

2013 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.)

Carefully read the following poem by Mary Oliver. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how Oliver conveys the relationship between the tree and family through the use of figurative language and other poetic techniques.

Unfortunately, we have been denied permission to reproduce “The Black Walnut Tree” by Mary Oliver on this website.

The poem is published in the book *Twelve Moons*.

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Question 2

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

The following passage is from D. H. Lawrence's 1915 novel, *The Rainbow*, which focuses on the lives of the Brangwens, a farming family who lived in rural England during the late nineteenth century. Read the passage carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze how Lawrence employs literary devices to characterize the woman and capture her situation.

Line It was enough for the men, that the earth heaved
and opened its furrow to them, that the wind blew to
dry the wet wheat, and set the young ears of corn
5 wheeling freshly round about; it was enough that they
helped the cow in labour, or ferreted the rats from
under the barn, or broke the back of a rabbit with a
sharp knock of the hand. So much warmth and
generating and pain and death did they know in their
blood, earth and sky and beast and green plants, so
10 much exchange and interchange they had with these,
that they lived full and surcharged, their senses full
fed, their faces always turned to the heat of the blood,
staring into the sun, dazed with looking towards the
source of generation, unable to turn around.
15 But the woman wanted another form of life than
this, something that was not blood-intimacy. Her
house faced out from the farm-buildings and fields,
looked out to the road and the village with church and
Hall and the world beyond. She stood to see the far-
20 off world of cities and governments and the active
scope of man, the magic land to her, where secrets
were made known and desires fulfilled. She faced
outwards to where men moved dominant and creative,
having turned their back on the pulsing heat of
25 creation, and with this behind them, were set out to
discover what was beyond, to enlarge their own scope
and range and freedom; whereas the Brangwen men
faced inwards to the teeming life of creation, which
poured unresolved into their veins.
30 Looking out, as she must, from the front of her
house towards the activity of man in the world at
large, whilst her husband looked out to the back at sky
and harvest and beast and land, she strained her eyes
to see what man had done in fighting outwards to

35 knowledge, she strained to hear how he uttered
himself in his conquest, her deepest desire hung on
the battle that she heard, far off, being waged on the
edge of the unknown. She also wanted to know, and
to be of the fighting host.
40 At home, even so near as Cossethay, was the vicar,
who spoke the other, magic language, and had the
other, finer bearing, both of which she could perceive,
but could never attain to. The vicar moved in worlds
beyond where her own menfolk existed. Did she not
45 know her own menfolk; fresh, slow, full-built men,
masterful enough, but easy, native to the earth,
lacking outwardness and range of motion. Whereas
the vicar, dark and dry and small beside her husband,
had yet a quickness and a range of being that made
50 Brangwen, in his large geniality, seem dull and local.
She knew her husband. But in the vicar's nature was
that which passed beyond her knowledge. As
Brangwen had power over the cattle so the vicar had
power over her husband. What was it in the vicar, that
55 raised him above the common men as man is raised
above the beast? She craved to know. She craved to
achieve this higher being, if not in herself, then in her
children. That which makes a man strong even if he
be little and frail in body, just as any man is little and
60 frail beside a bull, and yet stronger than the bull, what
was it? It was not money nor power nor position.
What power had the vicar over Tom Brangwen—
none. Yet strip them and set them on a desert island,
and the vicar was the master. His soul was master of
65 the other man's. And why—why? She decided it was
a question of knowledge.

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2013 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

(Mary Oliver's "The Black Walnut Tree")

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 Oliver's use of figurative language and other poetic techniques to convey her ideas about the relationship between the tree and family. These essays offer a range of interpretations; they provide convincing readings of both the ideas and Oliver's use of figurative language and other poetic techniques. They 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 essays scored a 9, especially persuasive.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of Oliver's use of figurative language and other poetic techniques to convey her ideas about the relationship between the tree and family. They are less thorough or less precise in their discussion of the ideas and Oliver's use of figurative language and other poetic techniques, and their analysis of the relationship between the two is less thorough or 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 Oliver's use of figurative language and other poetic techniques to convey her ideas about the relationship between the tree and family, but they tend to be superficial in their analysis of the ideas and of figurative language and other poetic techniques. They often rely on paraphrase, which may contain some analysis, implicit or explicit. Their analysis of the relationship of the ideas or of Oliver's use of figurative language and other poetic techniques 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 may be marred by surface errors. They 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 Oliver's ideas about the relationship between the tree and family or her use of figurative language and other poetic techniques. Evidence from the poem may be slight or misconstrued, or the essays may rely on paraphrase only. The essays often demonstrate 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, demonstrate inept writing, or do both.

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Question 1 (continued)

- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the essays in the 4–3 score range. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the 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 give a response that is completely off topic or inadequate; there may be some mark or a drawing or a brief reference to the task.
- These essays are entirely blank.