
Errata sheet for AP English Literature and Composition

This document lists corrections and/or refinements made to the AP English Literature and Composition Course and Exam Description since it was published in May of 2019.

Corrections as of September, 2019

The item listed below has been corrected in the online version of the CED. Teachers can print out the individual page in order to update their printed CED binders.

- Revisions were made to the instructions for each of the three free-response questions in the Exam Information section of the Course and Exam Description. The instructions have been updated to align with the revised rubrics and scoring guidelines. The following pages are impacted by these revisions:
 - Free-response instructions (bullet points) on pages 138-139
 - Free-response instructions (bullet points) for sample exam questions on pages 148, 150 and 151

Please note: the updated rubrics, scoring guidelines, student responses, and scoring commentaries can be found on the AP English Literature and Composition [course page](#).

Section II: Free-Response

The second section of the AP English Literature and Composition Exam includes three questions.

FREE-RESPONSE QUESTION 1: POETRY ANALYSIS

Free-response question 1 presents students with a passage of poetry of approximately 100 to 300 words. This question assesses students' ability to 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.

Sample Question

In the following poem "Plants" by Olive Senior (published in 2005), the speaker portrays the relationships among plant life and the implied audience. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Senior uses poetic elements and techniques to develop those complex relationships.

Stable Prompt Wording

The text in italics will vary by question, while the remainder of the prompt will be consistently used in all Poetry Analysis essay questions.

In the following poem [*or excerpt from poem*] by [*author, date of publication*], the speaker [*comment on what is being addressed in the poem*]. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how [*author*] uses [*poetic or literary*] elements and techniques to [*convey/portray/develop a thematic, topical, or structural aspect of the poem that is complex and specific to the passage of the poem provided*].

FREE-RESPONSE QUESTION 2: PROSE FICTION ANALYSIS

Free-response question 2 presents students with a passage of prose fiction of approximately 500 to 700 words. This question assesses students' ability to 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.

Sample Question

The following excerpt is from an 1852 novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne. In this passage, two characters who have been living on the Blithedale farm—a community designed to promote an ideal of equality achieved through communal rural living—are about to part ways. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Hawthorne uses literary elements and techniques to portray the narrator's complex attitude towards Zenobia.

Stable Prompt wording

The text in italics will vary by question, while the remainder of the prompt will be consistently used in all Prose Fiction Analysis essay questions.

The following excerpt is from [*text and author, date of publication*]. In this passage, [*comment on what is being addressed in the passage*]. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how [*author*] uses literary elements and techniques to [*convey/portray/develop a thematic, topical, or structural aspect of the passage that is complex and specific to the passage provided*].

FREE-RESPONSE QUESTION 3: LITERARY ARGUMENT

Free-response question 3 presents students with a literary concept or idea, along with a list of approximately 40 literary works. Students are required to select a work of prose fiction either from their own reading or from the provided list and analyze how the literary concept or idea described in the question contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole. This question assesses students' ability to do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Provide 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.

Sample Question

Many works of literature feature characters who have been given a literal or figurative gift. The gift may be an object, or it may be a quality such as uncommon beauty, significant social position, great mental or imaginative faculties, or extraordinary physical powers. Yet this gift is often also a burden or a handicap.

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which a character has been given a gift that is both an advantage and a problem. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how the gift and its complex nature contribute to an interpretation of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

Stable Prompt Wording

The text in italics will vary by question, while the remainder of the prompt will be consistently used in all Literary Argument essay questions.

[*Lead that introduces some concept or idea that students will be asked to apply to a text of their choosing.*]

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which [*some aspect of the lead is addressed*]. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how [*that same aspect of the lead*] contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

Section II: Free-Response

Poetry Analysis (Free-Response Question 1 on the AP Exam)

In the following poem by Ralph Waldo Emerson (published in 1867), the speaker reflects on the process of growing older. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Emerson uses poetic elements and techniques to convey the speaker's complex perspective on aging.

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.

Terminus¹

It is time to be old,
To take in sail:—
The god of bounds,
Who sets to seas a shore,
5 Came to me in his fatal rounds,
And said: “No more!
No farther shoot
Thy broad ambitious branches, and thy root.
Fancy departs: no more invent;
10 Contract thy firmament
To compass of a tent.
There's not enough for this and that,
Make thy option which of two;
Economize the failing river,
15 Not the less revere the Giver,
Leave the many and hold the few.
Timely wise accept the terms,
Soften the fall with wary foot;
A little while
20 Still plan and smile,
And,—fault of novel germs,—
Mature the unfallen fruit.
Curse, if thou wilt, thy sires,
Bad husbands of their fires,

¹the Roman god of boundaries

Prose Fiction Analysis (Free-Response Question 2 on the AP Exam)

An [excerpt from the novel *Lucy*](#), by Caribbean-American author Jamaica Kincaid, published in 1990, is found on the [AP English Literature and Composition Classroom Resources Page](#). In this passage, the narrator describes the beginning of a new phase in her life. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Kincaid uses literary elements and techniques to portray the complexity of the narrator's new situation.

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.

Literary Argument (Free-Response Question 3 on the AP Exam)

In many works of literature, characters who have been away from home return and find that they no longer have the same feelings about home as they once did. As novelist James Agee writes in *A Death In the Family*, "You can go home, it's good to go home, but you never really get all the way home again in your life."

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which a character's return home is problematic: "home" is not what it once was perceived to be. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how the character's response to his or her "home" contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Provide 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.

- *The Age of Innocence*
- *Americanah*
- *The Bell Jar*
- *The Bonesetter's Daughter*
- *Breath, Eyes, Memory*
- *Brighton Beach Memoirs*
- *Ceremony*
- *Cold Mountain*
- *Death of a Salesman*
- *Exit West*
- *Great Expectations*
- *Gulliver's Travels*
- *Home*
- *Homegoing*
- *The Hummingbird's Daughter*
- *Kindred*
- *The Kite Runner*
- *Lonely Londoners*
- *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love*
- *Mansfield Park*
- *The Mill on the Floss*
- *Mrs. Dalloway*
- *My Ántonia*
- *The Namesake*
- *Native Son*
- *Paradise Lost*
- *The Piano Lesson*
- *The Poisonwood Bible*
- *Pudd'nhead Wilson*
- *Pygmalion*
- *Quicksand*
- *The Return of the Native*
- *The Scarlet Letter*
- *Song of Solomon*
- *Sons and Other Flammable Objects*
- *The Sound and the Fury*
- *The Tempest*
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
- *Where the Dead Sit Talking*
- *Wuthering Heights*