

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2009 SCORING GUIDELINES

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.

2

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

2A
1/3

In this excerpt from Anselmi's *The Street*, the wind is the central antagonist. The narrator ~~more~~ efficiently utilizes a third-person omniscient narrator to relay to the reader the bitterness of the cold, along with the steadfast determination of Lute Johnson. Through the use of chillingly descriptive imagery and vivid personification, the narrator successfully conveys the ~~to~~ ^{to enhance} unrelenting nature of the cold ~~throughout~~ Lute Johnson's temporal and sensory experiences.

Imagery is undoubtedly the most central literary device in this excerpt as it gives the reader an accurate sense of the brutal cold that Lute the protagonist is forced to endure in her search for a home. The ~~omnipresence~~ and omnipresence of the "Cold November wind" (line 1) is evidenced in the sense of disorder and chaos that engulfs 116th street. "Scrapes of paper" (line 2) are sent "dancing high in the air, ... into the faces of the people on the street" (lines 16-18). As if the menace of having debris flying in one's face were not enough, the November wind summoned "all the dirt and dust and grime, and lifted it up so that the dirt got into their noses ... the dirt got into their eyes and blinded them ... the grit stung their skins". Pety's use of descriptive imagery successfully depicts the torturous and painful nature of this seasonally inherent meteorological phenomenon, and the use of personification establishes Lute Johnson's indomitable will and refusal to settle for anything less than

→

she expects

In this passage, the cold November wind is personified as an asinine, insistent man who does as he pleases with ~~withholding~~ a callous disregard of the emotions and feelings of those subject to his actions and influences. The first example within the passage that lends a significant amount of credence to ~~the~~ ~~myriad~~ the aforementioned assertion occurs in line 9, when the wind's relentless barrage is portrayed by the narrator as a "violent assault". The narrator takes her maleficent description of the wind a step further in lines 31-34, when she writes, "The wind is portrayed as an asinine, thoughtless, soulless entity, as it 'grabs hats, pierces scores from around... necks, sticks its fingers inside... coat collars, and blows coats away from... bodies'". The wind violates Catherine Johnson without even a modicum of respect, as ~~its~~ its icy, death-like fingers "touch the back of her neck, explored the sides of her head" (lines 39-41). ~~The~~ At this point in the excerpt, the wind is virtually a sexual predator, preying on the unwilting and innocent victims within its path. Despite the wind's relentless blowing, Catherine Johnson treks on in search of a three-room apartment, refusing to even inquire towards a two-room establishment despite the bone-chilling lashes of the cold November wind's relentless cat-o-nine tails. Catherine rests only when she finds an apartment suitable to her liking, and ~~with~~ the sense of relief she feels at her →

2

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

2A
3063

recessed resolution at the end of this excerpt is highlighted by the ~~recessed~~ author's masterful use of imagery and vivid personification.

#

An urban setting is very diverse, and many people feel differently towards it. In a selection from Ann Petry's The Street, Lutie Johnson shows us that she has adapted to the urban setting. Johnson uses personification and imagery to show us how Lutie Johnson adapts to whatever situation she is encountering.

A very prevalent literary technique in this passage is personification, as about 3/4 of it are devoted to the personification of the wind. The author uses verbs such as "found, discouraged, grabbed" and "lifted" to show us how powerful the wind is, and how some residents either run, or try to hide, or try to get to wherever ~~the~~ they're going as quickly as possible. The wind gets into their ~~coat~~ coats and scarves and hats and "[sticks] its fingers inside their coat collars" (33). This personification helps re-establish the image that the wind is very powerful, and almost all the residents are trying to flee from it, except for ~~that~~ Lutie Johnson.

Even though the wind makes her feel "naked and bald," (36) and "[touches] the back of her neck [and] the sides of her head]" (39-40), Lutie Johnson stays put. This comes from her need to find shelter. The fact that she stays put in order to try and read a sign advertising an apartment shows that she has adapted with the urban setting, that is,

Q 2

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

2B
2012

~~describes~~ her relationship is one of survival, or adaptation. The narrator uses imagery as well to convey the wind's power. She finely describes the way the wind is moving and pushing the sign from Lute's vision so that the reader can understand how daunting it is to even read a sign. However, Lute ~~is~~ wins this small battle against the wind and her reward is finding an apartment with "Three rooms, steam heat, parquet floors, respectable tenants," which she finds reasonable.

The author uses strong personification and imagery to convey how powerful the wind is. However, Lute Johnson is not daunted, instead she shows us that her relationship with the urban setting is that of an adaptive one. Lute Johnson puts up with whatever obstacles ~~was~~ the urban ~~is~~ setting gives her in order to get what she is looking for, and this is the mark of a strong personality.

#

Ann Petry's use of imagery, detail, and figurative language helps establish Lutie Johnson's relationship to the urban setting as someone in search of place to stay in on 116th Street.

The passage begins with a description of a "cold November wind" responsible for sending most people indoors. The wind ~~rings~~ rattled garbage cans, ^{and} sucked window shades. This initial use of imagery serves to establish the setting of the passage, of which Lutie Johnson ~~will soon~~ become a part of. The imagery gives the passage a sense of place, which is important to Lutie's relationship with the setting.

Further on in the passage, Petry uses selection of detail to give the urban setting inhabitants. The wind continued to be a force to be reckoned with, as it found scrap paper and sent it dancing. Petry describes multiple types of paper, from announcements to heavy waxed paper. These particular details enhance the urban setting. Petry also takes care to describe the battle between the wind and the pedestrians. The wind lifted dirt into their noses, "wrapped newspaper around their feet" and "grabbed their hats." Through the selection of detail, Petry further establishes the



Urban setting and those in it. ~~It's~~. The details serve as a comparison to Lutie Johnson.

Throughout the passage, Petry makes use of figurative language, most notably personification. Petry gives the wind the ability to assault, find, grab, and pry. ~~and~~ These human-like qualities transform the "cold November wind" into an antagonist for Lutie and the other pedestrians to deal with. By giving Lutie an ~~an~~ element ~~to~~ that opposed her, Petry further established Lutie's relationship to the urban setting. As Lutie attempted to read a sign, the wind ~~makes~~ ^{made} it nearly impossible. Even the simplest of tasks was made difficult. By personifying wind, Petry gives solidifies Lutie's relationship to the setting.

Through the use of imagery, selection of detail, and ~~petry~~ figurative language, Petry establishes Lutie Johnson's relationship to the urban setting, that of a pedestrian searching for a place to stay.

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AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2009 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 2

Overview

Students were asked to read carefully the opening passage from Ann Petry's novel *The Street* (1946) and then, in a well-organized essay, to analyze how Petry uses literary devices to establish the relationship between Lutie Johnson and the urban setting. In the prompt, imagery, personification, selection of detail, and figurative language were listed as literary devices to consider. The intent of the question was to assess students' abilities to read closely; to analyze the relation between character and setting; to explore the author's use of literary devices to contribute to the richness of textual meaning; and to control the elements of composition—developing a central idea and coherent units of analysis to support the main assertion.

Sample: 2A

Score: 8

The essay fully responds to the prompt by analyzing how literary devices such as narrative point of view, personification, and imagery establish a clear relationship between Lutie Johnson and the urban setting. While occasionally stretching to make meaning, the student also works carefully to support the chosen thesis and to control organization and the elements of effective composition. For example, the student skillfully points out how “the cold November wind is personified as an abusive, insistent man who does as he pleases with a callous disregard of the emotions and feelings of those subject to his actions and influences.” The writing is generally quite accurate, with good use of vocabulary, such as in the claim that “[t]he omnipotence and omnipresence of the ‘cold November wind’ (line 1) is evidenced in the sense of disorder and chaos that engulfs 116th street.”

Sample: 2B

Score: 6

This compact essay establishes a reasonable relationship between Lutie Johnson and the urban setting, although the examples it provides are generally less apt and the analogies less perceptive than those in higher-range essays. However, a few insights are quite good, such as the observation that Petry “finely describes the way the wind is moving and pushing the sign from Luties [*sic*] vision so that the reader can understand how daunting it is to even read a sign.” The organization is controlled by basic transitions and the simplicity of thought.

Sample: 2C

Score: 4

This is a less than adequate description of the passage that mentions that “Petry’s use of imagery, detail, and figurative language helps establish Lutie Johnson’s relationship to the urban setting” but never clearly develops the idea of the relationship beyond that of an antagonist. The student relies entirely on the structure of the prompt and the passage (“The passage begins”; “Further on in the passage”; “Throughout the passage”) for the essay’s organization. Few specific textual references are used for support, and although some generalizations are perceptive (“The details serve as a comparison to Lutie Johnson”), without evidence these assertions lack weight.