

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 5 “Then I must ask him!” she said, releasing her 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 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 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. 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 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 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 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 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

55 inventory made? You can send the men away 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 arrangements, and they must be carried out. As to 75 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

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you. Dover says he will take a good deal of the plate
back again, and any of the jewellery we like. He
85 really behaves very well."

"Are we to go without spoons and forks then?" said
Rosamond, whose very lips seemed to get thinner
with the thinness of her utterance. She was
determined to make no further resistance or
90 suggestions.

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Question 3

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

In a novel by William Styron, a father tells his son that life “is a search for justice.”

Choose a character from a novel or play who responds in some significant way to justice or injustice. Then write a well-developed essay in which you analyze the character’s understanding of justice, the degree to which the character’s search for justice is successful, and the significance of this search for the work as a whole.

You may choose a work from the list below or another work of comparable literary merit. Do not merely summarize the plot.

All the King’s Men
All the Pretty Horses
Antigone
Atonement
Beloved
The Blind Assassin
The Bonesetter’s Daughter
Crime and Punishment
A Gathering of Old Men
The God of Small Things
The Grapes of Wrath
Invisible Man
King Lear
A Lesson Before Dying
Light in August
Medea

The Merchant of Venice
Murder in the Cathedral
Native Son
No Country for Old Men
Oedipus Rex
The Poisonwood Bible
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead
Set This House on Fire
The Story of Edgar Sawtelle
The Stranger
Things Fall Apart
A Thousand Acres
A Thousand Splendid Suns
To Kill a Mockingbird
The Trial

STOP

END OF EXAM

AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2011 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 2

(George Eliot's *Middlemarch*)

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 Eliot's portrayal of the two characters and their complex relationship as husband and wife as Eliot develops these through literary devices. The essays make a strong case for their interpretation of the characters and their relationship. They consider literary devices such as narrative perspective and selection of detail, and they engage the text through apt and specific references. Although these essays may not be error-free, their perceptive analysis is apparent in writing that is clear and effectively organized. Essays scored a 9 reveal more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do essays scored an 8.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of Eliot's portrayal of the two characters and their complex relationship as husband and wife as Eliot develops these through literary devices. They provide a sustained, competent reading of the passage, with attention to devices such as narrative perspective and selection of detail. Although these essays may not be error-free and are less perceptive or less convincing than 9–8 essays, they present ideas with clarity and control, and refer to the text for support. 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 the passage but tend to be superficial or thinly developed in their treatment of Eliot's portrayal of the two characters and their complex relationship as husband and wife and/or of Eliot's use of literary devices. Although the essays contain some analysis of the passage, implicit or explicit, the discussion of how literary devices contribute to the portrayal of character may be slight, and support from the passage may tend toward summary or paraphrase. These essays demonstrate adequate 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 passage. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant; the responses may ignore the complex relationship of the husband and wife or Eliot's use of literary devices to develop the characters. These essays may be characterized by an unfocused or repetitive presentation of ideas, an absence of textual support, or an accumulation of errors. 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. They may persistently misread the passage or be unacceptably brief. They may contain pervasive errors that interfere with understanding. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the ideas are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the passage. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the passage.
- 0** These essays do no more than make a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.