

Question 2

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

The following excerpt is from Tim Winton’s novel *Breath*, published in 2008. In this passage, the main character, Bruce Pike, recalls an incident at a nearby river. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Winton uses literary elements and techniques to represent the complex response of the narrator to the incident at the riverbank.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

At the first signs of spring giving way to summer townie kids gathered after school near the bridge at the riverbank to dive off the crude springboard. The river was brown with tannin and cold as hell but it was very slow-flowing and safe to swim in. It was there that Loonie and I became friends.

Ivan Loon was twelve and a whole year older than me. He was the publican’s¹ son and although we’d been at school together half our lives we never had the remotest thing in common. That is, before we realized that we’d each independently perfected the art of causing riverside panic.

One November afternoon I coasted down to the river on my bike to have a jump off the plank but when I got there four girls and somebody’s mother were slithering up and down the bank, yanking at their own ears and screaming that there was a boy in the water, that he was drowning right beneath them. Naturally they didn’t know *which* boy because they were from out of town, but they knew he was *a* boy for he’d been there a minute ago and simply hadn’t come up from a dive and were there sharks and couldn’t I for God’s sake stop asking questions and just get on with doing something.

Sun blazed down in rods through the big old gums.² There were dragonflies in the air above us. I saw a towel near the diving plank and beside it a grubby pair of thongs,³ so I had no reason to doubt there was a crisis. Only the sluggish water seemed harmless and these females, who were making a frightful noise, looked so strangely out of place. I should have twigged.⁴ But I went into action on their behalf. As I bolted out to the sagging end of the springboard the wood was hot and familiar underfoot.

I looked down at the wind-ruffled surface of the river and tried to think. I decided that it would be best to wade in from the bank, to work my way out by feel, and just keep diving and groping in the hope of touching something human. There wasn’t time to go looking for help. I was it. I felt myself rise to the moment—put-upon but taller all of a sudden—and before I could embark upon my mission, or even pull my shirt off, Ivan Loon burst from the water. He came up so close to shore with such a feral shriek the woman fell back on the mud as if shot.

I stood bouncing on the plank while she lay in the muck. Then she reared up on her elbows. Loonie started to laugh, which didn’t really help her mood. I had never in my life seen a woman so angry. She charged into the water, lunging and swiping to no avail, while Loonie just ducked and fainted and giggled. He was a freckly sort of kid but he went so red with pleasure and exertion all his freckles disappeared. The poor woman never got close to him. Her frock ballooned about her. She made tanty⁵ noises like a toddler. Loonie sculled himself out of range, bobbed provocatively for a bit, then stroked off to the shadows of the far bank. Left alone with her once again, I realized it was more fun to pull this prank than it was to stand by while someone else did it. I began to feel more guilt than glee. Two Dr. Scholl’s sandals floated upstream in the breeze and I watched until I could bear it no longer and dived dutifully after them. As I snared them and sidestroked back to the bank they clunked together like firewood. It was embarrassing to see this grown woman standing there in her clinging dress with her dimpled knees and chubby legs all muddy.

Question 3

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

In many works of fiction, houses take on symbolic importance. Such houses may be literal houses or unconventional ones (e.g., hotels, hospitals, monasteries, or boats).

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which a literal or unconventional house serves as a significant symbol. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how this house contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Provide evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

All Over Creation
All the Light We Cannot See
The Awakening
Beloved
Brown Girl, Brownstones
Death of a Salesman
Elmet
Fences
The God of Small Things
Great Expectations
The Haunting of Hill House
Homegoing
A House for Mr. Biswas
The House of Mirth
The House of the Seven Gables
The House on Mango Street
Housekeeping
Howards End
Jane Eyre
Kindred
Mrs. Dalloway
Native Son
Nervous Conditions
Never Let Me Go

Northanger Abbey
Passing
The Portrait of a Lady
The Professor's House
A Raisin in the Sun
The Remains of the Day
The Round House
Saturday
The Secret Garden
Sense and Sensibility
Sing, Unburied, Sing
A Streetcar Named Desire
Sula
To Kill a Mockingbird
The Turn of the Screw
Uncle Tom's Cabin
Where the Crawdads Sing
White Teeth
Wide Sargasso Sea
Wuthering Heights

Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.

Question 2: Prose Fiction Analysis

6 points

The following excerpt is from Tim Winton’s novel *Breath*, published in 2008. In this passage, the main character, Bruce Pike, recalls an incident at a nearby river. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Winton uses literary elements and techniques to represent the complex response of the narrator to the incident at the riverbank.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0-1 points)	0 points For any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no defensible thesis. The intended thesis only restates the prompt. The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt. 	1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the passage.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only restate the prompt. Make a generalized comment about the passage that doesn't respond to the prompt. Describe the passage or features of the passage rather than making a claim that requires a defense. 	Responses that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a defensible interpretation of the narrator's complex response to the incident at the riverbank.
	Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "In this excerpt from <i>Breath</i>, Winton employs various literary techniques and elements to portray the narrator's response to the incident at the riverbank." Do not respond to the prompt but make a generalized comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Many year-round residents of a place feel disdainful towards the tourists that visit their hometown only during a particular season." Describe the passage or features of the passage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "The narrator describes his memory of the prank at the river with his schoolmate Ivan Loon." 	Examples that earn this point: Provide a defensible interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "In this excerpt, the narrator sees the fun in Loon's pulling the prank on the summer visitors and also feels conflicted about the lady's response." "The author's use of the first-person point of view combined with the backward-looking perspective of a story that is being told some time later allows the narrator to reflect on the 'sympathy and contempt' he felt for the woman and girls during this incident." "Winston uses first-person narration, vivid descriptions, and humor to convey the narrator's greater sense of connection to his friend Loon and his embarrassment on behalf of the woman who feels powerless in the situation."
Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. The thesis may be anywhere within the response. For a thesis to be defensible, the passage must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point. A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning. 		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points)	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student's argument.	2 points EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student's argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how at least one literary element or technique in the passage contributes to its meaning.	4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how multiple literary elements or techniques in the passage contribute to its meaning.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	Typical responses that earn 0 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant. 	Typical responses that earn 1 point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tend to focus on overarching narrative developments or description of a passage rather than specific details or techniques. Mention literary elements, devices, or techniques with little or no explanation. 	Typical responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don't strengthen the argument. May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. Do not explain the connections or progression between the student's claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established. 	Typical responses that earn 3 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an interpretation. Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim. 	Typical responses that earn 4 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an interpretation. Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained. Explain how the writer's use of multiple literary techniques contributes to the student's interpretation of the passage.
	Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. To earn the fourth point in this row, the response may observe multiple instances of the same literary element or technique if each instance further contributes to the meaning of the passage. 				