



AP[®] English Literature and Composition 2009 Scoring Guidelines Form B

The College Board

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AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION
2009 SCORING GUIDELINES (Form B)

Question 1

(Edward Field's "Icarus")

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-conceived essays offer a persuasive analysis of the language the poet uses to adapt the Icarus myth to a contemporary setting. Although these essays offer a range of interpretations and/or address different literary techniques (tone, point of view, imagery, diction, and structure), they provide convincing readings of how these techniques contribute to the meaning of the poem. They demonstrate consistent control over the elements of effective composition, including the language unique to the analysis of poetry. Their textual references are apt and specific. Although these essays may not be error-free, the writing is clear and sophisticated. The analysis is perceptive and insightful and, in the case of essays that earn 9 points, especially persuasive.
- 7–6** These competent essays offer a reasonable analysis of the language the poet uses to adapt the Icarus myth for a contemporary audience. They demonstrate an ability to express ideas clearly with references to the text, although they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as essays scored in the 9–8 range. They are less thorough or less precise in their discussion of how literary techniques contribute to the meaning of the poem, and their analysis of the poem is less convincing. While essays scored in the 7–6 range are generally well written, those scored a 7 demonstrate more sophistication in both substance and style.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of the poem, but they tend to be superficial in their understanding of how the poet uses language to adapt the Icarus myth. Their analysis of the poem may be vague, formulaic, or inadequately supported by references to the text. There may be minor misinterpretations of the poem. These essays demonstrate some control of language, but the writing may be marred by surface errors. They are not as well organized or developed as are essays scored in the 7–6 range.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of Field's poem. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant. Evidence from the poem may be slight or misconstrued, or the essay may rely on paraphrase only. The writing often demonstrates a lack of control over the conventions of composition. The ideas may be inadequately developed, there may be an accumulation of errors, or the argument may be unclear, inconsistent, or repetitive. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreadings and/or inept writing.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the essays scored in the 4–3 range. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the poem. These essays may contain serious errors in grammar and mechanics. They may offer a complete misreading or be unacceptably brief. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the poem.
- 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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Question 2

(Zora Neale Hurston's *Seraph on the Suwanee*)

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 essays offer a persuasive analysis of how Hurston uses literary techniques to draw the reader into her novel. They explore such literary elements as diction, tone, syntax, point of view, and selection of detail. They sustain their arguments through apt and specific references. Although these essays may not be error-free, their perceptive analysis is apparent in writing that is clear, precise, and effectively organized. Generally, essays scored a 9 reveal more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do essays scored an 8.
- 7–6** These essays offer a competent analysis of how the author uses literary techniques to draw the reader into her novel. They demonstrate a sustained, reasonable reading of mood and setting, with attention to literary devices such as diction, syntax, point of view, and selection of detail. Although these essays may not be error-free and may be less perceptive or less convincing than essays scored in the 9–8 range, they present ideas with clarity and control and refer to the text for support. Generally, essays scored a 7 present better-developed analysis and more consistent command of elements of effective composition than do essays scored a 6.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of the passage, but they tend to be superficial or undeveloped in their treatment of how the author draws the reader into her novel. While exhibiting some analysis of the passage, implicit or explicit, the discussion of how the author uses literary techniques may be slight, and support from the text may be thin or tend toward paraphrase. While these essays demonstrate adequate control of language, they may be marred by surface errors. Generally, essays scored a 5 lack the more effective organization and more sustained development characteristic of essays scored in the 7–6 range.
- 4–3** These essays offer a less than thorough understanding of the task and a less than adequate treatment of how the author uses literary techniques to draw the reader into her novel. Often relying on plot summary or paraphrase, the students may misread the passage or fail to articulate a convincing basis for understanding the author's intentions. These essays may be characterized by an unfocused or repetitive presentation of ideas, an absence of textual support, or an accumulation of errors. Generally, essays scored a 4 exhibit better control over the elements of composition than those scored a 3.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the essays scored in the 4–3 range. They may persistently misread the passage or be unacceptably brief. They may contain pervasive errors that interfere with understanding. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, ideas are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the passage. Essays scored a 1 are especially incompetent or incoherent.
- 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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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.