

**2005 AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

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.)

The poems below, published in 1789 and 1794, were written by William Blake in response to the condition of chimney sweeps. Usually small children, sweeps were forced inside chimneys to clean their interiors. Read the two poems carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, compare and contrast the two poems, taking into consideration the poetic techniques Blake uses in each.

The Chimney Sweeper

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry “ ’weep! ’weep! ’weep! ’weep!”*
So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.

Line

5 There’s little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head
That curl’d like a lamb’s back, was shav’d, so I said,
“Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head’s bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.”

10 And so he was quiet, & that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping he had such a sight!
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, & Jack,
Were all of them lock’d up in coffins of black;

15 And by came an Angel who had a bright key,
And he open’d the coffins & set them all free;
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing they run,
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun;

Then naked & white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind.
And the Angel told Tom, if he’d be a good boy,
20 He’d have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark
And got with our bags & our brushes to work.
Tho’ the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm;
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

* The child’s lisping attempt at the chimney sweep’s street cry,
“Sweep! Sweep!”

William Blake, “The Chimney Sweeper,” *The Complete Poetry and
Prose of William Blake*, ed. David V. Erdman (1789; 1794; Berkeley:
University of California Press, 1965).

(1789)

The Chimney Sweeper

A little black thing among the snow
Crying “ ’weep, ’weep,” in notes of woe!
“Where are thy father & mother? say?”
“They are both gone up to the church to pray.

Line

5 “Because I was happy upon the heath,
And smil’d among the winter’s snow;
They clothéd me in the clothes of death,
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

10 “And because I am happy, & dance & sing,
They think they have done me no injury,
And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King,
Who make up a heaven of our misery.”

William Blake, “The Chimney Sweeper,” *The Complete Poetry and
Prose of William Blake*, ed. David V. Erdman (1789; 1794; Berkeley:
University of California Press, 1965).

(1794)

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Question 2

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

Printed below is the complete text of a short story written in 1946 by Katharine Brush. Read the story carefully. Then write an essay in which you show how the author uses literary devices to achieve her purpose.

Unfortunately, we have been denied permission to
reproduce “Birthday Party” by Katharine Brush
on this Web site.

The short story was originally published in
The New Yorker.

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION
2005 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

(William Blake's *Chimney Sweeper* Poems)

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 the students offer a range of interpretations and choose to emphasize different poetic techniques, these essays 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 techniques, and their analysis of the relationship between the two poems is less convincing. These essays demonstrate the student's 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 essays. 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 technique. 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 inadequately 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, 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 essays in the 4–3 range. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the students' assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the poems themselves. The essays may contain serious errors in grammar and mechanics. These essays 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 either are left blank or are completely off-topic.