

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 following poem is by the contemporary poet Li-Young Lee. Read the poem carefully. Then write a well-developed essay in which you analyze how the poet conveys the complex relationship of the father and the son through the use of literary devices such as point of view and structure.

A Story

Sad is the man who is asked for a story
and can't come up with one.

His five-year-old son waits in his lap.

Line *Not the same story, Baba. A new one.*

5 The man rubs his chin, scratches his ear.

In a room full of books in a world
of stories, he can recall
not one, and soon, he thinks, the boy
will give up on his father.

10 Already the man lives far ahead, he sees
the day this boy will go. *Don't go!*
Hear the alligator story! The angel story once more!
You love the spider story. You laugh at the spider.
Let me tell it!

15 But the boy is packing his shirts,
he is looking for his keys. *Are you a god,*
the man screams, that I sit mute before you?
Am I a god that I should never disappoint?

But the boy is here. *Please, Baba, a story?*

20 It is an emotional rather than logical equation,
an earthly rather than heavenly one,
which posits that a boy's supplications
and a father's love add up to silence.

Li-Young Lee, "A Story" from *The City in Which I Love You*.
Copyright © 1990 by Li-Young Lee. Used by permission of
BOA Editions, Ltd., www.boaeditions.org.

Question 2

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

The following passage is from the novel *Middlemarch* by George Eliot, the pen name of Mary Ann Evans (1819–1880). In the passage, Rosamond and Tertius Lydgate, a recently married couple, confront financial difficulties.

Read the passage carefully. Then write a well-developed essay in which you analyze how Eliot portrays these two characters and their complex relationship as husband and wife. You may wish to consider such literary devices as narrative perspective and selection of detail.

Rosamond coloured deeply. “Have you not asked Papa for money?” she said as soon as she could speak.

“No.”

Line “Then I must ask him!” she said, releasing her
5 hands from Lydgate’s and rising to stand at two yards’ distance from him.

“No, Rosy,” said Lydgate decisively. “It is too late to do that. The inventory will be begun tomorrow. Remember it is a mere security; it will make no
10 difference; it is a temporary affair. I insist upon it that your father shall not know unless I choose to tell him,” added Lydgate with a more peremptory emphasis.

This certainly was unkind, but Rosamond had
15 thrown him back on evil expectation as to what she would do in the way of quiet, steady disobedience. The unkindness seemed unpardonable to her; she was not given to weeping and disliked it, but now her chin and lips began to tremble and the tears welled up.
20 Perhaps it was not possible for Lydgate, under the double stress of outward material difficulty and of his own proud resistance to humiliating consequences, to imagine fully what this sudden trial was to a young creature who had known nothing but indulgence and
25 whose dreams had all been of new indulgence, more exactly to her taste. But he did wish to spare her as much as he could, and her tears cut him to the heart. He could not speak again immediately, but Rosamond did not go on sobbing; she tried to conquer her
30 agitation and wiped away her tears, continuing to look before her at the mantelpiece.

“Try not to grieve, darling,” said Lydgate, turning his eyes up towards her. That she had chosen to move away from him in this moment of her trouble made
35 everything harder to say, but he must absolutely go on. “We must brace ourselves to do what is necessary. It is I who have been in fault; I ought to have seen that I could not afford to live in this way. But many things have told against me in my practice, and it really just
40 now has ebbed to a low point. I may recover it, but in the meantime we must pull up—we must change our

way of living. We shall weather it. When I have given this security I shall have time to look about me; and you are so clever that if you turn your mind to
45 managing you will school me into carefulness. I have been a thoughtless rascal about squaring prices—but come, dear, sit down and forgive me.”

Lydgate was bowing his neck under the yoke like a creature who had talons but who had reason too,
50 which often reduces us to meekness. When he had spoken the last words in an imploring tone, Rosamond returned to the chair by his side. His self-blame gave her some hope that he would attend to her opinion, and she said, “Why can you not put off having the inventory made? You can send the men away
55 tomorrow when they come.”

“I shall not send them away,” said Lydgate, the peremptoriness rising again. Was it of any use to explain?

60 “If we left Middlemarch, there would of course be a sale, and that would do as well.”

“But we are not going to leave Middlemarch.”

“I am sure, Tertius, it would be much better to do so. Why can we not go to London? Or near Durham,
65 where your family is known?”

“We can go nowhere without money, Rosamond.”

“Your friends would not wish you to be without money. And surely these odious tradesmen might be made to understand that and to wait if you would
70 make proper representations to them.”

“This is idle, Rosamond,” said Lydgate angrily. “You must learn to take my judgement on questions you don’t understand. I have made necessary
75 arrangements, and they must be carried out. As to friends, I have no expectations whatever from them and shall not ask them for anything.”

Rosamond sat perfectly still. The thought in her mind was that if she had known how Lydgate would behave, she would never have married him.

80 “We have no time to waste now on unnecessary words, dear,” said Lydgate, trying to be gentle again. “There are some details that I want to consider with

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2011 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

(Li-Young Lee's "A Story")

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 persuasive analysis of Lee's use of literary devices to develop the complex relationship of the father and son. The essays offer a range of interpretations; they provide convincing readings of both the complex relationship and Lee's use of literary devices. They demonstrate consistent and effective control over the elements of composition in language appropriate to the analysis of poetry. 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 score of 9, especially persuasive.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of Lee's use of literary devices to develop the complex relationship of the father and son. The essays are less thorough or less precise in their discussion of the relationship and Lee's use of literary devices, and their analysis of the relationship of the father and son is less convincing. These essays demonstrate the student's ability to express ideas clearly, making references to the text, although they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as the 9–8 responses. 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 of Lee's use of literary devices to develop the relationship of the father and son but tend to be superficial in their analysis of the relationship. They often rely on paraphrase, which may contain some analysis, implicit or explicit. Their analysis of the relationship of the father and son or of Lee's use of literary devices may be vague, formulaic, or minimally supported by references to the text. There may be minor misinterpretations of the poem. These essays demonstrate some 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 poem. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant, or it may ignore the complexity of the relationship of the father and son or Lee's use of literary devices. Evidence from the poem 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 misreading and/or demonstrate inept writing.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of those in the 4–3 range. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the student's assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the poem. These essays may contain serious errors in grammar and mechanics. They may offer a complete misreading or be unacceptably brief. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the poem.
- 0** These essays do no more than make a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.