

## **2017 AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

### **Question 3**

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

Select a novel, play, or epic poem that features a character whose origins are unusual or mysterious. Then write an essay in which you analyze how these origins shape the character and that character’s relationships, and how the origins contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole.

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

*Beloved*  
*Brave New World*  
*Dracula*  
*The English Patient*  
*Frankenstein*  
*Great Expectations*  
*Grendel*  
*The Iliad*  
*The Importance of Being Earnest*  
*Jane Eyre*  
*Light in August*  
*Macbeth*  
*The Mayor of Casterbridge*  
*The Metamorphosis*

*Middlemarch*  
*No Country for Old Men*  
*The Odyssey*  
*Oedipus Rex*  
*Orlando*  
*Oryx and Crake*  
*The Playboy of the Western World*  
*A Prayer for Owen Meany*  
*Their Eyes Were Watching God*  
*Tom Jones*  
*Twelfth Night*  
*Waiting for Godot*  
*Wuthering Heights*

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**

# **AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION**

## **2017 SCORING GUIDELINES**

### **Question 3: Mysterious Origins**

The score should reflect the quality of the essay as a whole — its content, style, and mechanics. **Reward the students for what they do well.** The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by 1 point above the otherwise appropriate score. A poorly written essay may not be scored higher than a 3.

**9–8** These essays offer a well-focused and persuasive analysis of how unusual or mysterious origins shape the character and his or her relationships, and how these origins contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole. Using apt and specific textual support, these essays analyze how unusual or mysterious origins affect the character, his or her relationships, and the meaning of the work as a whole. Although these essays may not be error-free, they make a strong case for their interpretation and discuss the literary work with significant insight and understanding. 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 how unusual or mysterious origins shape the character and his or her relationships, and how these origins contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole. While these papers have insight and understanding, their analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of the 9–8 essays. 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, but they tend to be superficial or thinly developed in analysis. They often rely upon plot summary that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Although the students attempt to analyze how unusual or mysterious origins shape the character and his or her relationships, and how these origins contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole, they may demonstrate a rather simplistic understanding of the significance of the origins, and support from the text may be too general. While these students demonstrate adequate control of language, their essays 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 how unusual or mysterious origins shape the character and his or her relationships, and how these origins contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant; the essays may reflect an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the character’s origins. These essays may be characterized by an unfocused or repetitive presentation of ideas or an accumulation of errors; they may lack control over the elements of college-level composition. Evidence from the text may be slight or misconstrued, or the essays may rely on plot summary only. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreading and/or demonstrate inept writing.

**2–1** Although these essays make some attempt to respond to the prompt, they compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 4–3 range. Often, they are unacceptably brief or incoherent in presenting their ideas. They may be poorly written on several counts and contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. The student’s remarks may be presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the text.

**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.