



## AP<sup>®</sup> English Literature and Composition 2001 Scoring Commentary

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**Question 1**

**Sample Y - Score 9**

The writer of this essay demonstrates effective control of language and a persuasive analysis of the relationship between the two poems. The writer succinctly describes the similarities of the two poems and then focuses on their differences. With appropriate quotations from the poems themselves, the writer notes how Wordsworth uses language that evokes a sense of urgency while Dunbar evokes a tone of resignation. The writer further develops the analysis by contrasting Dunbar’s “tempest of dispraise” — suggesting “a lone ship being cast back and forth” — with Wordsworth’s “stagnant waters.” The writer ends by noting the contrasting tones of the two poems in spite of their similar subject. The essay is extremely well written, and clearly organized, and its ideas are aptly supported from the texts of the poems themselves. The analysis is persuasive and insightful. It is a paper truly deserving of a 9.

**Sample KKK - Score 7**

This paper offers a reasonable comparison/contrast of both poems and does a commendable job of analyzing the relationship between the two, but it lacks the control of language and flashes of insight demonstrated in the 9 paper. The writer begins by stating the similarities between the two poems, namely, the crying out for “the guidance and protection needed in the dark days of their respective countries.” Focusing on similar devices and techniques, the writer attempts to show how rhymes in both poems serve “to dramatize and emphasize the dire nature of the times.” However, the analysis is left undeveloped and is not entirely convincing. The same is true of the writer’s argument about the difference of the “intent” of both poets, which isn’t as forceful and cogent as the argument developed in the previous paper. The essay writer notes some commonalties and differences between the two poems, but fails to provide a truly insightful comparison/contrast of them. Finally, the writing is not sophisticated enough nor the diction sufficiently rich to place the essay in the 9 to 8 range. It received a score of 7.

**Sample DDDD - Score 5**

The writer of this essay begins analysis of the two poems by comparing the absence of Milton and Douglass to the loss of a father and the void that results. The writer, however, fails to develop this point in a thorough and meaningful manner throughout the essay. The second paragraph of the essay is filled with general information about sonnets, but, while some interesting connections are made, the writer does not sufficiently inform the reader about the relationship between the two poems. The writer concludes the essay with a rather shallow treatment of the differences between the two sonnets as addressing “different men” and describing “different causes.” The causes are reduced to “free speech and liberty” versus an undefined “problem in the black civil rights movement.” The paper received a score of a 5, a score that is often given to essays that provide a plausible reading of both poems but do so in a rather superficial manner, often marred by poor organization and insufficient development.

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**Question 2**

**Sample TTTT - Score 9**

The writer of this essay focuses immediately upon the question asked and begins analyzing the two characters in this excerpt from Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*. The writer concentrates on diction, tone, and detail in developing a rather thorough analysis of their character differences between Squire Allworthy and Mrs. Deborah Wilkins. Throughout the analysis the writer demonstrates sensitivity to the language of the passage, noting the humor and the irony Fielding employs in his characterization of master and servant. The control of language at all levels — diction, sentence, and paragraph — is quite good. The writing is clear and precise. The essay is well organized, persuasively argued, and aptly supported with evidence drawn from the text. It is a superb analysis of character and well deserving of the 9 it received.

**Sample HH - Score 7**

The writer of this essay, while offering a reasonable interpretation of Fielding's passages, lacks the persuasiveness and sophistication of language shown in the previous paper. The writer shapes the response to the question by focusing on Fielding's use of point of view and dialogue, two important techniques. However, the writer resorts more to paraphrase of the plot than to analysis of the differences between the two characters. In paragraph two, for example, the writer belabors the notion of Mrs. Wilkins as an overly proper woman. Nor does the writer sufficiently account for Mrs. Wilkins' demonstrated ambivalent attitude toward the baby. The writer is certainly capable of responding well to the prompt and makes several intelligent comments on the situation and the characters, but the essay lacks the precision of expression as well as the insight that one finds in papers that receive a 9 or 8. The writer's statement, "Henry Fielding uses dialogue and third person to allow the reader to understand the characters' personalities" is a case in point. The statement restates the paper's basic premise but fails to consider the humor, the irony, and the ambiguity with which Fielding depicts the characters. The essay does, however, deserve the score of 7.

**Sample JJ - Score 5**

The writer of this essay uses the commonality of situation to develop the differences between the two characters in the excerpt from *Tom Jones*. While the writer concentrates on the two characters' responses to the discovery of the baby, the writing and the analysis are rather simplistic. The writer notes the dramatic change in Mrs. Wilkins' attitude towards the baby, but does not attempt to explain why it might have occurred. The writer's discussion of the differences between Squire Allworthy and Mrs. Deborah Wilkins is not inaccurate, but it remains very superficial and offers no real insight. While the writer offers a plausible interpretation of the characters' reactions, the lack of detailed analysis prevents this essay from being scored above a 5.

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**Question 3**

**Sample WWW - Score 9**

The writer focuses on the Emily Dickinson quotation and extracts from it a working definition of “madness” with apt appreciation of James Joyce’s novel. The writer traces Stephen’s “eccentric behavior” as he attempts to overcome the paralyzing forces of the church, family, sexuality, and society at large in defining his artistic genius. The writer traces the various forces in Stephen’s life that he must confront in order to discover the self. The essay is fully developed, with copious and apt references to the text itself. The writing is strong — each paragraph develops the idea of Stephen’s search for identity in the face of compelling conformity — and deals intelligently with the evolutionary formation of Stephen’s “discerning eye.” The writer capably crafts an essay that fully explores the nature of Stephen’s “madness” and the significance that theme has to the book as a whole without belaboring the plot. It is a seamless essay that is deserving of the score of 9.

**Sample RR - Score 7**

The writer of this essay cleverly uncovers the dark core of Kurtz’s character and treats his “madness” as a veneer of civilization. He or she develops the argument that Kurtz’s “madness” “can be interpreted as the genuine state of mankind that is only hidden by society to preserve order.” While keeping the focus clearly on the causes that lead to Kurtz’s degeneration into savagery, the writer fails to make a clear transition from madness as insanity to madness as “divinest sense.” In other words, the writer ignores the prompt’s reference to viewing madness with a “discerning eye.” The attempt to do so is evident, but it needs a more thoughtful development with apt references to the text. The paper is not as fully developed and supported by concrete examples as the previous paper. The final paragraph, for example, is a mere listing of items, items that could have been expanded more thoroughly and thoughtfully. In spite of these limitations, the paper is a strong 7.

**Sample LL - Score 5**

The writer begins the essay clearly focusing on Don Quixote as a delusional knight errant set on a mission to rid the world of all evil. The writer however, fails to sustain the analysis of “madness.” There is no attempt to deal with the question’s more subtle reference to “divinest sense” and a “discerning eye.” What analysis there is remains rather superficial. Its development and support from the text itself are limited. This is an essay that does offer a plausible discussion of Don Quixote’s “madness” but fails to address in detail the larger significance of the theme of “madness” in the work as a whole. The essay is further flawed by its unsophisticated thinking and by its mediocre writing. It is a middle range paper, a 5.