

**2002 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 the following poem carefully. Then, taking into consideration the title of the poem, analyze how the poetic devices convey the speaker's attitude toward the sinking of the ship.

The Convergence of the Twain

(*Lines on the loss of the Titanic*¹)

I

In a solitude of the sea
Deep from human vanity,
And the Pride of Life that planned her, stilly couches she.

II

Line Steel chambers, late the pyres
5 Of her salamandrine² fires,
Cold currents thrid,³ and turn to rhythmic tidal lyres.

III

Over the mirrors meant
To glass the opulent
The sea-worm crawls—grotesque, slimed, dumb, indifferent.

IV

10 Jewels in joy designed
To ravish the sensuous mind
Lie lightless, all their sparkles bleared and black and blind.

V

15 Dim moon-eyed fishes near
Gaze at the gilded gear
And query: "What does this vaingloriousness down here?" . . .

VI

Well: while was fashioning
This creature of cleaving wing,
The Immanent Will that stirs and urges everything

VII

20 Prepared a sinister mate
For her—so gaily great—
A Shape of Ice, for the time far and dissociate.

VIII

And as the smart ship grew
In stature, grace and hue,
In shadowy silent distance grew the Iceberg too.

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IX

25 Alien they seemed to be:
 No mortal eye could see
 The intimate welding of their later history,

X

 Or sign that they were bent
 By paths coincident
30 On being anon twin halves of one august event,

XI

 Till the Spinner of the Years
 Said “Now!” And each one hears,
 And consummation comes, and jars two hemispheres.

—Thomas Hardy

¹ On the night of April 14, 1912, the British White Star liner Titanic, the largest ship afloat, collided with an iceberg and sank on her maiden voyage from Southampton to New York. Fifteen hundred of the 2,206 passengers lost their lives.

² Bright red. The salamander was supposed to be able to live in the midst of fire.

³ Thread

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Question 3

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

Morally ambiguous characters—characters whose behavior discourages readers from identifying them as purely evil or purely good—are at the heart of many works of literature. Choose a novel or play in which a morally ambiguous character plays a pivotal role. Then write an essay in which you explain how the character can be viewed as morally ambiguous and why his or her moral ambiguity is significant to the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary.

Choose a work from the list below or another novel or play of comparable literary merit.

The Age of Innocence
All the King's Men
Anna Karenina
The Autobiography of An Ex-Colored Man
The Awakening
Billy Budd
Crime and Punishment
Faust
Fences
The Glass Menagerie
Great Expectations
The Great Gatsby
Heart of Darkness
Hedda Gabler

Henry V
The Mayor of Casterbridge
The Merchant of Venice
Mrs. Warren's Profession
Père Goriot
The Picture of Dorian Gray
The Plague
Poccho
The Scarlet Letter
Silas Marner
Sister Carrie
Sula
The Turn of the Screw
Typical American

END OF EXAMINATION

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE & COMPOSITION

2002 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 2

Thomas Hardy's "The Convergence of the Twain"

General Directions: This scoring guide will be useful for most of the essays that you read, but in problematic cases, please consult with your table leader. The score you assign should reflect your judgment of the quality of the essay as a whole. **Reward the writers for what they do well.** The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by one point above the otherwise appropriate score. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a three (3).

- 9-8** These well-focused essays offer an effective analysis of the poetic devices used by the author to convey the speaker's attitude toward the sinking of the ship. They also take into consideration, directly or indirectly, the title of the poem. Although the writers of these essays offer a range of interpretations or choose different poetic elements for emphasis, they provide convincing readings of the poem and demonstrate consistent and effective control over the elements of composition. Their textual references are apt and specific. Though these essays may not be error-free, they are perceptive in their analysis and demonstrate writing that is clear and sophisticated and, in the case of a nine (9) essay, especially persuasive.
- 7-6** These competent essays offer a reasonable analysis of the poetic devices used to convey the speaker's attitude toward the sinking of the ship, including the implications of the title. They are less thorough or less precise in their discussion of the poem, and their analysis of the title and the poetic devices is less thoughtful. These essays demonstrate the writer's ability to express and support ideas clearly, but they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as the 9-8 essays. Although essays scored 7-6 will be generally well written, those scored a seven (7) will demonstrate more sophistication in both substance and style.
- 5** These essays tend to be superficial in analysis even though they may respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of the poem. They often rely on paraphrase, but paraphrase that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Their interpretation of the poem may be simplistic or inadequately supported by references to the text, or there may be minor misinterpretations of the poem. These writers demonstrate control of ideas, but the writing may contain surface errors.
- 4-3** These lower-half essays reveal an incomplete understanding of the task required by the prompt: they may demonstrate a misunderstanding of the speaker's attitude, or they may fail to develop a coherent analysis of the poem. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant. These essays may rely on paraphrase alone or merely list poetic devices. Evidence from the poem may be slight or misconstrued. The writing often demonstrates a lack of control over the conventions of composition: inadequate development of ideas, an accumulation of errors, or a focus that is unclear, inconsistent, or repetitive. Essays scored a three (3) may contain significant misreadings and/or demonstrate weak control of language.

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Question 2 (cont'd.)

- 2-1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 4-3 range. They may contain serious misreadings of the poem, be unacceptably brief, or be incoherent in presenting their ideas. They may be characterized by multiple errors in grammar and mechanics. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the writer's assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the poem itself. Essays scored a one (1) contain little coherent discussion of the poem.
- 0** Indicates a response with no more than a reference to the task.
- Indicates a blank paper or completely off-topic response.