

2009 AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Question 2

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

The two passages below, both written by noted contemporary scientist Edward O. Wilson, appear in Wilson's book *The Future of Life* (2002). In the passages, Wilson satirizes the language of two groups that hold opposing attitudes about environmentalism. Read each passage carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze how Wilson's satire illustrates the unproductive nature of such discussions.

THE PEOPLE-FIRST CRITIC STEREOTYPES THE ENVIRONMENTALISTS

Environmentalists or conservationists is what they usually call themselves. Depending on how angry we are, we call them greens, enviros, environmental extremists, or environmental wackos. Mark my word, Line 5 conservation pushed by these people always goes too far, because it is an instrument for gaining political power. The wackos have a broad and mostly hidden agenda that always comes from the left, usually far left. How to get power? is what they're thinking. Their aim is to expand government, especially the federal government. They want environmental laws and regulatory surveillance to create government-supported jobs for their kind of bureaucrats, lawyers, and consultants. The New Class, these professionals Line 10 have been called. What's at stake as they busy themselves are your tax dollars and mine, and ultimately our freedom too. Relax your guard when these people are in power and your property rights go down the tube. Some Bennington College student with a summer job will find an endangered red spider Line 15 on your property, and before you know what happened the Endangered Species Act will be used to shut you down. Can't sell to a developer, can't even harvest your woodlot. Business investors can't get at the oil and gas on federal lands this country badly needs. Mind you, I'm all for the environment, and Line 20 I agree that species extinction is a bad thing, but conservation should be kept in perspective. It is best put in private hands. Property owners know what's good for their own land. They care about the plants and animals living there. Let them work out Line 25 conservation. They are the real grass roots in this country. Let them be the stewards and handle conservation. A strong, growing free-market economy, not creeping socialism, is what's best for Line 30 America—and it's best for the environment too.

THE ENVIRONMENTALIST STEREOTYPES THE PEOPLE-FIRST CRITICS

"Critics" of the environmental movement? That may be what they call themselves, but we know them more accurately as anti-environmentalists and brown lashers or, more locally out west, wise users (their own term, not intended to be ironic) and sagebrush rebels. In claiming concern of any kind for the natural environment, these people are the worst bunch of hypocrites you'll ever not want to find. What they are Line 40 really after, especially the corporate heads and big-time landowners, is unrestrained capitalism with land development *über alles*.^{*} They keep their right-wing political agenda mostly hidden when downgrading climate change and species extinction, but for them Line 45 economic growth is always the ultimate, and maybe the only, good. Their idea of conservation is stocking trout streams and planting trees around golf courses. Their conception of the public trust is a strong military establishment and subsidies for loggers and ranchers. The anti-environmentalists would be Line 50 laughed out of court if they weren't tied so closely to the corporate power structure. And notice how rarely international policy makers pay attention to the environment. At the big conferences of the World Trade Organization and other such gatherings of the rich and powerful, conservation almost never gets so much as a hearing. The only recourse we have is to protest at their meetings. We hope to attract the attention of the media and at least get our unelected Line 55 rulers to look out the window. In America the right-wingers have made the word "conservative" a mockery. What exactly are they trying to conserve? Their own selfish interests, for sure, not the natural environment.

* German for "above everything else"

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Question 3

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

Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which in prosperous circumstances would have lain dormant.

—Horace

Consider this quotation about adversity from the Roman poet Horace. Then write an essay that defends, challenges, or qualifies Horace’s assertion about the role that adversity (financial or political hardship, danger, misfortune, etc.) plays in developing a person’s character. Support your argument with appropriate evidence from your reading, observation, or experience.

STOP

END OF EXAM

AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION 2009 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 2

The score should reflect a judgment of the essay's quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 40 minutes to read and write; the essay, therefore, is not a finished product and should not be judged by standards appropriate for an out-of-class assignment. Evaluate the essay as a draft, making certain to reward students for what they do well.

All essays, even those scored 8 or 9, may contain occasional lapses in analysis, prose style, or mechanics. Such features should enter into the holistic evaluation of an essay's overall quality. In no case may an essay with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics be scored higher than a 2.

- 9** Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for a score of 8 and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their argument, thorough in their development, or impressive in their control of language.

8 Effective

Essays earning a score of 8 **effectively** analyze* how Wilson's satire illustrates the unproductive nature of some debates about environmentalism. They develop their position with evidence and explanations that are appropriate and convincing, referring to the passage explicitly or implicitly. The prose demonstrates a consistent ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not necessarily flawless.

- 7** Essays earning a score of 7 meet the criteria for a score of 6 but provide more complete explanation, more thorough development, or a more mature prose style.

6 Adequate

Essays earning a score of 6 **adequately** analyze how Wilson's satire illustrates the unproductive nature of some debates about environmentalism. They develop their position with evidence and explanations that are appropriate and sufficient, referring to the passage explicitly or implicitly. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

- 5** Essays earning a score of 5 analyze how Wilson's satire illustrates the unproductive nature of some debates about environmentalism. The evidence or explanations used may be uneven, inconsistent, or limited. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the student's ideas.

4 Inadequate

Essays earning a score of 4 **inadequately** analyze how Wilson's satire illustrates the unproductive nature of some debates about environmentalism. These essays may misunderstand the passage, misrepresent the strategies Wilson uses, or analyze these strategies inaccurately. The evidence or explanations used may be inappropriate, insufficient, or less convincing. The prose generally conveys the student's ideas but may be less consistent in controlling the elements of effective writing.

* For the purposes of scoring, *analysis* refers to identifying features of a text and explaining how the author uses these to achieve a particular effect or purpose.

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Question 2 (continued)

- 3** Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for a score of 4 but demonstrate less success in analyzing Wilson’s use of satire. They are less perceptive in their understanding of the passage or Wilson’s strategies, or the explanation or examples may be particularly limited or simplistic. The essays may show less maturity in control of writing.

2 Little Success

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in analyzing how Wilson’s satire illustrates the unproductive nature of some debates about environmentalism. These essays may misunderstand the prompt, misread the passage, fail to analyze the strategies Wilson uses, or substitute a simpler task by responding to the prompt tangentially with unrelated, inaccurate, or inappropriate explanation. The prose often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing, such as grammatical problems, a lack of development or organization, or a lack of control.

- 1** Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for a score of 2 but are undeveloped, especially simplistic in their explanation, or weak in their control of language.
- 0** Indicates an on-topic response that receives no credit, such as one that merely repeats the prompt.
- Indicates a blank response or one that is completely off topic.