

**2009 AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**Question 3**

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

Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which in prosperous circumstances would have lain dormant.

—Horace

Consider this quotation about adversity from the Roman poet Horace. Then write an essay that defends, challenges, or qualifies Horace’s assertion about the role that adversity (financial or political hardship, danger, misfortune, etc.) plays in developing a person’s character. Support your argument with appropriate evidence from your reading, observation, or experience.

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**

# **AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION 2009 SCORING GUIDELINES**

## **Question 3**

The score should reflect a judgment of the essay's quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 40 minutes to read and write; the essay, therefore, is not a finished product and should not be judged by standards appropriate for an out-of-class assignment. Evaluate the essay as a draft, making certain to reward students for what they do well.

All essays, even those scored 8 or 9, may contain occasional lapses in analysis, prose style, or mechanics. Such features should enter into the holistic evaluation of an essay's overall quality. In no case may an essay with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics be scored higher than a 2.

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- 9** Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for a score of 8 and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their argument, thorough in their development, or particularly impressive in their control of language.

### **8 Effective**

Essays earning a score of 8 **effectively** defend, challenge, or qualify Horace's assertion about the role that adversity plays in developing a person's character. The evidence and explanations used are appropriate and convincing. The prose demonstrates a consistent ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not necessarily flawless.

- 7** Essays earning a score of 7 meet the criteria for a score of 6 but provide a more complete explanation, more thorough development, or a more mature prose style.

### **6 Adequate**

Essays earning a score of 6 **adequately** defend, challenge, or qualify Horace's assertion about the role that adversity plays in developing a person's character. The evidence and explanations used are appropriate and sufficient. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

- 5** Essays earning a score of 5 defend, challenge, or qualify Horace's assertion about the role that adversity plays in developing a person's character. The evidence or explanations used may be uneven, inconsistent, or limited. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the student's ideas.

### **4 Inadequate**

Essays earning a score of 4 **inadequately** defend, challenge, or qualify Horace's assertion about the role that adversity plays in developing a person's character. The evidence or explanations used may be inappropriate, insufficient, or less convincing. The prose generally conveys the student's ideas but may be less consistent in controlling the elements of effective writing.

- 3** Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for a score of 4 but demonstrate less success in defending, challenging, or qualifying Horace's assertion about the role that adversity plays in developing a person's character. The essays may show less maturity in control of writing.

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**Question 3 (continued)**

**2 Little Success**

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in defending, challenging, or qualifying Horace's assertion about the role that adversity plays in developing a person's character. These essays may misunderstand the prompt or substitute a simpler task by responding to the prompt tangentially with unrelated, inaccurate, or inappropriate explanation. The prose often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing, such as grammatical problems, a lack of development or organization, or a lack of control.

- 1** Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for a score of 2 but are undeveloped, especially simplistic in their explanation and argument, or weak in their control of language.
- 0** Indicates an on-topic response that receives no credit, such as one that merely repeats the prompt.
- Indicates a blank response or one that is completely off topic.