



AP English Literature and Composition 2001 Free-Response Questions

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2001 AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In each of the following poems, the speaker responds to the conditions of a particular place and time—England in 1802 in the first poem, the United States about 100 years later in the second. Read each poem carefully. Then write an essay in which you compare and contrast the two poems and analyze the relationship between them.

London, 1802

Milton!¹ thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen²
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Line Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
5 Have forfeited their ancient English dower³
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;
10 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

—William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

¹ John Milton (1608-1674), English poet and political writer, author of *Paradise Lost*, whose famous essay against censorship, "Areopagitica," championed the cause of liberty and public virtue.

² Swamp

³ Natural endowment

Douglass*

Ah, Douglass, we have fall'n on evil days,
Such days as thou, not even thou didst know,
When thee, the eyes of that harsh long ago
Line Saw, salient, at the cross of devious ways,
5 And all the country heard thee with amaze.
Not ended then, the passionate ebb and flow,
The awful tide that battled to and fro;
We ride amid a tempest of dispraise.

Now, when the waves of swift dissension swarm,
10 And Honor, the strong pilot, lieth stark,
Oh for thy voice high-sounding o'er the storm,
For thy strong arm to guide the shivering bark,
The blast-defying power of thy form,
To give us comfort through the lonely dark.

Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906)

*Frederick Douglass (1817-1895), American writer, former slave, whose autobiography (1845) made him a leader in the abolitionist cause.

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Question 2

(Suggested time — 40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

The passage below is taken from the novel *Tom Jones* (1749) by the English novelist and playwright Henry Fielding. In this scene, which occurs early in the novel, Squire Allworthy discovers an infant in his bed. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-organized essay, analyze the techniques that Fielding employs in this scene to characterize Mr. Allworthy and Mrs. Deborah Wilkins.

Line
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Mr. Allworthy came to his house very late in the evening, and after a short supper with his sister, retired much fatigued to his chamber. Here, having spent some minutes on his knees—a custom which he never broke through on any account—he was preparing to step into bed, when, upon opening the clothes, to his great surprise he beheld an infant, wrapt up in some coarse linen, in a sweet and profound sleep, between his sheets. He stood some time lost in astonishment at this sight; but, as good-nature had always the ascendant in his mind, he soon began to be touched with sentiments of compassion for the little wretch before him. He then rang his bell, and ordered an elderly woman-servant to rise immediately, and come to him; and in the mean time was so eager in contemplating the beauty of innocence, appearing in those lively colours with which infancy and sleep always display it, that his thoughts were too much engaged to reflect that he was in his shirt when the matron came in. She had, indeed, given her master sufficient time to dress himself; for out of respect to him, and regard to decency, she had spent many minutes in adjusting her hair at the looking-glass, notwithstanding all the hurry in which she had been summoned by the servant, and though her master, for aught she knew, lay expiring in an apoplexy, or in some other fit.

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It will not be wondered at that a creature who had so strict a regard to decency in her own person should be shocked at the least deviation from it in another. She therefore no sooner opened the door, and saw her master standing by the bedside in his shirt, with a candle in his hand, than she started back in a most terrible fright, and might perhaps have swooned away, had he not now recollected his being undressed, and put an end to her terrors by desiring her to stay without the door till he had thrown some clothes over his back, and was become incapable of shocking the pure eyes of Mrs. Deborah Wilkins, who, though in the fifty-second year of her age, vowed she had never beheld a man without his coat . . .

When Mrs. Deborah returned into the room, and

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was acquainted by her master with the finding the little infant, her consternation was rather greater than his had been; nor could she refrain from crying out, with great horror of accent as well as look, “My good sir! what’s to be done?” Mr. Allworthy answered, she must take care of the child that evening, and in the morning he would give orders to provide it a nurse. “Yes, sir,” says she; “and I hope your worship will send out your warrant to take up the hussy its mother, for she must be one of the neighbourhood; and I should be glad to see her committed to Bridewell, and whipt at the cart’s tail. . . . but for my own part, it goes against me to touch these misbegotten wretches, whom I don’t look upon as my fellow-creature. Faugh! how it stinks! . . . If I might be so bold to give my advice, I would have it put in a basket, and sent out and laid at the churchwarden’s door. It is a good night, only a little rainy and windy; and if it was well wrapt up, and put in a warm basket, it is two to one but it lives till it is found in the morning. But if it should not, we have discharged our duty in taking proper care of it; and it is, perhaps, better for such creatures to die in a state of innocence, than to grow up and imitate their mothers; for nothing better can be expected of them.”

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There were some strokes in this speech which, perhaps, would have offended Mr. Allworthy had he strictly attended to it; but he had now got one of his fingers into the infant’s hand, which, by its gentle pressure, seeming to implore his assistance, had certainly outpleaded the eloquence of Mrs. Deborah, had it been ten times greater than it was. He now gave Mrs. Deborah positive orders to take the child to her own bed, and to call up a maid-servant to provide it pap, and other things, against it waked. . . .

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Such was the discernment of Mrs. Wilkins, and such the respect she bore her master, under whom she enjoyed a most excellent place, that her scruples gave way to his peremptory commands; and she took the child under her arms, without any apparent disgust at the illegality of its birth; and declaring it was a sweet little infant, walked off with it to her own chamber.

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Question 3

(Suggested time — 40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

One definition of madness is “mental delusion or the eccentric behavior arising from it.” But Emily Dickinson wrote

Much madness is divinest Sense—
To a discerning Eye—

Novelists and playwrights have often seen madness with a “discerning Eye.” Select a novel or play in which a character’s apparent madness or irrational behavior plays an important role. Then write a well-organized essay in which you explain what this delusion or eccentric behavior consists of and how it might be judged reasonable. Explain the significance of the “madness” to the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

You may select a work from the list below or choose another novel or play of literary merit.

As I Lay Dying

Beloved

Catch-22

The Catcher in the Rye

Ceremony

Coming Through Slaughter

Crime and Punishment

Dancing at Lughnasa

Don Quixote

An Enemy of the People

Equus

The Father

Going After Cacciato

Great Expectations

Gulliver’s Travels

Heart of Darkness

Invisible Man

King Lear

Medea

Moby-Dick

Native Son

Of Mice and Men

One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest

Pale Fire

The Sound and the Fury

A Streetcar Named Desire

Waiting for Godot

Wuthering Heights

The Zoo Story

END OF EXAMINATION