

2011 AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Question 3

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

In a novel by William Styron, a father tells his son that life “is a search for justice.”

Choose a character from a novel or play who responds in some significant way to justice or injustice. Then write a well-developed essay in which you analyze the character’s understanding of justice, the degree to which the character’s search for justice is successful, and the significance of this search for the work as a whole.

You may choose a work from the list below or another work of comparable literary merit. Do not merely summarize the plot.

All the King’s Men
All the Pretty Horses
Antigone
Atonement
Beloved
The Blind Assassin
The Bonesetter’s Daughter
Crime and Punishment
A Gathering of Old Men
The God of Small Things
The Grapes of Wrath
Invisible Man
King Lear
A Lesson Before Dying
Light in August
Medea

The Merchant of Venice
Murder in the Cathedral
Native Son
No Country for Old Men
Oedipus Rex
The Poisonwood Bible
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead
Set This House on Fire
The Story of Edgar Sawtelle
The Stranger
Things Fall Apart
A Thousand Acres
A Thousand Splendid Suns
To Kill a Mockingbird
The Trial

STOP

END OF EXAM

AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2011 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 3

(Justice)

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 well-focused and persuasive analysis of a literary character’s understanding of justice, the degree to which the character’s search for justice is successful, and the significance of the search for the work as a whole. Using apt and specific textual support, these essays analyze how the character responds in a significant way to justice or injustice. Although they may not be error-free, these essays make a strong case for their interpretation and discuss the literary work with significant insight and understanding. Essays scored a 9 reveal more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do essays scored an 8.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of a literary character’s understanding of justice, the degree to which the character’s search for justice is successful, and the significance of the search for the work as a whole. They analyze how the character responds in a significant way to justice or injustice. Although these responses have insight and understanding, their analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of the 9–8 essays. 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, but they tend to be superficial or thinly developed in analysis. They often rely upon plot summary that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Although these responses attempt to discuss how a character understands justice, the degree to which the character’s search for justice is successful, and the significance of the search for the work as a whole, they may demonstrate a rather simplistic understanding of the character or the idea of justice in the work, and support from the text may be too general. Although these essays demonstrate adequate control of language, they 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 a character’s understanding of and search for justice in a novel or play. The analysis may be partial, unsupported, or irrelevant, and the essays may reflect an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the character’s response to justice or injustice. They may not develop an analysis of the significance of the search for justice for the work as a whole, or they may rely on plot summary alone. These essays may be characterized by an unfocused or repetitive presentation of ideas, an absence of textual support, or an accumulation of errors; they may lack control over the elements of college-level composition. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreading and/or demonstrate inept writing.
- 2–1** Although these essays make some attempt to respond to the prompt, they compound the weaknesses of those in the 4–3 range. Often, they are unacceptably brief or are incoherent in presenting their ideas. They may be poorly written on several counts and contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Remarks may be presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the text.
- 0** These essays do no more than make a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.