



## AP English Language 2000 Student Samples

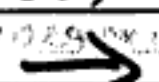
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In this poignant stab at wealth, nobility, and privilege, King Lear states that ~~wealth~~ while sin shows through ~~the~~ ~~ragged~~ ragged clothes of poorer people, wealth has a way of ~~swallowing~~ ~~swallowing~~ swallowing sin up. ~~He~~ He claims that justice cannot penetrate the armor of gold, while rags are not enough to escape the piercing of the lance. I would agree with this statement, but I would also extend it to the more general level of "privileged and non-privileged" or even "haves and have nots." It is a sad and pessimistic position to take, but through my own personal experience in sports, and through examples from the U.S. justice system, ~~I~~ intend to illustrate how power and money and privilege often sway the scale of justice.

First of all, when I think about my experience with soccer throughout the last 13 years, I have become almost cynical about the preferential treatment given to "superstars." For those players: empowered with exemplary natural talents for the game, the standards or behavioral expectations change. For example, my brother, an average player on his team, was 40 minutes late to his game because his ride got lost and didn't have proper directions. ~~His coach sat him down for the whole game.~~ His coach sat him down for the whole game. Two games later, one of the elite players showed up 10 minutes before game time — he ended up playing the whole game. On my high school team we have one extremely talented player who does not come to practice. ~~Yet, he still plays.~~ Yet, he still plays. It seems that the situation would be much different for someone not quite as integral to the success of the squad. Though these are not the same terms ("sin and justice") employed by King Lear, the same principle applies. 

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Although I hate to use the example of O.J. Simpson, his case is one of the most glaring examples of wealth and fame outweighing sin on the scale of justice. Though the truth will never be absolutely clear, there was overwhelming evidence against the former football superstar; I remember sitting in Earth Science in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade and watching the verdict on television. Our whole class was shocked, absolutely shocked. Our conclusion was very similar to that of Shakespeare in King Lear: "Plat sin with gold, and the strong force of justice hurtless breaks."

Lastly, when I consider the Microsoft anti-trust case and the recent developments, I sit back and wonder if it all will come true. At this point, Judge Jackson has ruled against Microsoft, the company with the largest market cap value in the world, on 3 of 4 anti-trust accusations. At this point, the Department of Justice Anti-Trust team is considering splitting the company into two new, separate entities to dissolve their monopolistic grip on the software market. Yet, whether this ~~split~~<sup>split</sup> will come to fruition is an entirely different matter — through much legal wrangling and appeals, a juggernaut such as Microsoft will most likely find a way to get a favorable decision. Whether that "legal ~~ability~~<sup>ability</sup> ~~maneuver~~<sup>maneuver</sup>" would be available to smaller companies is definitely debatable. In this case, ~~Microsoft~~ the lance of the justice department may be splintered by the metal doors of the Microsoft compound in Seattle, WA.

All is not lost, however, in the struggle for justice. In the end, there seems to be a strong equalizing process that ~~adjusts~~<sup>readjusts</sup> any perceived advantage gained by privilege, power, wealth, or status. That soccer player whomisses practice got benched for a game, O.J. Simpson is living a life of misery, and Microsoft may well get



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hammered. It is an unfortunate characteristic of human society, pointed out by Shakespeare in his day and persisting through my own. But, money and power and privilege guarantee nothing in terms of happiness or joy, and I live my life knowing that things have a way of evening out.

"All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others." (George Orwell, Animal Farm) King Lear is ~~stating~~ stating in this short passage that justice bends to let the wealthy pass by unaffected. History and literature ~~also~~ have both proven this to be true. This can be attributed to force, bribery, and respect that the wealthy command and the poor aren't able to compete with.

Mercenaries have been hired throughout history, by the wealthy, to uphold laws or to conquer land. When General George Washington defeated the Hessians at Princeton and Trenton, he was protecting the land ~~to~~ not from the Germans, but from the wealthy English who wanted to impose their laws on the colonies and who had hired those Germans to fight for the British cause. The wealthy have the power to buy the best weapons and create new laws in extreme cases. Thomas More was put to death by a wealthy king who wanted to change the laws in "Man for All Seasons." In the Gulf War, Saddam Hussein had less money than the allies, lost the war, and was forced to follow their rules. Money is power; power is laws. The wealthy create the laws, change the laws, and can break the laws.

When a law enforcement organization ~~cannot~~ cannot be conquered, ~~it~~ it can be bribed. In many cases politicians are rumored to be "compensated" for overlooking certain crimes that wealthy company



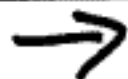
~~answer~~ ~~admitts~~

owners commit. Bribery of the ancient Roman senate was one of the first aspects of the first democracy. I have known people to bribe policemen or local officials for personal freedom. Often money can influence justice through bribery.

Social Darwinism is the belief that rich people are rich because they deserve to be. While this is mostly used by rich people to defend their gigantic houses or ludicrous salaries, it is also used by poor people to give them respect for the rich. Rich people are given much more credit than poor people sometimes. Horatio Alger's tales of success were popular for this reason.

Psychology experiments have proven that people give more leniency to persons driving nice cars or wearing nice clothing. People see the rich as perfect, because everyone wants to be rich. How could a person want to be rich if the rich weren't better people? This is the root of that assumption. Wealth can bring undue credit to people.

In reality, this should not be so. Justice should be an underlying principle. Justice should be inherent and inalienable, but it is not. With *corp' de' tat*, bribery, and bias, the rich get away with more than they should. In a perfect world, *poor* would be equal. 1984 is coming closer with every breath of truth. If:



# 3

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justice is not uniform, it cannot be  
justice!



In Shakespeare's speech, King Lear claims that wealth prevents justice and that the poor are easily broken down by it. Lear's metaphorical lance of justice cannot penetrate the gold plates robes of the wealthy yet destroy the poor through their tattered clothes. One can prove Lear's view that wealth prevents justice from occurring through literature, history, and social events.

First, literature reflects true life and can clearly show the relationship between wealth and justice. For example, in Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, the main character, Jean Valjean, begins as a poor man who steals a loaf of bread to feed his sisters starving family. But, after being caught, he must serve nineteen years in prison. This literary work attacks the French government and clearly implies that if Jean Valjean were not poor, he would not have received nearly as brutal of a sentence. Further, later in the story after Jean Valjean changes his identity to escape his extended punishment as an ex-convict, he becomes rich and a respected man. Yet, when he reveals his true identity, nobody believes him. His wealth (and the respect it brought him) prevented Lear's lance





### Question 3

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of justice from penetrating his wealthy demeanor. Thus, he temporarily escaped the system (although he does encounter other obstacles.) Wealth, show here, did ~~not~~ in fact prevent justice from occurring, whereas the poor Jean Valjean was subject to imprisonment because his "rags" forced him to steal.

Additionally, historical examples ~~also~~ give real-life evidence of Leav's statement. In the Watergate scandal of the 1970s, President Nixon had his Committee to Re-elect the President break into the Democratic National Committee's offices in the Watergate hotel. In order to prevent a White House connection after the burglars were caught, Nixon used his wealth and vast resources as President to pay each burglar with a bribe to prevent them from speaking and also to compensate them for the risks they took (and succumbed to). Here, wealth temporarily prevented justice from occurring. Although Nixon eventually was caught due to other circumstances, his wealth initially prevented his part in the crime to be known. Had he not had the wealth to pay-off the burglars with, they may have given him away. →

Lastly, the O.J. Simpson trial that occurred several years ago acts as a social event that also gives a real-life example of the truth to King Lear's Statement. After being accused of killing his ex-wife and her boyfriend, O.J. Simpson was put on an extensive and complex trial that lasted for several months. However, being a former professional football player and actor, he easily had the wealth to pay for excellent legal representation. He hired Jonny Cochran among several other expensive lawyers to defend him and was eventually found not-guilty after a long-drawn trial. If it weren't for the amazing amount of wealth Simpson had, he would not have been able to afford such knowledgeable and effective lawyers and would perhaps have been found guilty. His wealth prevented the legal system from proving his guilt due to a lack of sufficient evidence. Once again, this life situation ~~proves~~ <sup>shows the truth in</sup> King Lear's Statement.

King Lear's Statement is clearly true due to the literary and real-life examples that prove its reality. Through an examination of literature and history one realizes that wealth does prevent justice from occurring.