



## AP<sup>®</sup> English Language 1999 Sample Student Responses

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## Question 2

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

JJ,

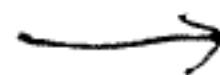
There are several ways of bringing about slavery. One is fear. <sup>Affirm</sup> ~~Admission~~ that you are the master, he is the slave, and <sup>that</sup> the consequences will be unpleasant if he ever strays from that idea. Another way, longer to do but equally effective, is adoration. Create for your slave the idea that you, the master, are the epitome of all that is good and beautiful and the slave will want to do the work, pleased to be associated in any way with such a grand personage. But it is still slavery. That is what Jamaica Kincaid, who wrote this passage, early realized and rebelled against. No matter how great or beautiful England was, she and her country were still slaves - mentally, if not physically. The strategy used by Kincaid to convey this to us is quite unusual - it ~~might~~ might be described as an "and what is the pill in all this jam?" idea. Kincaid, instead of openly and quickly displaying her ideas, ~~uses~~ uses a clever mix of syntax and rhetorical structure to <sup>let us</sup> gradually realize ~~at~~ that something is wrong in such a seeming paradise.

Kincaid is apparently writing in retrospect as a very little girl, and presents to us first what England seemed like to the little girl. "A special jewel" - a fairyland, no less. But also a great a glorious place, from which comes her "sense of what was meaningful, and ..... what was meaningless" her "sense of myth and some of reality" - altogether a splendid place. But, as the praise piles higher and higher, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> sense of bewilderment grows over the reader. Surely - surely nothing could really be this magnificent? There must be something wrong somewhere. And, gradually and stealthily, Kincaid begins to undermine her former statements. Despite the great English tradition of a big breakfast - when applied to her family and people it "made us sleepy and tired". But they still did it. Why? Why, because it was English, of course! In the same way, the

author's father wore a hat unsuitable to the climate or country-but he <sup>wore</sup> regularly ~~got~~ it, seeing as how it was English. Also, an atmosphere grows very quietly - an atmosphere of inferiority - if England was so great, we are that great, it seems. It was perhaps that that sparked young Kincaid's scorn and rebellion against England - the idea that she and her family were inferior to a race that, with all the pretense of helping them, were really hopelessly wrong on everything. Did she eat her food in the "pretty," English way? Yes - "but I knew then that I ~~wasn't~~ enjoyed my food more when I ate it with my bare hands."

Finally, after so much suppression of what she really thinks, of subtle clues that gave us half the answer, Kincaid breaks out into her true beliefs. When before she had begun each sentence with "England this" and "England that" she switches her use of syntax and begins sentences with the word "I" "I had long ago been conquered" and, in retrospect, "I did not know" "I did not know then that this statement was meant to make me feel ~~in~~ awe and small when I heard the word "England?" "I did not know that this... was part of a process that would result in my erasure"..... in fact "I did not know much of anything then." The long dormant voice of the narrator bursts forth in the last paragraph, charging it with all of the emotion that was left out before, and ~~convincing~~ gleaming the reader with no doubt of what her true feelings were - rebellion and hatred - on the subject of England.

There are different kinds of slavery. It may have been physically outlawed, but the slow and sure torment of physical slavery was still rampant in Kincaid's childhood world.



Question 2

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JJ<sub>3</sub>

She did not realize it then, but later it dawned on her, and in this passage she expresses her outrage and rebellion at the mental master of her home. By a unique rhetorical strategy of suppression of her feeling, which was emphasized in her use of syntax and sentence structure, Kincaid reveals to the reader her rich and vibrant emotions and rebellion against such a system, and ~~how~~ <sup>how she</sup> now sees ~~the~~ "what a blessing it was that I was unable to draw a map of England correctly." - for it saved her from being a slave.

When I saw ~~the~~ the opening of "On Seeing England for the First Time" for the first time, I was a teenager sitting at a desk. As I read the piece by Jamaica Kincaid, I discovered that the author uses repetition and figurative language comparisons to convey the overpowering presence of England in her life.

The most obvious use of repetition occurs in the second paragraph. Kincaid begins by describing her very British breakfast, listing each item of her two alternate morning meals. Then she tells the reader that certain items of her breakfasts were "Made in England." ~~she~~ ~~her~~ and for the rest of the paragraph, names other various objects in her life that bore the aggressive phrase. Her shoes, a bolt of gray linen cloth, ~~the~~ the box her shoes came in, her socks, her undergarments, her hair ribbons, her father's shoes, her father's shirt and trousers... Kincaid assaults the reader with these English ~~made~~ products. The effect mirrors hers—she feels helpless against this influence just as the reader quickly ~~sees~~ ~~of~~ the recognizes the pattern but is forced to slog through the rest of the paragraph. The reader may even develop a distaste for the endless list of things "Made in England," just as Kincaid resents the authoritative way with which English life is forced upon her.

Kincaid's comparisons clarify her ~~own~~ stance toward England. With dripping irony, Kincaid likens England to a "very special jewel" that <sup>only</sup> special people got to "wear." The prevailing attitude in her experience ~~was~~ that English people are good, because they are from England, and have obviously been rewarded by being from ~~the best country~~ such a noble, fine place. To Kincaid, England seems like a "Jerusalem," a holy land for those ~~unfortunate~~ who must achieve such a privilege. Naturally, Kincaid develops a resentment because of this preconception, and believes that she



2

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has already been "conquered" by the English, she has already been made to feel inferior.

The repetition and analogies presented by Jamaica Kincaid show her resentment toward the overpowering English influence and pride in her country.