

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 two poems, adults provide explanations for children. Read the poems carefully. Then write an essay in which you compare and contrast the two poems, analyzing how each poet uses literary devices to make his point.

A Barred Owl

The warping night air having brought the boom
Of an owl's voice into her darkened room,
We tell the wakened child that all she heard
Line Was an odd question from a forest bird,
5 Asking of us, if rightly listened to,
“Who cooks for you?” and then “Who cooks for you?”

Words, which can make our terrors bravely clear,
Can also thus domesticate a fear,
And send a small child back to sleep at night
10 Not listening for the sound of stealthy flight
Or dreaming of some small thing in a claw
Borne up to some dark branch and eaten raw.

—Richard Wilbur

"A Barred Owl" from MAYFLIES: NEW POEMS AND
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The History Teacher

Trying to protect his students' innocence
he told them the Ice Age was really just
the Chilly Age, a period of a million years
when everyone had to wear sweaters.
Line
5 And the Stone Age became the Gravel Age,
named after the long driveways of the time.

The Spanish Inquisition was nothing more
than an outbreak of questions such as
“How far is it from here to Madrid?”
10 “What do you call the matador's hat?”

The War of the Roses took place in a garden,
and the Enola Gay* dropped one tiny atom
on Japan.

The children would leave his classroom
15 for the playground to torment the weak
and the smart,
mussing up their hair and breaking their glasses,
while he gathered up his notes and walked home
past flower beds and white picket fences,
20 wondering if they would believe that soldiers
in the Boer War told long, rambling stories
designed to make the enemy nod off.

—Billy Collins

"The History Teacher" from QUESTIONS ABOUT ANGELS, by
Billy Collins, © 1991. Reprinted by permission of the University of
Pittsburgh Press.

*
The name of the airplane from which an atomic bomb was dropped on
Hiroshima, Japan, in 1945.

2007 AP® 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.)

Read carefully the following passage from Dalton Trumbo's novel *Johnny Got His Gun* (1939). Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how Trumbo uses such techniques as point of view, selection of detail, and syntax to characterize the relationship between the young man and his father.

Line
5 The campfire was built in front of a tent and the tent was under an enormous pine. When you slept inside the tent it seemed always that it was raining outside because the needles from the pine kept falling.
10 Sitting across from him and staring into the fire was his father. Each summer they came to this place which was nine thousand feet high and covered with pine trees and dotted with lakes. They fished in the lakes and when they slept at night the roar of water from the streams which connected the lakes sounded in their ears all night long.

15 They had been coming to this place ever since he was seven. Now he was fifteen and Bill Harper was going to come tomorrow. He sat in front of the fire and looked across at his father and wondered just how he was going to tell him. It was a very serious thing. Tomorrow for the first time in all their trips together he wanted to go fishing with someone other than his father. On previous trips the idea had never occurred to him. His father had always preferred his company to that of men and he had always preferred his father's company to that of the other guys. But now
20 Bill Harper was coming up tomorrow and he wanted to go fishing with him. He knew it was something that had to happen sometime. Yet he also knew that it was the end of something. It was an ending and a beginning and he wondered just how he should tell his father about it.

25 So he told him very casually. He said Bill Harper's coming up tomorrow and I thought maybe I'd go out with him. He said Bill Harper doesn't know very much about fishing and I do so I think if you don't

mind I'll get up early in the morning and meet Harper and he and I will go fishing.

35 For a little while his father didn't say a thing. Then he said why sure go along Joe. And then a little later his father said has Bill Harper got a rod? He told his father no Bill hasn't a rod. Well said his father why don't you take my rod and let Bill use yours? I don't
40 want to go fishing tomorrow anyhow. I'm tired and I think I'll rest all day. So you use my rod and let Bill use yours.

It was as simple as that and yet he knew it was a great thing. His father's rod was a very valuable one.
45 It was perhaps the only extravagance his father had had in his whole life. It had amber leaders and beautiful silk windings. Each spring his father sent the rod away to a man in Colorado Springs who was an expert on rods. The man in Colorado Springs
50 carefully scraped the varnish off the rod and rewound it and revarnished it and it came back glistening new each year. There was nothing his father treasured more. He felt a little lump in his throat as he thought that even as he was deserting his father for Bill
55 Harper his father had volunteered the rod.

60 They went to sleep that night in the bed which lay against a floor of pine needles. They had scooped the needles out to make a little hollow place for their hips. He lay awake quite a while thinking about tomorrow and his father who slept beside him. Then he fell asleep. At six o'clock Bill Harper whispered to him through the tent flap. He got up and gave Bill his rod and took his father's for himself and they went off without awakening his father.

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

(Richard Wilbur and Billy Collins)

The score reflects the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, its style, its 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 comparison/contrast of the two poems and present an insightful analysis of the relationship between them. Although these essays offer a range of interpretations and choose to emphasize different poetic devices, these papers provide convincing readings of both poems and 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 competent essays offer a reasonable comparison/contrast of the two poems and an effective analysis of the relationship between them. They are less thorough or less precise in their discussion of the themes and devices, and their analysis of the relationship between the two poems is less convincing. These essays demonstrate the ability to express ideas clearly with references to the text, although they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as the 9–8 papers. While essays scored 7–6 are generally well written, those scored a 7 demonstrate more sophistication in both substance and style.
- 5** These essays may respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of the two poems and their relationship, but they may be superficial in analysis of theme and devices. They often rely on paraphrase, but paraphrase that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Their comparison/contrast of the relationship between the two poems may be vague, formulaic, or minimally supported by references to the texts. There may be minor misinterpretations of one or both poems. These students demonstrate 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 two poems. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant, or may ignore one of the poems completely. Evidence from the poems 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 misreadings 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, assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the poems themselves. The 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 poems.
- 0** These essays give a response with no more than a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.