

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 3

(The Effect of Past Events on the Actions, Attitudes, or Values of a Character)

The score reflects the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, its style, its mechanics. Students are rewarded for what they do well. The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by 1 point above the otherwise appropriate score. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a 3.

- 9–8** These essays offer a well-focused and persuasive analysis of how a character's relationship to the past affects the character's actions, attitudes, or values. Using apt and specific textual support, these essays fully explore that relationship and demonstrate what it contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. Although not without flaws, these essays make a strong case for their interpretation and discuss the literary work with significant insight and understanding. Generally, essays scored a 9 reveal more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do essays scored an 8.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of how a character's relationship to the past affects the character's actions, attitudes, or values. The essays explore that relationship and demonstrate what it contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. These works have insight and understanding, but the analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of the 9–8 essays. Generally, essays scored a 7 present better-developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than those scored a 6.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading, but they tend to be superficial or underdeveloped in analysis. They often rely upon plot summary that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Although the students attempt to discuss the effect of the past on the actions, attitudes, or values of a character and what that relationship contributes to the work as a whole, they may demonstrate a rather simplistic understanding of the work. Typically, these essays reveal unsophisticated thinking and/or immature writing. The students demonstrate adequate control of language, but their essays lack effective organization and may be marred by surface errors.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays offer a less than thorough understanding of the task or a less than adequate treatment of it. They reflect an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the work, or they may fail to establish the nature of the effect of the past on a character's actions, attitudes, or values. They may not address or develop a response to how that relationship contributes to the work as a whole, or they may rely on plot summary alone. Their assertions may be unsupported or even irrelevant. Often wordy, elliptical, or repetitious, these essays may lack control over the elements of college-level composition. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreadings and demonstrate inept writing.
- 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 remarks are presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Particularly inept, vacuous, and/or incoherent essays must be scored a 1.
- 0** These essays make no more than a reference to the task.
- These essays either are left blank or are completely off topic.

and Eliza ~~and~~ learns of her Uncle John Eyre ~~at whom there is slight mention by her Aunt~~ ~~when Jane was a child she also discovered~~
She also finds out about her Eyre relatives of whom she knew little as a young girl. Her ~~most~~ Aunt Reed nurtured them rarely, leaving Jane with ~~at~~ ~~no~~ little knowledge of any family but the Reeds. Therefore, discovering she had other cousins (the Rivers) brought great comfort to her. The news also came with an inheritance from her previously unknown Uncle John Eyre.

The money allowed her to find complete happiness once the opportunity arose. The opportunity came when she was near accepting St. John's proposal and her love called to her. When she returned to Thornfield, she found her prophetic dream had been fulfilled. It was burned down. She eventually finds Rochester and is able to enter a relationship of equality with him, because she is able to satisfy her ideals of freedom she wanted as a child.

She is ~~not~~ in no way trapped because she can legally marry Rochester (his wife died), she is financially his equal (because of her inheritance), and his injuries actually rate her



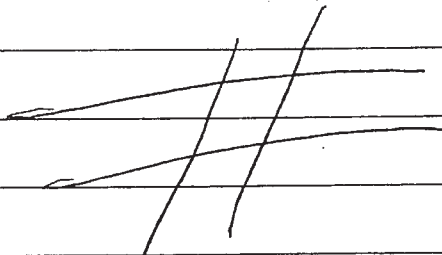
3

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

3A₃

dependent upon her. They can support each others emotional needs.

Janes experience as a child guided the rest of her life. Her fear of entrapment lead her to make decisions that ultimately made her happy. She was free of all constraints.



In "The Great Gatsby", Jay Gatsby falls in love with a girl named Daisy ~~in~~ while he is in the army, and the rest of his actions ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ the novel ~~are~~ are motivated solely by his desire to obtain her. Throughout the novel Gatsby does many things in order to ~~do many things~~ gain the love of Daisy, ~~eventually leading to his death~~ Gatsby's actions eventually lead to his death, ~~which~~ which eventually lead to his death. Gatsby's love of Daisy in the past which leads to his later obsession contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole by emphasizing the novel's theme that money cannot buy happiness.

When Gatsby is first introduced ~~in~~ in the novel, he is an extremely wealthy man. ~~Gatsby~~ It is later revealed in the novel that Gatsby was once poor and gained his wealth through illegitimate business practices. His sole motivation to gain so much wealth was to permanently win the love of Daisy, ~~when~~ when he had a short relationship with ~~her~~ while he was poor and in the army.

Gatsby does many things throughout



The novel ~~focuses~~ in an attempt to get Daisy to leave her husband to be with him. He throws lavish parties, ~~invites~~ ^{spends} Daisy and her ~~time~~ spends time with Daisy, shows off his wealth, but none of them ~~prevent~~ those things ~~which~~ ^{are} enough to get Daisy to leave her husband. ~~At the end of the~~ Gatsby's own death is eventually caused by his obsession ~~because~~ when he allows Daisy to drive his car Daisy hits and kills a woman while driving, and Gatsby hides the car and tells no one in order to protect her. The dead woman's husband eventually finds out that Gatsby was the owner of the car and then proceeds to go to his house and shoot him.

The novel's theme that money can't buy happiness is ~~emphasized~~ ^{shown} by Gatsby's inability to let the past go. ~~He~~ ^{Gatsby} tries to win back the love of Daisy through money, but by the end of the novel has become ~~even more unhappy~~ ^{unhappy} and is eventually ~~killed~~ but ends up becoming even more unhappy and eventually in a way causes his own death, although not directly. If Gatsby had been



Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

3

3B₃

able to let go of the past, he wouldn't of ~~been~~
so many things destroyed his own life.

#

In "A Streetcar Named Desire" the main character is tormented by her past, so tormented that she becomes a new person altogether, which then attributes to her downfall.

As a transformed person, the main character of the play has become emotionally frail and attention seeking, especially to males. While visiting and then living at her sister's house, she meets her sister's husband, a rude brute of a man, the attention of whom she seeks, simply because ~~he~~ he would not give up. The main character acts the way she does now because of the way that her past affected her. Her insecurities cause her to engage in witty, biting repartee with her sister's husband. At the end of the play, after being pushed past his breaking point with the main character's ability to create situations full of sexual frustration, and her insecure but somehow charming allure, ~~she~~ it is implied that the husband rapes her. The fact that the ending



was terrible conveys a point by the author. That point is to let go of the past. The past obviously affected the main character in a negative manner and her grasping onto it did not help. The strong relationship she had with her past led directly to her downfall.

The meaning of "A Streetcar Named Desire" ~~is~~ reflects the universal philosophy of "no regrets" well through the main character's relationship to her past and the events caused by that relationship. The fact that the author ended the play negatively persuades the reader to follow this philosophy.

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Question 3

Overview

The prompt for question 3, the “open” question, began by noting that in many works of literature, past events can affect, positively or negatively, the present actions, attitudes, or values of a character. Students were then asked to choose a novel or play in which a character must contend with some aspect of the past, either personal or societal, and then to write an essay in which they showed how the character’s relationship to the past contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole.

The aim of the question was to assess students’ abilities to move beyond the common problem of paraphrasing or summarizing plot by emphasizing the causal relationship between a character’s actions, attitudes, or values and an event in the past that affects the character either positively or negatively.

Sample: 3A

Score: 7

This essay provides a sustained, insightful focus on how *Jane Eyre*’s fear of entrapment—as it emerges from her youthful experience of being locked in the red room by Aunt Reed—guides the rest of her life. Strong, but relatively brief arguments advance the thesis: Jane flees Rochester initially because marriage would mean “enslavement as a mistress,” while marriage to St. John would lead to her “imprisonment” in India both physically and emotionally. Only when she comes close to accepting St. John’s proposal and hears Rochester’s plea for help does Jane return to Thornfield and establish a “relationship of equality with him.” When this occurs, she is no longer trapped by the past because she is legally and financially free to marry Rochester, and Rochester is no longer physically dominant over her. Now “[t]hey can support each others’ emotional needs.” While the events detailed in the middle of the essay are sketchy, the final two paragraphs connect these events to the student’s thesis and make the essay a well-focused, reasonable discussion of how the past affects Jane’s actions and an effective demonstration of how this contributes to the meaning of *Jane Eyre*.

Sample: 3B

Score: 5

A plausible but superficial reading of *The Great Gatsby*, this essay argues the simplistic theme that “money can’t buy hapiness [*sic*].” Relying heavily on plot summary, the student provides only very general details in an attempt to discuss the effects of Gatsby’s past on his efforts to win Daisy’s love. (The essay does not, in fact, develop this analysis but rather focuses on the effect of Gatsby’s “obsession” with Daisy, which, the student argues, eventually causes his death.) The writing is pedestrian, quite repetitive, and marred by surface errors.

Sample: 3C

Score: 3

This essay on *A Streetcar Named Desire* provides an oversimplified understanding of the characters’ motivations and the meaning of the work as a whole. The student does not mention characters’ names or provide other specific textual support for the claim that the meaning of the play “reflects the universal philosophy of ‘no regrets.’” The essay’s claims about “the main character” (Blanche DuBois) are contradictory and fail to adequately establish the nature of the effect of the past—on the one hand, the

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Question 3 (continued)

student argues that Blanche has deliberately escaped her past to become a “transformed person,” and on the other hand, that “her grasping onto it [the past] did not help.” The writing lacks control and is full of awkward clichés and malapropisms, such as the statement that the “main character ... engage[s] in witty, biting repetoire [*sic*]” (rather than “repartee”).