

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.)

The following poem is by Rachel M. Harper. Read the poem carefully. Then, considering such elements as imagery, form, and tone, write a well-organized essay in which you analyze the relationship between music and the speaker's complex memories of her family.

The Myth of Music*for my father*

Line If music can be passed on
like brown eyes or a strong
left hook, this melody
5 is my inheritance, lineage traced
through a title track,
displayed on an album cover
that you pin to the wall
as art, oral history taught
on a record player, the lessons
10 sealed into the grooves like fact.
This is the only myth I know.
I sit on the hardwood
floors of a damp November,
my brother dealing cards
15 from an incomplete deck,
and I don't realize that this
moment is the definition
of family, collective memory
cut in rough-textured tones,
20 the voice of a horn so familiar
I don't know I'm listening,
Don't know I'm singing,
a child's improvisation
of Giant Steps or Impressions:¹
25 songs without lyrics
can still be sung.

In six months, when my mother
is 2,000 miles away, deciding
if she wants to come home,
30 I will have forgotten
this moment, the security
of her footsteps, the warmth

of a radiator on my back and you
present in the sound of typing
35 your own accompaniment,
multiphonics disguised as chords
in a distant room, speakers set
on high to fill the whole house
with your spirit, your call
40 as a declaration of love.

But the music will remain.
The timeless notes of jazz
too personal to play out loud,
stay locked in the rhythm
45 of my childhood, memories fading
like the words of a lullaby,
come to life in a saxophone's blow.
They lie when they say
music is universal—this is my song,
50 the notes like fingerprints
as delicate as breath.
I will not share this air
with anyone
but you.

¹*Giant Steps* is a jazz album (1960) by John Coltrane. *Impressions* (1963) is another album by Coltrane.

From "The Myth of Music" in *Mending the World: Stories of Family by Contemporary Black Writers* by Rachel M. Harper, copyright ©1999. Reprinted by permission of Basic Civitas Books, a member of The Perseus Books Group.

Question 2

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

In the passage below, from *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* (1751) by Tobias Smollett, Mr. Pickle encounters Godfrey Gauntlet, the brother of his beloved Emilia. Consider how the two men confront their own uncontrolled emotions and yet attempt to abide by their social norms. In a well-developed essay, analyze how the author explores the complex interplay between emotions and social propriety in the passage. You may wish to consider such literary techniques as dialogue, narrative pace, and tone.

Line “Mr. Pickle, you have carried on a correspondence
with my sister for some time, and I should be glad to
know the nature of it.” To this question our lover
replied, “Sir, I should be glad to know what title you
5 have to demand that satisfaction?”—“Sir,” answered
the other, “I demand it in the capacity of a brother,
jealous of his own honour, as well as of his sister’s
reputation; and if your intentions are honourable, you
will not refuse it.”—“Sir,” said Peregrine, “I am not
10 at present disposed to appeal to your opinion for the
rectitude of my intentions: and I think you assume a
little too much importance, in pretending to judge my
conduct.”—“Sir,” replied the soldier, “I pretend to
judge the conduct of every man who interferes with
15 my concerns, and even to chastise him, if I think he
acts amiss.”—“Chastise!” cried the youth, with
indignation in his looks, “sure you dare not apply that
term to me?”—“You are mistaken,” said Godfrey;
“I dare do anything that becomes the character of a
20 gentleman.”—“Gentleman, God wot!” replied the
other, looking contemptuously at his equipage,*
which was none of the most superb, “a very pretty
gentleman, truly!”

The soldier’s wrath was inflamed by this ironical
25 repetition, the contempt of which his conscious
poverty made him feel; and he called his antagonist
presumptuous boy, insolent upstart, and with other
epithets, which Perry retorted with great bitterness.
A formal challenge having passed between them, they
30 alighted at the first inn, and walked into the next field,
in order to decide their quarrel by the sword. Having
pitched upon the spot, helped to pull off each other’s
boots, and laid aside their coats and waistcoats,
Mr. Gauntlet told his opponent, that he himself was

35 looked upon in the army as an expert swordsman,
and that if Mr. Pickle had not made that science his
particular study, they should be upon a more equal
footing in using pistols. Peregrine was too much
incensed to thank him for his plain dealing, and
40 too confident of his own skill to relish the other’s
proposal, which he accordingly rejected: then,
drawing his sword, he observed, that were he to treat
Mr. Gauntlet according to his deserts, he would order
his man to punish his audacity with a horsewhip.
45 Exasperated at this expression, which he considered
an indelible affront, he made no reply, but attacked
his adversary with equal ferocity and address. The
youth parried his first and second thrust, but received
the third in the outside of his sword-arm. Though the
50 wound was superficial, he was transported with rage
at the sight of his own blood, and returned the assault
with such fury and precipitation, that Gauntlet, loath
to take advantage of his unguarded heat, stood upon
the defensive. In the second lunge, Peregrine’s
55 weapon entering a kind of network in the shell of
Godfrey’s sword, the blade snapped in two, and left
him at the mercy of the soldier, who, far from making
an insolent use of the victory he had gained, put up
his Toledo with great deliberation, like a man who
60 had been used to that kind of rencounters, and
observed that such a blade as Peregrine’s was not to
be trusted with a man’s life: then advising the owner
to treat a gentleman in distress with more respect for
the future, he slipped on his boots, and with sullen
65 dignity of demeanour stalked back to the inn.

*carriage and horse

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2017 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1: Rachel M. Harper, “The Myth of Music”

The score should reflect the quality of the essay as a whole — its content, style, and mechanics. **Reward the students for what they do well.** The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by 1 point above the otherwise appropriate score. A poorly written essay may not be scored higher than a 3.

9–8 These essays offer a persuasive analysis of how the relationship between music and the speaker’s complex memories of her family is conveyed through elements such as imagery, form, and tone. The writers of these essays offer a range of interpretations; they provide convincing readings of the relationship between music and the speaker’s complex memories and Harper’s use of elements such as imagery, form, and tone. 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 9 essay, especially persuasive.

7–6 These essays offer a reasonable analysis of how the relationship between music and the speaker’s complex memories of her family is conveyed through elements such as imagery, form, and tone. They are less thorough or less precise in their discussion of how the relationship between music and the speaker’s complex memories of her family is conveyed through elements such as imagery, form, and tone. Their analysis of the relationship and the use of elements 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 papers. 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 analysis of how the relationship between music and the speaker’s complex memories of her family is conveyed through elements such as imagery, form, and tone, but tend to be superficial or pedestrian in their analysis of the relationship and the use of elements. They often rely on paraphrase, which may contain some analysis, implicit or explicit. Their analysis of the relationship between music and memory or of Harper’s use of such elements as imagery, form, and tone may be vague, formulaic, or minimally supported by references to the text. There may be minor misinterpretations of the poem. These students demonstrate some control of language, but their essays 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 may ignore the relationship between music and memory or Harper’s use of elements. 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 the papers 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 give a response that is 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.