



AP[®] English Literature and Composition 2004 Scoring Guidelines

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**AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE
2004 SCORING GUIDELINES**

Question 1

**Emily Dickinson’s “We Grow Accustomed to the Dark”
and Robert Frost’s “Acquainted with the Night”**

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** These essays offer a persuasive comparison/contrast of both poems and an effective analysis of the significance of “dark” and “night” in each. The writers of these essays offer a range of insightful interpretations, and they consider how such elements as point of view, imagery, and structure function in each poem. These essays provide convincing readings of **both** poems and demonstrate consistent and effective control over the elements of composition, which includes language appropriate to the analysis of poetry. Their textual references are apt and specific. Although they may not be error-free, these essays are perceptive in their analysis and demonstrate writing that is clear and controlled and—in the case of a nine (9) essay—especially persuasive.
- 7-6** These essays offer a reasonable comparison/contrast of both poems and a plausible analysis of the significance of “dark” or “night” in each. The writers of these essays offer a range of interpretations of each poem, and they make appropriate textual references, suggesting how such elements as point of view, imagery, and structure function in each. These essays provide a plausible reading of **both** poems and demonstrate the writer’s ability to express and support ideas clearly, though they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as the 9-8 papers. Essays scored 7-6 are generally well written, but those scored a seven (7) demonstrate more sophistication in both substance and style.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with an acceptable reading of the two poems, but they tend to be superficial in their analysis. The writers often rely on paraphrase that contains some implicit or explicit analysis. The comparison/contrast of such elements as point of view, imagery, and structure may be vague, formulaic, or inadequately developed, and there may be minor misinterpretations of the poems. The writers demonstrate adequate control of language, but their essays may be marred by surface errors and may lack effective organization.
- 4-3** These lower-half essays attempt to respond to the task required by the prompt. Writers may misread either or both poems; they may fail to develop a coherent basis for comparing/contrasting the two poems; they may slight one of the poems; or they may rely completely on paraphrase. Evidence may be inadequate. The writing often demonstrates a lack of control over the elements of composition: inadequate development of ideas; an accumulation of errors; or a focus that is unclear, inconsistent, or repetitive. Essays scored a three (3) may contain significant misreadings.

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Question 1 (cont'd.)

- 2-1** Although these essays make some attempt to respond to the prompt, they may contain serious misreadings of the poems. They compound the weaknesses of the papers in the **4-3** range. They are unacceptably brief or are incoherent in presenting their ideas. They may contain serious errors in grammar and mechanics. Essays scored a one (1) contain little coherent discussion of the poems.
- 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

Henry James's "The Pupil"

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** These essays offer a persuasive analysis of the three characters and the relationships among them as depicted in the excerpt from Henry James's "The Pupil." The writers make a strong case for their interpretation of character and situation, examine techniques such as tone and point of view, and include apt and specific references to the passage. Although these essays may not be error-free, they are perceptive in their analysis. In writing that is clear, precise, and effective, they demonstrate an understanding of the complexity of the passage. Generally, the nine (9) essays reveal more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do essays scored an eight (8).
- 7-6** These essays offer a reasonable interpretation of James's three characters and the relationships among them. With attention to techniques such as tone and point of view, the writers provide sustained, competent analysis supported by specific references to the text. Although these essays may not be error-free and are not so convincing or so thoroughly developed as essays in the highest range, they reveal the writer's ability to express ideas and insights with clarity and control. Generally, the seven (7) essays present better developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than do essays scored a six (6).
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of the passage, but tend to be superficial in their analysis of the three characters and their relationships. They often rely on paraphrase, but exhibit some analysis, implicit or explicit. The discussion of how tone, point of view, and other techniques shape the characters and their relationships may be slight, and support from the passage may be thin. While these writers demonstrate adequate control of language, their essays may be marred by surface errors. Generally, essays scored a five (5) lack the more effective organization and the more sustained development characteristic of 7-6 papers.
- 4-3** These lower-half essays offer a less than thorough understanding of the task and a less than adequate treatment of how James uses tone, point of view, and other techniques to depict the characters and the relationships among them. Relying on plot summary or paraphrase in place of textual support, the writers may fail to articulate a convincing basis for interpretation and argument, and may consistently misread the passage. These essays may be characterized by a lack of control over the elements of composition, with inadequate development of ideas, an accumulation of errors, or a focus that is unclear, inconsistent, or repetitive. Generally, essays scored a four (4) exhibit better control of organization and language than those scored a three (3).

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Question 2 (cont'd.)

- 2-1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 4-3 range. They may persistently misunderstand the passage, be unacceptably brief, or be incoherent. They may contain pervasive compositional errors that interfere with understanding. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the question, the writer's assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the passage. Essays scored a one (1) contain little coherent discussion of the passage or are especially inept or unsound.
- 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

“Literature is the question minus the answer.”

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** These essays focus on a central question raised in a novel or play and on the extent to which the work offers answers to it. The writers of these essays use apt references from the selected literary work to persuasively analyze how the author’s treatment of the question affects the reader’s understanding of the work as a whole. Although not without flaws, these essays exhibit the writer’s ability to analyze a literary work perceptively, to control a thesis, and to write with clarity, precision, coherence, and—in the case of a nine (9) essay—with particular persuasiveness and/or stylistic flair.
- 7-6** These essays identify a central question in a novel or play and discuss the extent to which the work offers answers to it. The writers of these essays provide a reasonable analysis of how the author’s treatment of the question affects the reader’s understanding of the work as a whole. These essays provide some insight, but the analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific than that of the 9-8 essays; references to the work may not be as apt or as persuasive. Although essays scored in the 7-6 range are generally well written, those scored a seven (7) will demonstrate more sophistication in both substance and style.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task, but they tend to be superficial in analysis. They often rely upon plot summary that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Although the writers may attempt to explain the nature of the central question in the work and the extent to which the text offers answers to it, they may demonstrate a rather simplistic understanding. Typically, these essays reveal unsophisticated thinking and/or immature writing. The writers demonstrate adequate control of language, but their essays may be marred by surface errors and may lack effective organization.
- 4-3** These lower-half essays reflect an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the work selected, or they may fail to establish how the question raised in a novel or play—and the extent to which the work offers answers to it—contributes to the understanding of the work as a whole. They may rely on plot summary alone. Their assertions may be unsupported or even irrelevant. Often wordy, elliptical, or repetitious, these essays lack control over the elements of college-level composition. Essays scored a three (3) exhibit more than one of these stylistic errors; they may also be marred by significant misinterpretation and/or poor development.

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Question 3 (cont'd.)

- 2-1** Although these essays make some attempt to respond to the prompt, they compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 4-3 range. Often, they are unacceptably brief or are incoherent in presenting their ideas. They may be poorly written on several counts and contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. The writer's remarks are presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Especially inept and/or unsound essays must 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.