



AP[®] English Literature 2009 Scoring Guidelines

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AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2009 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

(Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, Cardinal Wolsey's Speech)

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 persuasive analysis of Shakespeare's use of literary elements to convey Wolsey's complex response to his dismissal from court. The essays offer a range of interpretations; they provide convincing readings of Wolsey's complex response, Shakespeare's use of literary devices, and the relationship between the two. They demonstrate consistent and effective control over the elements of composition in language appropriate to the analysis of poetic speech. Their textual references are apt and specific. Though they may not be error-free, these essays are perceptive in their analysis and demonstrate writing that is clear and sophisticated, and in the case of an essay earning a 9, especially persuasive.
- 7–6** These competent essays offer a reasonable analysis of Shakespeare's use of literary elements to convey Wolsey's complex response to his dismissal. They are less thorough or less precise in their discussion of Wolsey's response and Shakespeare's use of literary techniques, and their analysis of the relationship between the two is less convincing. These essays demonstrate the student's ability to express ideas clearly with references to the text, although they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as essays in the 9–8 scoring range. While essays scored 7–6 are generally well written, those scored a 7 demonstrate more sophistication in both substance and style.
- 5** These essays may respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of Shakespeare's use of literary elements to convey Wolsey's response, but they may be superficial in their analysis of the speech. They often rely on paraphrase, but paraphrase that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Their analysis of Wolsey's response or Shakespeare's techniques may be vague, formulaic, or minimally supported by references to the text. There may be minor misinterpretations of the speech. The essays demonstrate some control of language, but the writing may be marred by surface errors. These essays are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as those in the 7–6 range.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of the speech. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant, or may ignore the complexity of Wolsey's response or Shakespeare's use of techniques. Evidence from the speech may be slight or misconstrued, or the essays may rely on paraphrase only. The writing often demonstrates a lack of control over the conventions of composition: inadequate development of ideas, accumulation of errors, or a focus that is unclear, inconsistent, or repetitive. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreading and/or demonstrate incompetent writing.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of those in the 4–3 range. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the speech. The essays may contain serious errors in grammar and mechanics. They may offer a complete misreading or be unacceptably brief. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the speech.
- 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

(Ann Petry's *The Street*)

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 persuasive analysis of Petry's use of literary devices to establish Lutie Johnson's relationship to the urban setting and provide strong support for the students' interpretation of the passage. They explore the urban setting as it affects the character; consider devices such as imagery, personification, selection of detail, and figurative language; and engage the text through apt and specific references. Although the essays may not be error-free, their perceptive analysis is apparent in writing that is clear, precise, and effectively organized. Generally, essays scored a 9 reveal more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do those scored an 8.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of how the author uses literary devices to establish Lutie Johnson's relationship to the urban setting. They provide a sustained, competent reading of the passage, with attention to devices such as imagery, personification, selection of detail, and figurative language. Although these essays may not be error-free and are less perceptive or less convincing than those in the 9–8 range, they present ideas with clarity and control and refer to the text for support. Generally, essays scored a 7 present better-developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than do essays scored a 6.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of the passage but tend to be superficial or undeveloped in their treatment of how the author uses literary devices to characterize the relationship between Lutie Johnson and the urban setting. While containing some analysis of the passage, implicit or explicit, the discussion of how literary devices contribute to the relationship between character and setting may be slight, and support from the passage may be thin or tend toward summary or paraphrase. While these essays demonstrate adequate control of language, they may be marred by surface errors. They are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as essays in the 7–6 range.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of the passage. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant; students may ignore Lutie Johnson or Petry's use of literary devices to establish Lutie's relationship to the setting. The essays may be characterized by an unfocused or repetitive presentation of ideas, an absence of textual support, or an accumulation of errors. Generally, essays scored a 3 exhibit less control over the elements of composition and may contain weaker or less-developed readings than those scored a 4.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of those in the 4–3 range. They may persistently misread the passage or be unacceptably brief. The essays may contain pervasive errors that interfere with understanding. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, ideas are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the passage. Essays that are especially incompetent or incoherent are 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
(A Symbol)

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 symbol functions to reveal characters or themes in a novel or play. Using apt and specific textual support, the essays fully explore the symbol and its significance. Although not without flaws, these essays make a strong case for their interpretation and discuss the literary work with 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 symbol functions to reveal characters or themes in a novel or play. The essays explore the symbol and demonstrate its significance. While the responses show insight and understanding, their analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of the essays in the 9–8 range. Generally, essays scored a 7 present better-developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than do essays 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 students attempt to discuss the symbol’s significance and how it functions to reveal characters or themes, they may demonstrate a rather simplistic understanding of the work. Typically, these essays reveal unsophisticated thinking and development. They demonstrate adequate control of language but may lack effective organization and 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 relationship between the symbol and the work’s characters or themes. The essays may not address or develop the symbol’s significance, or they may rely on plot summary alone. Their assertions may be unsupported or even irrelevant. Sometimes wordy or repetitious, these essays may lack control over the elements of college-level composition. Essays scored a 3 may reflect serious misreading and demonstrate incompetent writing.
- 2–1** Although these essays make some attempt to respond to the prompt, they compound the weaknesses of essays 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. Remarks are presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Particularly incompetent and/or incoherent essays are 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.