



## **AP<sup>®</sup> English Literature and Composition 2007 Free-Response Questions**

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**2007 AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION 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.)

In the following two poems, adults provide explanations for children. Read the poems carefully. Then write an essay in which you compare and contrast the two poems, analyzing how each poet uses literary devices to make his point.

**A Barred Owl**

The warping night air having brought the boom  
Of an owl's voice into her darkened room,  
We tell the wakened child that all she heard  
*Line* Was an odd question from a forest bird,  
5 Asking of us, if rightly listened to,  
“Who cooks for you?” and then “Who cooks for you?”

Words, which can make our terrors bravely clear,  
Can also thus domesticate a fear,  
And send a small child back to sleep at night  
10 Not listening for the sound of stealthy flight  
Or dreaming of some small thing in a claw  
Borne up to some dark branch and eaten raw.

—Richard Wilbur

"A Barred Owl" from *MAYFLIES: NEW POEMS AND TRANSLATIONS*, copyright © 2000 by Richard Wilbur, reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Inc.

**The History Teacher**

Trying to protect his students' innocence  
he told them the Ice Age was really just  
the Chilly Age, a period of a million years  
when everyone had to wear sweaters.  
*Line*  
5 And the Stone Age became the Gravel Age,  
named after the long driveways of the time.

The Spanish Inquisition was nothing more  
than an outbreak of questions such as  
“How far is it from here to Madrid?”  
10 “What do you call the matador's hat?”

The War of the Roses took place in a garden,  
and the Enola Gay\* dropped one tiny atom  
on Japan.

The children would leave his classroom  
15 for the playground to torment the weak  
and the smart,  
mussing up their hair and breaking their glasses,  
while he gathered up his notes and walked home  
past flower beds and white picket fences,  
20 wondering if they would believe that soldiers  
in the Boer War told long, rambling stories  
designed to make the enemy nod off.

—Billy Collins

"The History Teacher" from *QUESTIONS ABOUT ANGELS*, by Billy Collins, © 1991. Reprinted by permission of the University of Pittsburgh Press.

\*The name of the airplane from which an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, in 1945.

**2007 AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**Question 2**

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

Read carefully the following passage from Dalton Trumbo’s novel *Johnny Got His Gun* (1939). Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how Trumbo uses such techniques as point of view, selection of detail, and syntax to characterize the relationship between the young man and his father.

Line  
5  
10  
15  
20  
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The campfire was built in front of a tent and the tent was under an enormous pine. When you slept inside the tent it seemed always that it was raining outside because the needles from the pine kept falling. Sitting across from him and staring into the fire was his father. Each summer they came to this place which was nine thousand feet high and covered with pine trees and dotted with lakes. They fished in the lakes and when they slept at night the roar of water from the streams which connected the lakes sounded in their ears all night long.

They had been coming to this place ever since he was seven. Now he was fifteen and Bill Harper was going to come tomorrow. He sat in front of the fire and looked across at his father and wondered just how he was going to tell him. It was a very serious thing. Tomorrow for the first time in all their trips together he wanted to go fishing with someone other than his father. On previous trips the idea had never occurred to him. His father had always preferred his company to that of men and he had always preferred his father’s company to that of the other guys. But now Bill Harper was coming up tomorrow and he wanted to go fishing with him. He knew it was something that had to happen sometime. Yet he also knew that it was the end of something. It was an ending and a beginning and he wondered just how he should tell his father about it.

So he told him very casually. He said Bill Harper’s coming up tomorrow and I thought maybe I’d go out with him. He said Bill Harper doesn’t know very much about fishing and I do so I think if you don’t

mind I’ll get up early in the morning and meet Harper and he and I will go fishing.

35  
40  
45  
50  
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For a little while his father didn’t say a thing. Then he said why sure go along Joe. And then a little later his father said has Bill Harper got a rod? He told his father no Bill hasn’t a rod. Well said his father why don’t you take my rod and let Bill use yours? I don’t want to go fishing tomorrow anyhow. I’m tired and I think I’ll rest all day. So you use my rod and let Bill use yours.

It was as simple as that and yet he knew it was a great thing. His father’s rod was a very valuable one. It was perhaps the only extravagance his father had had in his whole life. It had amber leaders and beautiful silk windings. Each spring his father sent the rod away to a man in Colorado Springs who was an expert on rods. The man in Colorado Springs carefully scraped the varnish off the rod and rewound it and revarnished it and it came back glistening new each year. There was nothing his father treasured more. He felt a little lump in his throat as he thought that even as he was deserting his father for Bill Harper his father had volunteered the rod.

60

They went to sleep that night in the bed which lay against a floor of pine needles. They had scooped the needles out to make a little hollow place for their hips. He lay awake quite a while thinking about tomorrow and his father who slept beside him. Then he fell asleep. At six o’clock Bill Harper whispered to him through the tent flap. He got up and gave Bill his rod and took his father’s for himself and they went off without awakening his father.

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### Question 3

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

In many works of literature, past events can affect, positively or negatively, the present actions, attitudes, or values of a character. Choose a novel or play in which a character must contend with some aspect of the past, either personal or societal. Then write an essay in which you show how the character's relationship to the past contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole.

You may choose a work from the list below or another appropriate novel or play of similar literary merit. Do not merely summarize the plot.

*Absalom, Absalom!*  
*All the King's Men*  
*The American*  
*Atonement*  
*The Awakening*  
*Beloved*  
*The Blind Assassin*  
*The Bonesetter's Daughter*  
*The Cherry Orchard*  
*Cry, the Beloved Country*  
*Death of a Salesman*  
*An Enemy of the People*  
*Ethan Frome*  
*Fifth Business*  
*The Fixer*  
*Great Expectations*  
*The Great Gatsby*  
*The House of Mirth*  
*Jane Eyre*  
*The Kite Runner*

*Long Day's Journey into Night*  
*Lord Jim*  
*Middlemarch*  
*Moby-Dick*  
*The Moor's Last Sigh*  
*Mrs. Dalloway*  
*Native Speaker*  
*Obasan*  
*A Passage to India*  
*Persuasion*  
*The Piano Lesson*  
*Ragtime*  
*A Separate Peace*  
*A Streetcar Named Desire*  
*The Tempest*  
*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*  
*Their Eyes Were Watching God*  
*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*  
*Wuthering Heights*

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**