2024

AP® English Literature and Composition

Scoring Guidelines
Set 2

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Question 1: Poetry Analysis — 6 points

In George Moses Horton's poem "On Summer," published in 1829, the author describes multiple aspects of summer in a rural area. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Horton uses literary elements and techniques to develop a complex portrayal of the setting.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

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Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A **Thesis** **(0–1 points)**	**0 points** For any of the following: • There is no defensible thesis. • The intended thesis only restates the prompt. • The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. • There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.	**1 point** Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the poem.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: • Only restate the prompt. • Make a generalized comment about the poem that doesn't respond to the prompt. • Describe the poem or features of the poem rather than making a claim that requires a defense.	**Responses that earn this point:** • Provide a defensible interpretation of the complex portrayal of the setting.
	Examples that do not earn this point: **Restate the prompt** • *"The poet describes through various literary elements the complexity of summer in the country."* • *"In the poem 'On Summer,' the poet develops a complex portrayal of a summer setting."* **Do not relate to the prompt** • *"We all have a favorite season, a time of year in which we are happiest and look forward to the most."* **Describe the poem or features of the poem** • *"Over the course of the poem, the speaker describes scenes from both nature and the human world during summer. We see how the farmer and children react to the summer setting as well as how creatures such as insects, birds, and farm animals react. In addition, the speaker also vividly describes how the natural world around them appears in summer."*	**Examples that earn this point:** **Provide a defensible interpretation** • *"The speaker in 'On Summer' presents both the negative and positive aspects of summer in the country. These aspects come together to form a complete portrayal of the season as a sort of paradox."* • *"In this poem, the poet uses description to point out that the heat of summer is helpful for some, but difficult for others."* • *"Throughout the poem 'On Summer,' the poet employs literary elements such as personification, vivid descriptions, rhyme, and classical references to convey a complex setting that is fearsome, playful, challenging, and restful in the summer months."*
	Additional Notes: • The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. • The thesis may be anywhere within the response. • For a thesis to be defensible, the poem must include at least minimal evidence that *could* be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. • The thesis *may* establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point. • A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.	

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Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0–4 points)	**0 points** Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	**1 point** EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student's argument.	**2 points** EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student's argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	**3 points** EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how at least one literary element or technique in the poem contributes to its meaning.	**4 points** EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how multiple literary elements or techniques in the poem contribute to its meaning.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: • Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. • May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.	**Typical responses that earn 1 point:** • Tend to focus on summary or description of a poem rather than specific details or techniques. • Mention literary elements, devices, or techniques with little or no explanation.	**Typical responses that earn 2 points:** • Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. • May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don't strengthen the argument. • May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. • Do not explain the connections or progression between the student's claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.	**Typical responses that earn 3 points:** • Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. • Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the poem to build an interpretation. • Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. • Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.	**Typical responses that earn 4 points:** • Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. • Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the poem to build an interpretation. • Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained. • Explain how the writer's use of multiple literary techniques contributes to the student's interpretation of the poem.
	Additional Notes: • Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. • To earn the fourth point in this row, the response may observe multiple instances of the same literary element or technique if each instance further contributes to the meaning of the poem.				

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<tr><td>Responses that do not earn this point:
• Attempt to contextualize their interpretation, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“Human experiences always include…” OR “In a world where…” OR “Since the beginning of time…”).
• Only hint at or suggest other possible interpretations (“While another reader may see…” OR “Though the poem could be said to…”).
• Make a single statement about how an interpretation of the poem comments on something thematic without consistently maintaining that thematic interpretation.
• Oversimplify complexities in the poem.
• Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the student’s argument.</td><td>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate a sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument by doing any of the following:
1. Identifying and exploring complexities or tensions within the poem.
2. Illuminating the student’s interpretation by situating it within a broader context.
3. Accounting for alternative interpretations of the poem.
4. Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Additional Notes:
• This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.</td></tr>
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Question 2: Prose Fiction Analysis — 6 points

The following excerpt is from Jane Urquhart's novel *The Night Stages*, published in 2015. In this passage, an artist named Kenneth is finishing a mural for a new airline terminal using the long-established medium of egg tempera, a paint made of egg yolk, pigment, and water. He thinks about the influences on his work and how his mural may be received. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Urquhart uses literary elements and techniques to convey Kenneth's complex perspective as he completes his mural.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
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	Responses that do not earn this point: • Only restate the prompt. • Make a generalized comment about the passage that doesn't respond to the prompt. • Describe the passage or features of the passage rather than making a claim that requires a defense.	**Responses that earn this point:** • Provide a defensible interpretation of Kenneth's complex perspective as he completes his mural.
	Examples that do not earn this point: **Restate the prompt** • *"In this excerpt, the author shows Kenneth thinking about how complex the experience of making art can be."* **Do not respond to the prompt but make a generalized comment** • *"Great works of art can have an amazingly powerful effect on our emotions."* **Describe the passage or features of the passage** • *"Kenneth uses eggs to make paint for his mural, and afterwards he takes pictures to show his friends."*	**Examples that earn this point:** **Provide a defensible interpretation** • *"The passage shows Kenneth realizing that the experience of painting the mural is a worthwhile endeavor no matter what may happen to it afterwards."* • *"Kenneth's experience of completing the mural causes him to consider the impact of artistic tradition and its continued value in the future."* • *"Although Kenneth works alone, he recognizes that he does not really create alone—he is aware that his art is always influenced by other people, both those he has known personally as well as complete strangers."*
	Additional Notes: • The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. • The thesis may be anywhere within the response. • For a thesis to be defensible, the passage must include at least minimal evidence that *could* be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. • The thesis *may* establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point. • A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.	

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Question 3: Literary Argument — 6 points

Many works of literature explore a character's sense of lacking something important in life. The character perceives an unfulfilled need which may be emotional, spiritual, financial, or something the character does not understand or cannot articulate. Either from your own reading or from the following list, choose a work of fiction in which such a feeling is explored. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how the character's sense of an unfulfilled need contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

In your response, you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Provide evidence to support your line of reasoning.
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	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: • Only restate the prompt. • Make a generalized comment about the selected work that doesn't respond to the prompt.	**Responses that earn this point:** • Provide a defensible interpretation of a character's sense of an unfulfilled need in the selected work. OR • Make a claim about how a character's sense of an unfulfilled need contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole.
	Examples that do not earn this point: **Restate the prompt** • *"A common theme in literature is a character who feels like one of their needs has not been met, or they are missing something that they want out of life."* **Do not respond to the prompt but make a generalized comment about the selected work** • *"Gatsby is never really satisfied with anything in his life."* • *"The Bell Jar follows the life of the protagonist, Esther, through a short period of time in her young adulthood."* • *"In Ceremony, Tayo feels like something is missing from his life."*	**Examples that earn this point:** **Provides a defensible interpretation** • *"Edna's lack of freedom to pursue her desires, in Chopin's The Awakening, highlights how societal constraints can drive a person to both rebellion and submission."* • *"In The Bluest Eye, Pecola's need to be loved goes unfulfilled and contributes to the violence of the world in which she lives."* • *"Throughout The Age of Innocence, Newland Archer believes he needs more excitement than his traditional, comfortable life with his wife provides. This drives him to consider a relationship with Ellen Olenska and makes him realize that this 'unfulfilled need' is really a foolish idea."*
	Additional Notes: • The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. • The thesis may be anywhere within the response. • A thesis that offers a defensible claim about a character's sense of an unfulfilled need in the selected work may earn the point; any reasonable student interpretation of "an unfulfilled need" is acceptable. • For a thesis to be defensible, the selected work must include at least minimal evidence that *could* be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. • The thesis *may* establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point. • A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.	

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	Additional Notes: • Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. • To earn the fourth point in this row, the response must address the interpretation of the selected work as a whole.				

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• Oversimplify complexities of the topic and/or the selected work.
• Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the student’s argument.</td><td>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate a sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument by doing any of the following:
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