# AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION 2009 SCORING GUIDELINES (Form B)

## **Question 3**

(A Political or Social Issue)

The score reflects the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, its style, its mechanics. Students are rewarded 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 well-focused and persuasive essays identify political or social issues in a novel or play and explain how the author explores such issues. Providing apt and specific textual support, these essays analyze the nature of the political or social issues and identify the literary elements used by the author. Although not without flaws, these essays exhibit an ability to discuss a literary work with significant insight and understanding, to sustain control over a thesis, and to write with clarity, precision, and coherence—and in the case of an essay scored a 9, with particular persuasiveness and/or stylistic flair.
- **7–6** These competent essays identify political or social issues in a novel or play and explain how the author explores such issues. These essays offer insight and understanding of the literary elements the author uses, but the analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of essays scored in the 9–8 range. References to the text may not be as apt or as persuasive. Essays scored a 7 demonstrate more sophistication in substance and in style than those scored a 6, though both are generally well written and free from significant or persistent misinterpretations.
- 5 These essays respond to the assigned task, but they tend to be superficial in analysis. They often rely on plot summary that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Although they attempt to identify and discuss political or social issues and how the author uses literary elements to explore such issues, they may demonstrate a rather simplistic understanding. Typically, these essays reveal unsophisticated thinking and/or immature writing. They demonstrate adequate control of language but lack effective organization and may be marred by surface errors.
- **4–3** These lower-half essays reflect an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the work. They may fail to identify political or social issues, or fail to explain how the author uses literary elements to explore such issues. These essays may rely almost exclusively on plot summary. Their assertions may be unsupported or even irrelevant. Often wordy, vague, or repetitious, they lack control over the elements of college-level composition. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreadings and demonstrate inept writing.
- 2-1 Although these essays make some attempt to respond to the prompt, they compound the weaknesses of essays scored in the 4–3 range. Often they are unacceptably brief or incoherent in presenting their ideas. They are poorly written and contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. Remarks are presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Particularly incompetent and/or incoherent essays are scored a 1.
- **0** These essays do no more than make reference to the task.
- These essays are either blank or completely off topic.

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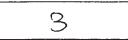
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The Great Gatslay is a novel that uses social issues to contribute a whole. Fitzgerald uses his characters and turns menning the of the work as <u>to</u> Then into sterectupes of the different scial choses to portry the social issues Fand and thematic presence in each class Fitzgerald does this by using details, separation, paint of view (onet Proval, danta throughout the novel. superficiality of -the novel is the superficient differences the happiness created The thenes of masons stronghot ADDENSTON 50 wealth which bards to waath. This is showing on otra coartod m repeated throughout the novel. Batsby was driven to become ich and weathing and jumped to an elite society from the motivation of Duisy's rejection, This caused him to be propage and page by one wealthy but lovely He was still obsessed with the idea of pleasing Daisy, Duisy, on the other was whappy hand, chose the life of being a rich burgeois wife Who her life by manying Tom. They had their own social problems with but chose to ignore them. Hitzgend uses details of how inhappy Daisy is about her mariage and how superficial the happiness of wealth is. The details used to describe Garisby at his grand social parties show that he are ushappy over though he stating Thous there parties. This unhappiness from wealth shapes the work by \_that these high class people pretend to be happy but behind every smile and laugh, they are said with the choices they made in life. The point of view created by the norrator, shows insight atto his others see batslay and Daisy as. The narrator have prinions and interess of how close relationships with both Onisy and Gatsby, and therefore, explains to the readers what they are really like and how doctor superficial they are at public server.

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In conclusion, Fitzgerald explains the issues of the noved by using
the literary elements of details, thenatic presence, and point of view to
create the reasing of the work. Wealth does not always make a
person happy. Choices in life matter This is stated by Fitzgerald who convers
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# AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION 2009 SCORING COMMENTARY (Form B)

### **Question 3**

#### Sample: 3A Score: 8

A very apt discussion of imperialism as a social issue in *Heart of Darkness* forms the core of this essay. The student pertinently refers to literary devices or techniques, including allusion and symbolism, as strategies to convey political disapproval by the author, Joseph Conrad. Although some details from the novel are inaccurately recalled, there are enough direct and indirect references to the text to make this a well-supported argument. There are some impressive insights, such as the point that the colonial Belgian Company "has come to Africa with imperialistic intentions which only serve to damage the morality of the European colonists and destroy the country and lives of the locals." The essay concludes by arguing that the novel "is essentially a political novel protesting imperialism in an age where Europe was obsessed with expansion"—linking the finely detailed observations with the large-scale contextualizing discussion the student consistently uses to frame the analysis. This is a powerful essay.

### Sample: 3B Score: 6

Well-organized and competent, this essay launches directly into a discussion of imagery and is convincing in defending its claim that the images in George Orwell's *1984* "are absolutely vital to its meaning." Among the images the essay identifies are those of "dirt, desolation, poverty, isolation." The discussion of setting is somewhat less compelling because, unlike the discussion of imagery, the essay provides little textual reference, though it does—in discussing telescreens—comment on how today "[i]t's increasingly easy to find someone and listen in on their conversations, as many government agencies can confirm." Near the end of this extended analysis, the essay discusses themes of "good versus evil," and of the individual's struggle "against the world."

## Sample: 3C Score: 4

A very thin discussion of *The Great Gatsby*, this essay is also poorly written. There is some understanding of the social issues at stake in the novel, but the conceptualization is often murky: "Fitzgerald uses his characters and turns them into stereotypes of the different social classes to portray the social issues found in each class." Perhaps more important, the key theme the essay identifies ("the superficiality of the happiness created by wealth") is not convincingly presented as a political or social issue. The essay mentions but does not discuss technical devices. Beyond repeating the theme, the essay does not show how happiness is indeed created for Gatsby by wealth, or why happiness is superficial, or in what sense this is a social or political issue. The essay claims that "Fitzgerald uses details of how unhappy Daisy is about her marriage and how superficial the happiness of wealth is," but it does not develop this idea. The essay moves on to mention the narrator's "point of view" as another technique, but again it does not demonstrate how this "shows insight to his opinions and views of how others see Gatsby and Daisy." This essay does not rise out of the lower half.