

# **AP<sup>®</sup> English Literature and Composition 2015 Free-Response Questions**

© 2015 The College Board. College Board, Advanced Placement Program, AP, AP Central, and the acorn logo are registered trademarks of the College Board.

Visit the College Board on the Web: www.collegeboard.org.

AP Central is the official online home for the AP Program: apcentral.collegeboard.org.



# 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 the following poem by Caribbean writer Derek Walcott, the speaker recalls a childhood experience of visiting an elderly woman storyteller. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-developed essay, discuss the speaker's recollection and analyze how Walcott uses poetic devices to convey the significance of the experience.

#### XIV

With the frenzy of an old snake shedding its skin, the speckled road, scored with ruts, smelling of mold, twisted on itself and reentered the forest

- *Line* where the dasheen<sup>1</sup> leaves thicken and folk stories begin.
  - 5 Sunset would threaten us as we climbed closer to her house up the asphalt hill road, whose yam vines wrangled over gutters with the dark reek of moss, the shutters closing like the eyelids of that mimosa<sup>2</sup> called Ti-Marie; then—lucent as paper lanterns,
- 10 lamplight glowed through the ribs, house after house there was her own lamp at the black twist of the path. There's childhood, and there's childhood's aftermath. She began to remember at the minute of the fireflies, to the sound of pipe water banging in kerosene tins,
- 15 stories she told to my brother and myself.Her leaves were the libraries of the Caribbean.The luck that was ours, those fragrant origins!Her head was magnificent, Sidone. In the gully of her voice shadows stood up and walked, her voice travels my shelves.
- 20 She was the lamplight in the stare of two mesmerized boys still joined in one shadow, indivisible twins.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> dasheen: tropical plant with large leaves

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> mimosa: tropical plant whose leaves close or droop when touched or shaken

<sup>&</sup>quot;XIV" from MIDSUMMER by Derek Walcott. Copyright © 1984 by Derek Walcott. Reprinted by permission of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, LLC and Faber and Faber Ltd.

# 2015 AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

### **Question 2**

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

The following excerpt is from the opening of *The Beet Queen*, a 1986 novel by Louise Erdrich. Read the passage carefully. Then write a well-developed essay in which you analyze how Erdrich depicts the impact of the environment on the two children. You may wish to consider such literary devices as tone, imagery, selection of detail, and point of view.

Unfortunately, we do not have permission to reproduce the excerpt from Louise Erdrich's *The Beet Queen* on this website.

The excerpt consists of the first six paragraphs of the novel.

© 2015 The College Board. Visit the College Board on the Web: www.collegeboard.org.

## 2015 AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

#### **Question 3**

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

In literary works, cruelty often functions as a crucial motivation or a major social or political factor. Select a novel, play, or epic poem in which acts of cruelty are important to the theme. Then write a well-developed essay analyzing how cruelty functions in the work as a whole and what the cruelty reveals about the perpetrator and/or victim.

You may select a work from the list below or another work of equal literary merit. Do not merely summarize the plot.

Beloved A Bend in the River Billy Budd Black Boy Catch-22 Cat's Eye The Crucible Frankenstein A Gesture Life Great Expectations Heart of Darkness Invisible Man The Kite Runner The Last of the Mohicans Lord of the Flies

Mansfield Park Medea The Merchant of Venice Night The Odyssey Oliver Twist One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest Othello The Red Badge of Courage The Scarlet Letter Sister Carrie Sophie's Choice Tess of the d'Urbervilles To Kill a Mockingbird Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? Wuthering Heights

STOP

END OF EXAM

© 2015 The College Board. Visit the College Board on the Web: www.collegeboard.org.