



AP[®] English Literature and Composition 2008 Scoring Guidelines Form B

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AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2008 SCORING GUIDELINES (Form B)

Question 1

(Ted Hughes's "Hawk Roosting" and Mark Doty's "Golden Retrievals")

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 provide an insightful and persuasive analysis of both poems. They ably explain the characterization of both the hawk and the dog and precisely define their differing world views. Although these essays offer a range of interpretations and choose various poetic techniques for emphasis (imagery, diction, selection of details, puns, or tone, for example), they provide convincing readings of the poems, using apt and specific references to the texts. These essays maintain consistent control over the elements of effective composition, but they need not be flawless. Nonetheless, the best ones will demonstrate the students' abilities to read poetry perceptively and to write with clarity and sophistication.
- 7–6** These competent essays convey coherent understandings of the poems and the characterizations presented in them, yet their assertions about the differing views of the world are less precise than those in the top-scoring group. The interpretations of both poems contain minor errors and may falter in some particulars. These essays demonstrate the ability to express ideas clearly, but they do not exhibit the same level of mastery, maturity, or control as the very best ones. They are likely to be briefer, less incisive, and less well supported than essays in the 9–8 range.
- 5** Although these plausible essays demonstrate awareness of the speakers' characterizations and their differing attitudes toward the world, they are generally more superficial and less convincing than those in the 7–6 category. Discussion, though not inaccurate, tends to be overly generalized and inadequately supported by references to the texts. There may be little analysis of the techniques the poet employs. Although the writing is adequate to convey ideas and is not marred by distracting errors, these essays are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as those in the 7–6 range.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays reveal an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the poems or of the task itself. They may discuss the characterizations without addressing the attitudes toward the world. They may discuss only one of the poems and ignore the other. Their assertions about characterization and the animals' views of the world may suggest a misreading (that is, the interpretation may be implausible or irrelevant). They may rely almost entirely on paraphrase. Often wordy and repetitious, the writing may reveal uncertain control of the elements of college-level composition and may contain recurrent stylistic defects. Essays that contain some misreading and/or inept writing should be scored a 3.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of those in the 4–3 range. They may seriously misread the poems. Often they are unacceptably brief. Although some attempt may be made to answer the question, observations are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the texts. These essays may be poorly written on several counts and may contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the poems. Especially inept, vacuous, and/or unsound essays must be scored a 1.
- 0** These essays do no more than make a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.

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Question 2

(Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey)

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 persuasive essays reflect astute readings of the Austen selection. They analyze with clarity and precision the strategies and/or techniques of characterization that Austen uses to create the complex portrait of the “unaccountable” Catherine Morland. They articulately describe Catherine’s personality and, with apt and specific references to the text, illustrate Austen’s strategies and/or techniques. These essays need not be flawless. Nonetheless, they exhibit the students’ abilities to discuss the passage with understanding and insight, sustaining control and writing with clarity and sophistication.
- 7–6** These competent essays coherently describe Catherine’s personality and identify some strategies and/or techniques of characterization used by Austen. Their assertions about her characterization may be less convincing or they may provide fewer supporting examples from the text than do the highest-scoring essays. In essays scored a 6, analysis may be more implicit than explicit. These essays demonstrate the students’ abilities to express ideas clearly, but they do not exhibit the same level of mastery, maturity, or control as the very best ones. They are likely to be briefer, less incisive, and less well supported than essays in the 9–8 range.
- 5** Although these plausible essays suggest awareness of the complexity of Catherine’s character and the techniques employed by Austen, they are generally superficial and less convincing than the ones in the 7–6 category. Discussion in these essays, though not inaccurate, tends to be overly generalized and inadequately supported by references to the passage. Although the writing is adequate to convey ideas and is not marred by distracting errors, these essays are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as those in the 7–6 range.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays reveal an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the passage. Their assertions about the nature of Catherine’s personality or the methods of characterization employed by Austen may be implausible or irrelevant. They may rely almost entirely on 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 some misreading and/or inept writing should be scored a 3.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of those in the 4–3 range. They may seriously misread the passage. Often, they are unacceptably brief. Although some attempt may be made to answer the question, the observations are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the text. These essays may be poorly written on several counts and may contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the passage. Especially inept, vacuous, and/or unsound essays must be scored a 1.
- 0** These essays do no more than make a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.

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Question 3

(Portrayal of Childhood or Adolescence)

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 persuasive essays describe a representation of childhood or adolescence in a novel or play and explain how this representation shapes the meaning of the work as a whole. Selecting apt and specific examples, they describe a childhood or adolescence and cogently argue for its significance. Given that the prompt called for a discussion of a conception of childhood, students should not be penalized for selecting more than one character to illustrate this representation. These essays need not be flawless. Nonetheless, they exhibit the ability to sustain a thesis while discussing a literary work with understanding and insight. The best essays demonstrate the ability to compose with clarity and sophistication.
- 7–6** These competent essays present a representation of childhood or adolescence in a novel or play and coherently discuss its contribution to meaning. Although these essays have some insight, the analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of ones in the 9–8 range. References to the text may not be as apt or as persuasive. These essays demonstrate the ability to express ideas clearly, but they do not exhibit the same level of mastery, maturity, or control as the very best responses. They are likely to be briefer, less incisive, and less well supported than those in the 9–8 category.
- 5** These essays, though plausible, are characterized by superficiality. They may refer to a depiction of childhood or adolescence and offer some discussion of its significance; however, these essays do not accomplish one or both of the tasks in sufficient depth or with sufficient development. They may rely on unsubstantiated generalizations, or the significance to the meaning of the work may not be soundly addressed. Discussion, though not inaccurate, tends to be thin and may rely on plot summary more than essays in the 7–6 range do. These essays typically reveal unsophisticated thinking or immature writing. Although the writing is adequate to convey ideas and is not marred by distracting errors, these essays are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as those in the 7–6 category.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays reveal an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the meaning of the work or of the task itself. They may fail to link the representation of childhood to the larger meaning of the text. Their assertions may suggest a misreading (that is, the interpretation may be implausible or irrelevant), or the work may be poorly chosen for the question. 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 some misreading and/or inept writing should be scored a 3.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of those in the 4–3 range. They may seriously misread the work. Often they are unacceptably brief. Although some attempt may be made to answer the question, the observations are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the text. These essays may be poorly written on several counts and may contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Especially inept, vacuous, and/or unsound essays must be scored a 1.
- 0** These essays do no more than make a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.