



## **AP<sup>®</sup> English Literature and Composition 2006 Free-Response Questions**

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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.)

Read the following poem carefully. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how the poet uses language to describe the scene and to convey mood and meaning.

Evening Hawk

From plane of light to plane, wings dipping through  
Geometries and orchids that the sunset builds,  
Out of the peak's black angularity of shadow, riding  
*Line* The last tumultuous avalanche of  
5 Light above pines and the guttural gorge,  
The hawk comes.

His wing  
Scythes down another day, his motion  
Is that of the honed steel-edge, we hear  
The crashless fall of stalks of Time.  
10 The head of each stalk is heavy with the gold of our error.

Look! look! he is climbing the last light  
Who knows neither Time nor error, and under  
Whose eye, unforgiving, the world, unforgiven, swings  
Into shadow.

Long now,  
15 The last thrush is still, the last bat  
Now cruises in his sharp hieroglyphics. His wisdom  
Is ancient, too, and immense. The star  
Is steady, like Plato,\* over the mountain.

If there were no wind we might, we think, hear  
20 The earth grind on its axis, or history  
Drip in darkness like a leaking pipe in the cellar.

—Robert Penn Warren

\*Greek philosopher (427?–347? B.C.)

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**Question 2**

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

The following passage is an excerpt from *Lady Windermere's Fan*, a play by Oscar Wilde, produced in 1892. Read the passage carefully. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how the playwright reveals the values of the characters and the nature of their society.

Line DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*shaking hands*). Dear  
Margaret, I am so pleased to see you. You remember  
Agatha,<sup>1</sup> don't you? How do you do, Lord  
Darlington? I won't let you know my daughter, you  
5 are far too wicked.

LORD DARLINGTON. Don't say that, Duchess.  
As a wicked man I am a complete failure. Why, there  
are lots of people who say I have never really done  
anything wrong in the whole course of my life. Of  
10 course they only say it behind my back.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK. Isn't he dreadful?  
Agatha, this is Lord Darlington. Mind you don't  
believe a word he says. No, no tea, thank you, dear.  
(*Sits on sofa.*) We have just had tea at Lady Markby's.  
15 Such bad tea, too. It was quite undrinkable. I wasn't at  
all surprised. Her own son-in-law supplies it. Agatha  
is looking forward so much to your ball tonight, dear  
Margaret.

LADY WINDERMERE (*seated*). Oh, you musn't  
20 think it is going to be a ball, Duchess. It is only a  
dance in honour of my birthday. A small and early.

LORD DARLINGTON (*standing*). Very small,  
very early, and very select, Duchess.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK. Of course it's going  
25 to be select. But we know *that*, dear Margaret, about  
*your* house. It is really one of the few houses in  
London where I can take Agatha, and where I feel  
perfectly secure about dear Berwick. I don't know  
what society is coming to. The most dreadful people  
30 seem to go everywhere. They certainly come to my  
parties—the men get quite furious if one doesn't  
ask them. Really, some one should make a stand  
against it.

LADY WINDERMERE. I will, Duchess. I will  
35 have no one in my house about whom there is any  
scandal.

LORD DARLINGTON. Oh, don't say that, Lady  
Windermere. I should never be admitted. (*Sitting.*)

<sup>1</sup> the Duchess's daughter

DUCHESS OF BERWICK. Oh, men don't matter.  
40 With women it is different. We're good. Some of us  
are, at least. But we are positively getting elbowed  
into the corner. Our husbands would really forget our  
existence if we didn't nag at them from time to time,  
just to remind them that we have a perfect legal right  
45 to do so.

LORD DARLINGTON. It's a curious thing,  
Duchess, about the game of marriage—a game, by the  
way, that is going out of fashion—the wives hold all  
the honours<sup>2</sup> and invariably lose the odd trick.<sup>3</sup>

50 DUCHESS OF BERWICK. The odd trick? Is that  
the husband, Lord Darlington?

LORD DARLINGTON. It would be rather a good  
name for the modern husband.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK. Dear Lord Darlington,  
55 how thoroughly depraved you are!

LADY WINDERMERE. Lord Darlington is trivial.

LORD DARLINGTON. Ah, don't say that, Lady  
Windermere.

LADY WINDERMERE. Why do you *talk* so  
60 trivially about life, then?

LORD DARLINGTON. Because I think that life  
is far too important a thing ever to talk seriously  
about it.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK. What does he mean?  
65 Do, as a concession to my poor wits, Lord Darlington,  
just explain to me what you really mean.

LORD DARLINGTON. I think I had better not,  
Duchess. Nowadays to be intelligible is to be found  
out. Good-bye! (*Shakes hands with DUCHESS.*) And  
70 now—Lady Windermere, good-bye. I may come  
tonight, mayn't I? Do let me come.

LADY WINDERMERE. Yes, certainly. But you  
are not to say foolish, insincere things to people.

LORD DARLINGTON (*smiling*). Ah! you are  
75 beginning to reform me. It is a dangerous thing to  
reform any one, Lady Windermere. (*Bows and exit.*)

<sup>2</sup> high cards

<sup>3</sup> round of a card game

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**Question 3**

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

Many writers use a country setting to establish values within a work of literature. For example, the country may be a place of virtue and peace or one of primitivism and ignorance. Choose a novel or play in which such a setting plays a significant role. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the country setting functions in the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

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

*Adam Bede*  
*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*  
*All the Pretty Horses*  
*Anna Karenina*  
*As I Lay Dying*  
*As You Like It*  
*The Bear*  
*Black Boy*  
*Bless Me, Ultima*  
*The Bonesetter's Daughter*  
*Ceremony*  
*The Cherry Orchard*  
*David Copperfield*  
*Don Quixote*  
*East of Eden*  
*Ethan Frome*  
*For Whom the Bell Tolls*  
*Frankenstein*

*The Grapes of Wrath*  
*House Made of Dawn*  
*King Lear*  
*Madame Bovary*  
*Mansfield Park*  
*A Midsummer Night's Dream*  
*Obasan*  
*O Pioneers!*  
*Out of Africa*  
*The Scarlet Letter*  
*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*  
*Their Eyes Were Watching God*  
*A Thousand Acres*  
*Tom Jones*  
*The Vicar of Wakefield*  
*The Way We Live Now*  
*The Winter's Tale*  
*Wuthering Heights*

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**