

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 Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), the speaker addresses the subject of desire. Read the poem carefully. Then write a well-developed essay in which you analyze how poetic devices help to convey the speaker's complex attitude toward desire.

Thou Blind Man's Mark

Thou blind man's mark,¹ thou fool's self-chosen snare,
Fond fancy's scum, and dregs of scattered thought;
Band of all evils, cradle of causeless care;
Line Thou web of will, whose end is never wrought;
5 Desire, desire! I have too dearly bought,
With price of mangled mind, thy worthless ware;
Too long, too long, asleep thou hast me brought,
Who should my mind to higher things prepare.
But yet in vain thou hast my ruin sought;
10 In vain thou madest me to vain things aspire;
In vain thou kindlest all thy smoky fire;
For virtue hath this better lesson taught—
Within myself to seek my only hire,²
Desiring naught but how to kill desire.

¹ target

² reward

Question 2

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

Carefully read the following excerpt from the novel *Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena María Viramontes. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze the development of Estrella’s character. In your analysis, you may wish to consider such literary elements as selection of detail, figurative language, and tone.

Unfortunately, we have been denied permission to reproduce the excerpt from *Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena María Viramontes on this website.

The excerpt is taken from early in the novel, when Estrella finds Perfecto’s red tool chest and Perfecto names the various tools and explains their uses.

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2012 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

(Sir Philip Sidney's "Thou Blind Man's Mark")

The score reflects the quality of the essay as a whole — its content, style, and mechanics. Students are rewarded for what they do well. The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by 1 point above the otherwise appropriate score. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a 3.

- 9–8** These essays offer a persuasive analysis of Sidney's use of poetic devices to convey the speaker's complex attitude toward desire. The essays offer a range of interpretations; they provide convincing readings of both the complex attitude and Sidney's use of poetic devices. They demonstrate consistent and effective control over the elements of composition in language appropriate to the analysis of poetry. Their textual references are apt and specific. Though they may not be error-free, these essays are perceptive in their analysis and demonstrate writing that is clear and sophisticated, and in the case of a score of 9, especially persuasive.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of Sidney's use of poetic devices to convey the speaker's complex attitude toward desire. The essays are less thorough or less precise in their discussion of the attitude toward desire and of Sidney's use of poetic devices, and their analysis of the relationship between the two is less thorough or convincing. These essays demonstrate the student's ability to express ideas clearly, making references to the text, although they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as the 9–8 responses. Essays scored a 7 present better developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than do essays scored a 6.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of Sidney's use of poetic devices to convey the speaker's attitude toward desire but tend to be superficial in their analysis of the attitude and of the devices. They often rely on paraphrase, which may contain some analysis, implicit or explicit. Their analysis of the speaker's attitude or of Sidney's use of devices may be vague, formulaic, or minimally supported by references to the text. There may be minor misinterpretations of the poem. These essays demonstrate some control of language, but the writing may be marred by surface errors. These essays are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as 7–6 essays.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of the poem. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant, or it may ignore the complexity of the speaker's attitude toward desire or Sidney's use of devices. Evidence from the poem may be slight or misconstrued, or the essays may rely on paraphrase only. The writing often demonstrates a lack of control over the conventions of composition: inadequate development of ideas, accumulation of errors, or a focus that is unclear, inconsistent, or repetitive. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreading and/or demonstrate inept writing.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of those in the 4–3 range. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the student's assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the poem. These essays may contain serious errors in grammar and mechanics. They may offer a complete misreading or be unacceptably brief. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the poem.
- 0** These essays are completely off topic or inadequate; there may be some mark, or a drawing, or a brief reference to the task.
- These essays are entirely blank.