberton  
supposed it was precisely to approach the delicate  
subject of his remuneration. But it had been only to  
30 say some things about her son which it was better that  
a boy of eleven shouldn’t catch. They were  
extravagantly to his advantage, save when she  
lowered her voice to sigh, tapping her left side  
familiarly: “And all over-clouded by *this*, you  
35 know — all at the mercy of a weakness —!”  
Pemberton gathered that the weakness was in the  
region of the heart. He had known the poor child was  
not robust: this was the basis on which he had been  
invited to treat, through an English lady, an Oxford

40 acquaintance, then at Nice, who happened to know  
both his needs and those of the amiable American  
family looking out for something really superior in  
the way of a resident tutor.

The young man’s impression of his prospective  
45 pupil, who had first come into the room, as if to see  
for himself, as soon as Pemberton was admitted, was  
not quite the soft solicitation the visitor had taken for  
granted. Morgan Moreen was, somehow, sickly  
without being delicate, and that he looked intelligent  
50 (it is true Pemberton wouldn’t have enjoyed his being  
stupid), only added to the suggestion that, as with his  
big mouth and big ears he really couldn’t be called  
pretty, he might be unpleasant. Pemberton was  
modest—he was even timid; and the chance that his  
55 small scholar might prove cleverer than himself had  
quite figured, to his nervousness, among the dangers  
of an untried experiment. He reflected, however, that  
these were risks one had to run when one accepted a  
position, as it was called, in a private family; when as  
60 yet one’s University honours had, pecuniarily  
speaking, remained barren. At any rate, when Mrs.  
Moreen got up as if to intimate that, since it was  
understood he would enter upon his duties within the  
week she would let him off now, he succeeded, in  
65 spite of the presence of the child, in squeezing out a  
phrase about the rate of payment. It was not the fault  
of the conscious smile which seemed a reference to  
the lady’s expensive identity, if the allusion did not  
sound rather vulgar. This was exactly because she  
70 became still more gracious to reply: “Oh, I can assure  
you that all that will be quite regular.”

Pemberton only wondered, while he took up his  
hat, what “all that” was to amount to—people had  
such different ideas. Mrs. Moreen’s words, however,  
75 seemed to commit the family to a pledge definite  
enough to elicit from the child a strange little  
comment, in the shape of the mocking, foreign  
ejaculation, “Oh, là-là!”

\*suede gloves

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**Question 3**

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

Critic Roland Barthes has said, “Literature is the question minus the answer.” Choose a novel or play and, considering Barthes’ observation, write an essay in which you analyze a central question the work raises and the extent to which it offers any answers. Explain how the author’s treatment of this question affects your understanding of the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary.

You may select a work from the list below or another novel or play of comparable literary merit.

*Alias Grace*  
*All the King’s Men*  
*Candide*  
*Crime and Punishment*  
*Death of a Salesman*  
*Doctor Faustus*  
*Don Quixote*  
*A Gesture Life*  
*Ghosts*  
*Great Expectations*  
*The Great Gatsby*  
*Gulliver’s Travels*  
*Heart of Darkness*  
*Invisible Man*  
*Joe Turner’s Come and Gone*  
*King Lear*  
*Major Barbara*

*Middlemarch*  
*Moby-Dick*  
*Obasan*  
*Oedipus Rex*  
*Orlando*  
*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*  
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*  
*The Scarlet Letter*  
*Sister Carrie*  
*The Sound and the Fury*  
*Sula*  
*The Sun Also Rises*  
*Their Eyes Were Watching God*  
*The Things They Carried*  
*The Turn of the Screw*  
*Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf*

**END OF EXAMINATION**