

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION
2008 SCORING GUIDELINES (Form B)

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.

2

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

2A

10/3

Catherine Morland from Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey is ^a rather ordinary ^{girl}. Although Austen opens by telling the reader that Morland is a "heroine" in her later years, the girl's youth is marked by pleasantness, but by no means the greatness typically associated with heroes or heroines. By describing Morland's appearance, abilities, and tastes, Austen paints the portrait of a young girl who is for the most part, ~~not~~ "plain, as any."

The passage starts primarily with a description of Catherine's parents. Her father was "a very respectable man" with "two good livings," and her mother was "a woman of useful plain sense." These qualities evoke the feelings of a middle class family, perfectly functional, however not a catalyst for greatness. Furthermore, Morland's "family of ten children" makes it so that the girl does not stand out, received special attention or anything of the sort that can be inferred from the passage. If anything, Catherine's family helps ~~her~~ to cloak her, draw her into a crowd of regularity.

Neither does Morland's appearance distinguish her. "she had a thin awkward figure, a sallow skin without color, dark lank hair; and strong features." ~~not~~ Simply put, the way she looked did not help her become great, but rather ~~helped~~ gives her the aesthetics



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2

2A

2073

of an ordinary person.

In terms of mental abilities (as defined by learning), Morland is described as "often inattentive, and occasionally stupid." It's not just at school she achieves mediocrity, but also at other tasks such as learning the piano which, "she learnt a year and could not bear." At this point neither Catherine's surroundings, appearance, nor intelligence set her strongly apart from her peers.

Perhaps it's only in her tastes that there is a more defining quality about Morland. She is a bit naughty, doing things such as "gathering flowers" for the pleasure of mischief." The girl also leans towards the tomboyish side, as she is "fond of all boys' play," even more so than "typical" girl activities such as "nursing a dormouse, feeding a canary bird, or watering a rose-bush." Another important characteristic is her aversion to "confinement and cleanliness." This little streak of rebellion illuminates Catherine, along with her penchant for carefree joys such as "rolling down the green slope at the back of the house." This contrast to her watery appearance ~~ultimately Morland is portrayed as~~ and quotidian surroundings give's her character a little bit of flare, not enough to set her apart as extraordinary, but certainly



#2

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

2A

3073

enough to ~~take~~ warrant a deeper look of this "strange unaccountable character."

It seems that greatness ~~is~~ isn't obvious from childhood. ~~The~~ ~~girl~~ future heroine, Catherine Moreland, ~~is an~~ exemplifies this. Hence when we read Austen's description of the girl we do not see a ~~blissful~~ ~~girl~~ hero-in-the-works, but a girl who does not stand out of the crowd, save for her small propensity towards freedom and carefree ~~from~~.

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

Question 2

2B
1/2

As with most works of literature, Jane Austen's novel Northanger Abbey begins with a description of the main character, Catherine Morland. Austen characterizes Catherine with the help of imagery, paradox, ^{and} sarcasm, ~~and anaphora~~.

The imagery and descriptions of Catherine's looks and personality are what is most apparent when reading this passage. It is first used when describing her appearance. The reader gains a vivid image of Catherine with her "thin awkward figure ... dark lank hair, and strong features". This is not only helpful in picturing the character, but it also ~~helps~~ adds to Catherine's "strange ... character" because these images are not those ~~of~~ ^{as related to} a beautiful, confident or overachieving person. Later on in the passage when Austen begins to describe Catherine's hobbies and personality, imagery is also present, especially when referring to her lack of art skills; how she would draw "houses and trees, hens and chickens, all very much like one another". By pointing out the fact that all of these things turned out to look alike helps show just how not talented Catherine is when it comes to the arts.

Paradox is used when Jane Austen constantly ~~points~~ draws attention to Catherine Morland's



Question 2

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2B
20/2

weak points and yet still refers to her as a heroine and later goes on to state that "~~she~~ even "with all these symptoms of profligacy", she is still a kind-hearted, happy, person. This paradox ~~shows~~ portrays a great strength in Catherine's character. It shows that she doesn't have to be talented or smart or pretty to be happy and a good person.

~~The sarcasm is~~ The sarcasm in Austen's description of Catherine comes when referring to her learning capabilities and how "she learnt the fable ~~the~~ 'The Hare and many Friends', as quickly as any girl in England." This describes Catherine's perseverance and eagerness to learn even though ~~she~~ it takes her longer or she might not be able to learn one ^{subject} ~~thing~~ over another.

These three specific literary devices ~~are~~ ^{are} all a great help when describing Catherine Morland. With imagery, paradox and sarcasm, the reader can better understand and relate to this character.

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~~20/2~~

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

2

2C

10/4

Jane Austen's novel Northanger Abbey depicts

~~and~~ describes the childhood of Catherine Morland.

Austen makes use of proper diction, a narrative tone,

and overall structure to characterize Catherine Morland

as a ~~an~~ ~~conventional~~ ^{but} ~~an~~ uncertain character.

~~The~~ Austen's use of formal diction coupled with a

narrative ~~to~~ tone allows to give an extensive description

of the surroundings of Catherine: "Her father was a

clergyman, without being neglected or poor, and a

very responsible man..." (line 5). This narrative and

straightforward tone contributes to the characterization

of Catherine as a conventional little girl with only

some unexpected ideals: "She was found of all boy's play".



2

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2C

2074

Catherine's normal and undisturbed childhood which is coupled with a narrative tone ~~and~~ and formal diction gives an atmosphere of simplicity and ~~simplicity~~ calmness to the passage as a whole, which again contribute to the characterization of Catherine as being a conventional character. The one-paragraph, long, and simple structure of the ~~entire~~ passage also reflects Catherine's own simplicity.

Austen's diction and tone come into effect ~~at the end~~ at the end of the excerpt where a compilation of the traits Catherine embodies is achieved: "She had neither a bad heart nor a bad temper, was seldom stubborn, scarcely ever quarrelsome..."



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2

2C
344

Austen's elaboration of long sentences also serves the characterization of Catherine since the poet is able to compile several mental and physical traits which reflect the rich and ~~well~~ ~~thoughtful~~ ~~thoughtful~~ thoughtful developed character. Such occurrence occurs between lines 62 to 71.

By developing such a narrative and descriptive passage, Austen enables herself the possibility of adding certain details which upset the ~~the~~ characterization of Catherine as a conventional girl. Austen for example states that Catherine "had no taste for a garden" (line 31), which is relatively strange since ~~the~~ girls are usually the ones who enjoy flowers or such activities.



2

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

2C
4 of 4

To conclude, Austen's use of a formal diction alongside with a narrative tone and ~~an~~ varying but straight forward structure allows her to characterize Catherine as a conventional but sometimes ~~an~~ unusual character.

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AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION
2008 SCORING COMMENTARY (Form B)

Question 2

Sample: 2A

Score: 7

This is a competent essay that coherently describes the complexity of Catherine Morland's character. Catherine is recognized as unconventional, having "by no means the greatness typically associated with heroes or heroines," and being plain yet characterized by "pleasantness." The sense of coherence is further established by the recognition of the structural features of the Austen passage: it begins, as the student notes, with a description of Catherine's milieu—her parents, the world of middle-class life. The essay observes that Austen devotes another section to Catherine's ordinary appearance and one more to her mental or intellectual propensities. It cogently discusses Catherine's "tastes" as possibly her only distinguishing characteristic and notes her "little streak of rebellion" and her "penchant for carefree joys." The ideas are expressed clearly but perhaps less insightfully than in the very best essays.

Sample: 2B

Score: 5

Although superficial, this essay suggests a plausible understanding of the text and of the task. The student understands that Austen employs a certain paradoxical strategy, describing Catherine as lacking in looks, personality, and artistic or academic ability—and yet as kind-hearted, happy, and good, for all that. The writing is less strong in the second half of this sparse analysis, notably when imputing—wrongly—"sarcasm" to Austen's depiction of her "heroine," and especially when the student seems to argue that the sarcasm "describes Catherine's perseverance and eagerness to learn even though it takes her longer." This is an essay that aspires toward the upper half but remains in the middle.

Sample: 2C

Score: 3

Despite the fact that this essay is long, what it has to say is rather slight, implausible, and sometimes irrelevant. It occasionally reveals an uncertain control of elementary compositional principles and contains stylistic and other flaws. These weaknesses are evident at the very outset, when the student offers the opinion that "Austen makes use of proper diction, a narrative tone, and overall structure to characterize Catherine Morland as a conventional but uncertain character." Some of the shaky control results from basic confusion, as when the student insists that Austen employs a "narrative and straightforward tone," which is exactly the opposite of the truth, as more capable readers are able to see. Catherine is not a conventional character for a heroine, and neither is Austen's tone "straightforward." These mistakes are not merely slips of the pen, for the student repeats them more than once. There is some attempt, though too late, to define Catherine's conventionality and to qualify this assertion by admitting that there *are* some "unusual" traits in her personality.