

**2009 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.)

In the following speech from Shakespeare's play *Henry VIII*, Cardinal Wolsey considers his sudden downfall from his position as advisor to the king. Spokesmen for the king have just left Wolsey alone on stage. Read the speech carefully. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how Shakespeare uses elements such as allusion, figurative language, and tone to convey Wolsey's complex response to his dismissal from court.

So farewell—to the little good you bear me.  
Farewell? a long farewell to all my greatness!  
This is the state of man: to-day he puts forth  
*Line*      The tender leaves of hopes, to-morrow blossoms,  
5            And bears his blushing honors thick upon him;  
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,  
And when he thinks, good easy man, full surely  
His greatness is a-ripening, nips his root,  
And then he falls as I do. I have ventur'd,  
10          Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,<sup>1</sup>  
This many summers in a sea of glory,  
But far beyond my depth. My high-blown pride  
At length broke under me, and now has left me,  
Weary and old with service, to the mercy  
15          Of a rude stream that must for ever hide me.  
Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye!  
I feel my heart new open'd. O how wretched  
Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favors!  
There is, betwixt that smile we would aspire to,  
20          That sweet aspect of princes, and their ruin,  
More pangs and fears than wars or women have;  
And when he falls, he falls like Lucifer,<sup>2</sup>  
Never to hope again.

<sup>1</sup> air-filled sacs

<sup>2</sup> Satan, the fallen angel

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### Question 2

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

The following selection is the opening of Ann Petry's 1946 novel, *The Street*. Read the selection carefully and then write an essay analyzing how Petry establishes Lutie Johnson's relationship to the urban setting through the use of such literary devices as imagery, personification, selection of detail, and figurative language.

Line  
There was a cold November wind blowing through  
116th Street. It rattled the tops of garbage cans,  
sucked window shades out through the top of opened  
windows and set them flapping back against the  
5 windows; and it drove most of the people off the  
street in the block between Seventh and Eighth  
Avenues except for a few hurried pedestrians who  
bent double in an effort to offer the least possible  
exposed surface to its violent assault.

10 It found every scrap of paper along the street—  
theater throwaways, announcements of dances and  
lodge meetings, the heavy waxed paper that loaves  
of bread had been wrapped in, the thinner waxed  
paper that had enclosed sandwiches, old envelopes,  
15 newspapers. Fingering its way along the curb, the  
wind set the bits of paper to dancing high in the air,  
so that a barrage of paper swirled into the faces of the  
people on the street. It even took time to rush into  
doorways and areaways and find chicken bones and  
20 pork-chop bones and pushed them along the curb.

It did everything it could to discourage the people  
walking along the street. It found all the dirt and dust  
and grime on the sidewalk and lifted it up so that the  
dirt got into their noses, making it difficult to breathe;  
25 the dust got into their eyes and blinded them; and the  
grit stung their skins. It wrapped newspaper around  
their feet entangling them until the people cursed  
deep in their throats, stamped their feet, kicked at the  
paper. The wind blew it back again and again until  
30 they were forced to stoop and dislodge the paper with  
their hands. And then the wind grabbed their hats,

pried their scarves from around their necks, stuck its  
fingers inside their coat collars, blew their coats away  
from their bodies.

- 35        The wind lifted Lutie Johnson's hair away from the  
back of her neck so that she felt suddenly naked and  
bald, for her hair had been resting softly and warmly  
against her skin. She shivered as the cold fingers of  
40        the wind touched the back of her neck, explored the  
sides of her head. It even blew her eyelashes away  
from her eyes so that her eyeballs were bathed in a  
rush of coldness and she had to blink in order to read  
the words on the sign swaying back and forth over her  
head.  
45        Each time she thought she had the sign in focus,  
the wind pushed it away from her so that she wasn't  
certain whether it said three rooms or two rooms. If  
it was three, why, she would go in and ask to see it,  
but if it said two—why, there wasn't any point. Even  
50        with the wind twisting the sign away from her, she  
could see that it had been there for a long time  
because its original coat of white paint was streaked  
with rust where years of rain and snow had finally  
55        eaten the paint off down to the metal and the metal  
had slowly rusted, making a dark red stain like blood.  
It was three rooms. The wind held it still for an  
instant in front of her and then swooped it away until  
it was standing at an impossible angle on the rod that  
suspected it from the building. She read it rapidly.  
60        Three rooms, steam heat, parquet floors, respectable  
tenants. Reasonable.