

## ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

## SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

3 Questions

## Question 1

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

In John Rollin Ridge’s poem “To a Star Seen at Twilight,” published in 1868, the speaker admires a solitary star shining at twilight and considers its significance. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Ridge uses literary elements and techniques to convey the speaker’s complex reflection on the star.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

## To a Star Seen at Twilight

	Hail solitary star!		I love to gaze upon
	That shinest from thy far blue height,		Thy speaking face, thy calm, fair brow,
	And overlookest Earth		And feel my spirit dark
Line	And Heaven, companionless in light!	20	And deep, grow bright and pure as thou.
5	The rays around thy brow		Like thee it stands alone;
	Are an eternal wreath for thee;		Like thee its native home is night,
	Yet thou’rt not proud, like man,		But there the likeness ends,—
	Though thy broad mirror is the sea,		It beams not with thy steady light.
	And thy calm home eternity!	25	Its upward path is high,
			But not so high as thine—thou’rt far
10	Shine on, night-bosomed star!		Above the reach of clouds,
	And through its realms thy soul’s eye dart,		Of storms, of wreck, oh lofty star!
	And count each age of light,		I would all men might look
	For their eternal wheel thou art.	30	Upon thy pure sublimity,
			And in their bosoms drink
	Thou dost roll into the past days,		Thy loveliness and light like me;
15	Years, and ages too,		For who in all the world
	And naught thy giant progress stays.		Could gaze upon thee thus, and feel
		35	Aught in his nature base,
			Or mean, or low, around him steal!

Shine on companionless  
As now thou seem'st. Thou art the throne  
Of thy own spirit, star!  
40 And mighty things must be alone.  
Alone the ocean heaves,  
Or calms his bosom into sleep;  
Alone each mountain stands  
Upon its basis broad and deep;  
45 Alone through heaven the comets sweep,  
Those burning worlds which God has thrown  
Upon the universe in wrath,  
As if he hated them—their path  
No stars, no suns may follow, *none*—  
50 'Tis great, 'tis great to be alone!

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**Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.**

## Question 2

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

The following excerpt is from Mavis Gallant’s short story “One Morning in June,” published in 1952. In this passage, Mike Cahill is in France for one year to explore his talent for art. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Gallant uses literary elements and techniques to convey Mike’s complex experience of studying painting.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Line He had come to France because the words “art”  
and “Paris” were unbreakably joined in his family’s  
imagination, the legend of Trilby’s Bohemia<sup>1</sup>  
5 persisting long after the truth of it had died. When his  
high school art teacher, a young woman whose  
mobiles<sup>2</sup> had been praised, pronounced that his was a  
talent not to be buried under the study of medicine or  
law, his family had decided that a year in Paris would  
10 show whether or not his natural bent was toward  
painting. It was rather like exposing someone to a  
case of measles and watching for spots to break out.

In Paris, Mike had spent the first three weeks  
standing in the wrong queue at the Beaux-Arts,<sup>3</sup> and  
when no one seemed able to direct him to the right  
15 one, he had given up the Beaux-Arts entirely and  
joined a class instructed by an English painter called  
Chitterley, whose poster advertisement he had seen in  
a café. It was Mr. Chitterley’s custom to turn his  
young charges loose on the city and then, once a week  
20 or so, comment on their work in a borrowed studio on  
the Quai d’Anjou.<sup>4</sup> Mike painted with sober patience  
the bridges of the Seine, the rain-soaked lawns of the  
Tuileries, and a head-on view of Notre Dame. His  
paintings were large (Mr. Chitterley was nearsighted),  
25 askew (as he had been taught in the public schools of  
New York), and empty of people (he had never been  
taught to draw, and it was not his nature to take  
chances).

“Very *interesting*,” said Mr. Chitterley of Mike’s  
30 work. Squinting a little, he would add, “Ah! I *see* what  
you were trying to do here!”

“You do?” Mike wished he would be more specific,  
for he sometimes recognized that his pictures were

flat, empty, and the color of cement. At first, he had  
35 blamed the season, for the Paris winter had been  
sunless; later on, he saw that its gray contained every  
shade in a beam of light, but this effect he was unable  
to reproduce. Unnerved by the pressure of time, he  
watched his work all winter, searching for the clue  
40 that would set him on a course. Prodded in the  
direction of art, he now believed in it, enjoying, above  
all, the solitude, the sense of separateness, the  
assembling of parts into something reasonable. He  
might have been equally happy at a quiet table,  
45 gathering into something ticking and ordered the  
scattered wheels of a watch, but this had not been  
suggested, and he had most certainly never given it a  
thought. At last, when the season had rained itself to  
an end (and his family innocently were prepared to  
50 have him exhibit his winter’s harvest in some garret<sup>5</sup>  
of the Left Bank and send home the critics’ clippings),  
he approached Mr. Chitterley and asked what he  
ought to do next.

“Why, go to the country,” said Mr. Chitterley, who  
55 was packing for a holiday with the owner of the Quai  
d’Anjou studio. “Go south. Don’t stop in a hotel but  
live on the land, in a tent, and paint, paint, paint, paint,  
paint!”

“I can’t afford it,” Mike said. “I mean I can’t afford  
60 to buy the tent and stuff. But I can stay over here until  
August, if you think there’s any point. I mean is it  
wasting time for me to paint, paint, paint?”

Mr. Chitterley shot him an offended look and then  
a scornful one, which said, How like an American!  
65 The only measuring rods, time and money. Aloud, he  
suggested Menton.<sup>6</sup> He had stayed there as a child,

## Question 1: Poetry Analysis

6 points

In John Rollin Ridge’s poem “To a Star Seen at Twilight,” published in 1868, the speaker admires a solitary star shining at twilight and considers its significance. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Ridge uses literary elements and techniques to convey the speaker’s complex reflection on the star.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<b>Row A</b> <b>Thesis</b> <b>(0–1 points)</b>	<b>0 points</b> For any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no defensible thesis.</li> <li>The intended thesis only restates the prompt.</li> <li>The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim.</li> <li>There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.</li> </ul>	<b>1 point</b> Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the poem.
	<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>	
	<b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only restate the prompt.</li> <li>Make a generalized comment about the poem that doesn't respond to the prompt.</li> <li>Describe the poem or features of the poem rather than making a claim that requires a defense.</li> </ul>	<b>Responses that earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a defensible interpretation of the speaker's complex reflection on the star.</li> </ul>
	<b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b> <b>Restate the prompt</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"The speaker admires a star at twilight and has a complex reflection on it."</i></li> <li><i>"John Rollin Ridge employs multiple literary elements and techniques to convey the speaker's reflection in all its complexity."</i></li> </ul> <b>Do not relate to the prompt</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"Looking at the sky can inspire a lot of thought and emotion."</i></li> </ul> <b>Describe the poem or features of the poem</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"What makes this poem particularly striking is that the speaker talks to a star."</i></li> </ul>	<b>Examples that earn this point:</b> <b>Provide a defensible interpretation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"The speaker of the poem compares humankind to the star seen at twilight, which emphasizes the speaker's sense of wonder of the star and dissatisfaction with being human."</i></li> <li><i>"Clearly the speaker of the poem wishes to be as alone as the star he sees in the sky, as he equates being 'companionless' with being sublime."</i></li> <li><i>"Through rhyme, imagery, and direct address, Ridge presents the speaker of the poem as someone who projects his desire to escape human nature onto the star, which he admires and yet can never truly emulate."</i></li> </ul>
	<b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity.</li> <li>The thesis may be anywhere within the response.</li> <li>For a thesis to be defensible, the poem must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point.</li> <li>A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.</li> </ul>	

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
<b>Row B</b> <b>Evidence</b> <b>AND</b> <b>Commentary</b> <b>(0–4 points)</b>	<b>0 points</b> Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	<b>1 point</b> <b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides evidence that is mostly general.  AND  <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student’s argument.	<b>2 points</b> <b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides some specific, relevant evidence.  AND  <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.	<b>3 points</b> <b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning.  AND  <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.  AND  Explains how at least one literary element or technique in the poem contributes to its meaning.	<b>4 points</b> <b>EVIDENCE:</b> Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning.  AND  <b>COMMENTARY:</b> Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.  AND  Explains how multiple literary elements or techniques in the poem contribute to its meaning.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	<b>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are incoherent or do not address the prompt.</li> <li>May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant.</li> </ul>	<b>Typical responses that earn 1 point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tend to focus on summary or description of a poem rather than specific details or techniques.</li> <li>Mention literary elements, devices, or techniques with little or no explanation.</li> </ul>	<b>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities.</li> <li>May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument.</li> <li>May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim.</li> <li>Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established.</li> </ul>	<b>Typical responses that earn 3 points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the poem to build an interpretation.</li> <li>Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims.</li> <li>Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim.</li> </ul>	<b>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uniformly offer evidence to support claims.</li> <li>Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the poem to build an interpretation.</li> <li>Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained.</li> <li>Explain how the writer’s use of multiple literary techniques contributes to the student’s interpretation of the poem.</li> </ul>
	<b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row.</li> <li>To earn the fourth point in this row, the response may observe multiple instances of the same literary element or technique if each instance further contributes to the meaning of the poem.</li> </ul>				

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<b>Row C</b> <b>Sophistication</b> <b>(0–1 points)</b>	<b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.	<b>1 point</b> Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or develops a complex literary argument.
	<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>	
	<b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attempt to contextualize their interpretation, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>Human experiences always include...</i>” OR “<i>In a world where...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time...</i>”).</li> <li>Only hint at or suggest other possible interpretations (“<i>While another reader may see...</i>” OR “<i>Though the poem could be said to...</i>”).</li> <li>Make a single statement about how an interpretation of the poem comments on something thematic without consistently maintaining that thematic interpretation.</li> <li>Oversimplify complexities in the poem.</li> <li>Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the student’s argument.</li> </ul>	<b>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate a sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument by doing any of the following:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying and exploring complexities or tensions within the poem.</li> <li>Illuminating the student’s interpretation by situating it within a broader context.</li> <li>Accounting for alternative interpretations of the poem.</li> <li>Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.</li> </ol>
<b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference.</li> </ul>		