



AP[®] English Literature and Composition 2004 Scoring Guidelines Form B

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**AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE
2004 SCORING GUIDELINES (Form B)**

Question 1

Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton*

General Directions: This scoring guide will be useful for most of the essays that you read, but in problematic cases, please consult your table leader. The score that you assign should reflect your judgment of the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, its style, its mechanics. Reward the writers 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 three (3).

- 9-8** The writers of these well-written essays provide an insightful analysis of the social commentary implicit in the passage. They ably explain how the author conveys, through a variety of devices such as point of view, selection of detail, dialogue, and characterization, her sense of social injustice. Although the writers of these essays may understand Gaskell's social commentary in a variety of ways, they will tend to agree that her view is critical of the social hierarchy. Not necessarily without flaws, these essays still provide a coherent and persuasive interpretation of the passage, using apt and specific references to the text. The best essays will demonstrate the writer's ability to read the narrative perceptively and write with clarity and sophistication.
- 7-6** The writers of these competent essays grasp the nature of Gaskell's social commentary and convey plausible interpretations of the passage. However, their assertions do not demonstrate as full an awareness of the extent or nature of the social criticism implied. These essays effectively discuss some of the relevant techniques used in the passage. Their interpretations need not be flawless, and may falter in persuasiveness or specificity. These essays demonstrate the writer's ability to express ideas clearly, but not with the same maturity or control as the very best essays.
- 5** Although these essays demonstrate some understanding of Gaskell's social commentary, they are generally more superficial and less convincing than the upper half essays. Discussion, though not inaccurate, tends to be overly generalized and inadequately supported by references to the text. There may be insufficient discussion of the techniques used in the passage or an inconsistent interpretation of the social commentary. While the writing adequately conveys the writer's ideas and is not marred by distracting errors, these essays are not as well conceived, organized, or well developed as the upper half essays.
- 4-3** These lower half essays reveal an incomplete understanding of the passage and perhaps of the task itself. They may discuss the techniques of the passage without showing how they imply social commentary, or they may misunderstand what that commentary is, offering implausible or irrelevant interpretations. They may summarize the narrative without grasping its message at all. Often wordy and repetitious, the writing may reveal uncertain control of the elements of college-level composition and may contain recurrent stylistic flaws. Essays that contain significant misreading and /or unusually inept writing must be scored a three (3).

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Question 1 (cont'd.)

- 2-1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the essays in the 4-3 range. They may seriously misread the text and are often unacceptably brief. Although some attempt may be made to answer the question, the writer's observations are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the text. They may be poorly written on several counts and may contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Essays that contain little coherent writing or discussion of the text should be scored a one (1).
- 0** These essays give a response that is no more than a reference to the task.
- Indicates a blank response or one that is completely off topic.

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Question 2

Mary Oliver’s “Crossing the Swamp”

General Directions: This scoring guide will be useful for most of the essays that you read, but in problematic cases, please consult your table leader. The score that you assign should reflect your judgment of the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, its style, its mechanics. Reward the writers 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 three (3).

- 9-8** The writers of these persuasive essays show themselves to be astute readers of poetry, analyzing with clarity and precision the nature of the relationship between Oliver’s speaker and the swamp. These essays are particularly effective in demonstrating why the swamp (or the idea of a swamp) appeals to the speaker, and what her complex reactions to it are. These essays need not be flawless, but they are convincingly specific about the poetic techniques used in the poem and why they are effective. These essays demonstrate a significant maturity, both in their understanding of the poem and in their sustained control and clarity of writing.
- 7-6** The writers of these competent essays offer a convincing interpretation of the poem, giving a clear account of the relation between swamp and speaker, and identifying many of the poetic techniques used in the poem. Their assertions may be more generalized, less convincing, or less specific than the highest scoring essays. Despite minor errors of interpretation these essays offer significant insights. Lacking the maturity and control of the very best essays, they still demonstrate the ability to express ideas effectively. They may be briefer, less incisive, or less well supported than the 9-8 essays.
- 5** Although these essays may suggest a reasonable interpretation of the speaker’s relation to the swamp and may demonstrate some ability to analyze poetic technique, they are generally superficial and less convincing than the upper half essays. Discussion in these essays, though not inaccurate, tends to be overly generalized and inadequately supported by references to the details of the poem. Although the writing adequately conveys the writer’s ideas and is not marred by distracting errors, these essays are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as the upper half essays.
- 4-3** These lower half essays may reveal an incomplete, oversimplified, or mistaken understanding of the poem. Their assertions about the swamp and the speaker’s relation to it may be implausible or irrelevant. They may be vague about the poem’s poetic techniques and may rely almost entirely on generalization or paraphrase. Often wordy and repetitious, the writing may reveal uncertain control of the elements of college-level composition and may contain recurrent stylistic flaws. Essays that contain significant misreading and/or unusually inept writing must be scored a three (3).

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Question 2 (cont'd.)

- 2-1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the essays in the 4-3 range. Often they are unacceptably brief or without even a basic understanding of poetry. Although some attempt may be made to answer the question, the writer's observations are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the text. They may be poorly written on several counts and may contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Essays that contain little coherent writing or discussion of the poem should be scored a one (1).
- 0** These essays give a response that is no more than a reference to the task.
- Indicates a blank response or one that is completely off topic.

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Question 3

A Death Scene

General Directions: This scoring guide will be useful for most of the essays that you read, but in problematic cases, please consult your table leader. The score that you assign should reflect your judgment of the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, its style, its mechanics. Reward the writers 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 three (3).

- 9-8** The writers of these persuasive, well-written essays make an effective selection of a particular scene in which a death or deaths take place, showing convincingly how that scene sheds light on the larger meaning of the work as a whole. These essays demonstrate an impressive command of the text selected, and are adept at showing how details of the scene have large and significant implications. These essays need not be flawless, but they nevertheless display the writer's resourcefulness in developing and sustaining an argument. The best essays will demonstrate an ability to write with clarity and sophistication, sometimes even with stylistic elegance.
- 7-6** The writers of these competent essays also make an effective selection of a specific death scene and discuss clearly how that scene illuminates the work as a whole. While their discussion offers significant and convincing insights, it remains less thorough, less perceptive, or less specific than that of top essays. References to the death scene may be fewer or less apt than those in the best essays, or the inferences made from the scene may be less well focused or less well developed. These essays demonstrate the writer's ability to express ideas clearly, but they do not exhibit the same level of maturity or control as the very best essays. They may be briefer, less incisive, or less insightful in their analysis than the 9-8 essays.
- 5** Although these essays do select an appropriate text and refer to a specific death scene, they are characterized by superficiality, insufficient depth, or inadequate development. They may neglect to discuss the scene in any detail or fail to connect it effectively with the larger meaning of the work. They may rely on generalizations or resort to excessive plot summary. Discussion, though not inaccurate, tends to be thin and not consistently well focused on the question. These essays typically reveal unsophisticated thinking or writing which is no better than adequate to convey the writer's ideas. Although not as well conceived, organized, or developed as the upper half essays, these are generally free from distracting grammatical and stylistic errors.
- 4-3** These lower half essays reveal a mistaken, incomplete, or oversimplified understanding of the question itself or of the work chosen for discussion. They may fail to discuss any particular death scene at all or offer unpersuasive, irrelevant, or mistaken arguments about the selected text itself. Their assertions about the meaning of the work as a whole tend to be unconvincing and the examples selected are mostly ineffective. These essays may rely almost entirely on plot summary. Often wordy and repetitious, the writing may reveal uncertain control of the elements of college-level composition and may contain recurrent stylistic flaws. Essays that contain significant misreading and /or unusually inept writing must be scored a three (3).

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Question 3 (cont'd.)

- 2-1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the essays in the 4-3 range. They may seriously misread the text or the question. Often they are unacceptably brief. Although some attempt may be made to answer the question, the writer's observations are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the text. They may be poorly written on several counts and may contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Essays that contain little coherent writing or discussion of the text should be scored a one (1).
- 0** These essays give a response that is no more than a reference to the task.
- Indicates a blank response or one that is completely off topic.