

2019 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.)

In his 2004 novel *Magic Seeds*, V. S. Naipaul writes: “It is wrong to have an ideal view of the world. That’s where the mischief starts. That’s where everything starts unravelling.”

Select a novel, play, or epic poem in which a character holds an “ideal view of the world.” Then write an essay in which you analyze the character’s idealism and its positive or negative consequences. Explain how the author’s portrayal of this idealism illuminates 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.

The Alchemist
Antigone
The Awakening
The Bluest Eye
Brave New World
Brideshead Revisited
The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao
Candide
The Catcher in the Rye
Death of a Salesman
Don Quixote
A Gesture Life
Great Expectations
The Great Gatsby
The Handmaid’s Tale
The House of Mirth

The Importance of Being Earnest
Invisible Man
King Lear
Lolita
The Mill on the Floss
My Ántonia
Native Son
Odyssey
The Portrait of a Lady
A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man
The Sound and the Fury
The Sun Also Rises
The Tempest
To Kill a Mockingbird
When the Emperor Was Divine

STOP

END OF EXAM

AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 3: Idealism and Its Consequences

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. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a 3.

9–8 These essays offer a persuasive analysis of a character’s idealism, its consequences, and how the author’s portrayal of the idealism contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. Using apt and specific textual support, these essays demonstrate consistent and effective control over the elements of composition and language appropriate to the discussion. Although these well-focused essays may not be error-free, they make a strong case for their interpretation and discuss the literary work with insight and understanding in writing that is clear and effectively organized. Essays scored a 9 have especially convincing analysis and effective control of language.

7–6 These essays offer a reasonable analysis of a character’s idealism, its consequences, and how the author’s portrayal of the idealism contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. Using textual support, these essays are organized and demonstrate control over the elements of composition and language appropriate to the discussion. These focused essays show some insight, and they offer clear and controlled analysis and writing. Essays scored a 7 have solidly developed analysis and consistent command of the elements of effective composition.

5 These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of a character’s idealism, its consequences, and/or how the author’s portrayal of the idealism contributes to the work as a whole, but the analysis may be superficial and thinly developed. They often rely upon plot summary or general textual support that includes some analysis, implicit or explicit. They may demonstrate a rather simplistic understanding of the character’s idealism or its consequences. Their analysis and discussion may be vague, formulaic, or minimally supported. These essays demonstrate some control of language, but they may be marred by surface errors. These essays have difficulty presenting a cohesive idea, clear organization, or sustained development of analysis.

4–3 These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate reading of a character’s idealism, its consequences, and/or how the author’s portrayal of the idealism contributes to the work as a whole. The analysis may be partial, unsupported, oversimplified, or irrelevant, and the essays may reflect an incomplete understanding of the character’s idealism, its consequences, and/or the author’s portrayal. They may rely on plot summary that is not in service to a clear idea. These essays may be characterized by an unfocused or repetitive presentation of ideas, an absence of textual support, or an accumulation of errors; they may lack control over the elements of college-level composition. Essays scored a three 3 may contain significant misreading and/or demonstrate inept writing.

2–1 These essays compound several weaknesses. Often, they are unacceptably brief or incoherent in presenting their ideas. They may be poorly written on several counts; they may contain pervasive errors that interfere with understanding. 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.