

2016 Lit Ques 2 (Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* excerpt) Student Samples/Anchors
Essays are typed as written by students

Sample B Score 1

Hardy relationship with his daughter is not a strong nor loving relationship. He use his daughter for work purposes. Their relationship doesn't show connection between the two. Hardy is caught up in his own world that he doesn't stop to spend time with his daughter.

The author uses tone, word choice and close selection of detail throughout the excerpt.

2-1 These essays compound the weaknesses of the papers 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, the writer's ideas are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the passage. Essays scored a one (1) contain little coherent discussion of the passage.

Sample I Score 2

In Thomas Hardy's The Mayor of Casterbridge the relation between the mayor Mr Henchard and his daughter is a strange one. They had not seen each other in years and during that time he rose from a farmworker to the mayor of a small town while his daughter worked at a tavern. With the wealth he gained, Mr. Henchard's way of speaking turned from slang to formal. His daughter however still had her same old accent and he wants her to speak like him. As he knows a man of power he wants his daughter to improve her speaking and he treats her with indifference, he does not want to have a daughter who can not speak appropriately.

Mr. Henchard is ashamed of her because she has not been able to do the things he wants her to do.

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Sample C Score 3

Thomas Hardy used tone, diction, and detail very well to compose a story such as this one. This excerpt from "The Mayor of Casterbridge" portrays a clear complex relationship between a father and a daughter. Hardy's use of literary tools is a key part of understanding this complex relationship.

Hardy uses diction as one of the main components of this piece. "An agitation which had half carried the point of affection with her," Thomas Hardy uses words like "agitation" leading to "affection" by choice. This is to help the reader understand the contrast of these two words and make the reader think twice. In line 16 Elizabeth offers to get something for her father, but instead her father insults the way she speaks and compares her to someone "only fit to carry wash to a pig-trough." Both incidents mentioned above imply both love and hate or kindness and egotism, very opposite feelings or actions.

Elizabeth-Jane constantly followed orders and took the negativity because she knew no different, she was constantly in an environment where contradicting emotions was a continuous occurrence.

By denoting the excerpt it is clear that Henchard and his daughter had a complex relationship. Seen through environment, diction, and tone it was evident the two characters were very different causing the complexity of their relationship.

4-3 These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of the passage. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant; the writers may ignore the portrayal of the complex relationship between the characters or the use of elements to develop the relationship. These essays may be characterized by an unfocused or repetitive presentation of ideas, an absence of textual support, or an accumulation of errors. Essays scored a three (3) may contain significant misreading and/or demonstrate inept writing.

Sample G Score 4

Nobody is perfect. We all will inevitably mess up and be criticized for it, but sometimes, we are right in what we do but are still criticized for it. Elizabeth-Jane is no stranger to this. In Thomas Hardy's The Mayor of Casterbridge, Michael Henchard and Elizabeth-Jane's relationship is one of demeaning criticism.

We see this criticism from Michael almost every time Elizabeth talks. Whenever she speaks using a lower-class word, she is reprimanded and told how she must say it. This criticism especially comes out when he says, "Good God, are you only fit to carry wash to a pig-trough, that ye use such words as those?" He demeans her by inferring that she is basically talking like a servant would.

Through this passage's tone we can also see his demeanings. Any time he talks to her, whether it be for speaking wrong or having her write up an agreement, he talks with a tone that is that of chiding and demeans her to something less than what she is.

Word choice is another major point, not by the author, but by the characters. Elizabeth's word choice is one of the few things that sets her apart from her father. Through this low-level speech, Michael creates his criticisms and demeans her for her word choice. Even Michael's word choice is specific to demeaning her. Every time she messes up, he exclaims, "Good God ..." as if her speaking is physically hurting him.

Most of the criticism spouts from how different their jobs are. Michael is an upper-class member as the Mayor while Elizabeth is a low-class member as a tavern waitress. This is what stems the very different behavior that causes Michael's scorn and derision.

Though in the end of the excerpt, Michael apologizes for his harshness, the criticisms continue and his dislike for her grows showing that no matter how or what she changes, he will never fully accept or like her.

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Sample A Score 5

In the story "The Mayor of Casterbridge (1886)," written by Thomas Hardy, the author shows how one's social upbringing can cause such tension and hatred. Hardy is able to showcase this through his tone, word choice, and also as a result of his selection and attention to detail.

Hardy set his tone right from the beginning of this particular excerpt from "The Mayor of Casterbridge." This became evident when he stated, "He had done it in an ardour and an agitation..." (Line 4-5) By stating this in the first few sentences, the reader is able to feel the tension that already exists. This shows the reader that the relationship between the two is not all roses, but rather almost hatred and conflicting. The tone is also set through Hardy's word choice, which helps show his portrayal of the complex relationship between the two characters.

An author's word choice plays a huge role in the overall tone and theme in a passage. Hardy shows this when he states, "coldness" (Line 9), "Grievous" (Line 10), and also "She reddened

with shame and sadness.” (Line 21). By using these particular words, the reader is able to greatly analyse the situation and all the feelings that come with it. The author makes sure he includes no happy and fulfilling words in this particular excerpt. This allows the reader to understand that there is some kind of bitterness between these two characters. This is an example of how Hardy pays attention to his selection of detail.

Hardy becomes very specific throughout the excerpt in order to add greater depth and meaning. For example in Lines 28 and 29, he stated, “that she no longer spoke of “dumbledores” but of/ “humble-bees.” The author chooses to be very specific when it came to her vocabulary changing. This showed that Elizabeth went from taking in a past, proper English sense, to the more modern English that we use today. This allowed the reader to visualize how greatly Elizabeth’s attitude and actions change due to one situation.

Thomas Hardy was able to provide a good portrayal of the complex relationship between the two characters, Henchard and Elizabeth, by using tone, his word choice, and also his attention to the selection of detail. The tone and word choice showcased the bitterness and tension between the two characters while his selection of detail allowed the reader to see and understand how much and how Elizabeth changed her attitude and actions.

5 These essays respond to this assigned task with a plausible reading of the passage, but tend to be superficial or thin in their discussion of Hardy’s portrayal of the complex relationship between the two characters. While containing some analysis of the passage, implicit or explicit, the discussion of how elements such as tone, word choice, and detail contribute to the portrayal of complex relationship may be slight, and support from the passage may tend toward summary or paraphrase. While these writers demonstrate adequate control of language, their essays may be marred by surface errors. These essays are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as 7-6 essays.

Sample H Score 6

The relationship that Elizabeth shares with her father, Henchard, is unhealthy—Henchard looks down upon his own daughter for being a bit ‘rough around the edges’, in the same way he was, before he attained his prestigious position as town mayor. Thomas Hardy expresses the negativity in their relationship with the use of tone, diction, and particular selection of details.

The stark difference between Elizabeth’s tone and Henchard’s tone immediately reveals the lack of balance in their relationship. In the description of the first interaction they share (in this passage), Elizabeth kindly asks a question using words that Hardy describes as “terrible marks of the beast to the truly genteel.” (12-13). Her father responds to the diction she uses in her question to him with clear anger, which is expressed in his tone: “Good God, are you only fit to carry wash to a pig-trough, that ye use such words as those?” (19-20) His tone of voice is inappropriately harsh and violent, and unapologetically so. When Henchard and a business man require someone to write their contract, Henchard recruits the help of his daughter. However, his tone is like that of a ruler or master of her. He doesn’t ask for her help—he simply commands her to help: “Here, Elizabeth Jane”... “just write down what I tell you ...” (47-48) The little amount of respect Henchard addresses Elizabeth with is incredible.

Hardy conveys the unbalanced relationship they share even more with his word choice. He uses gentler words to describe Elizabeth and more harsh ones to describe Henchard. When he insults her speech over their first dinner, Hardy tells us he echoes her “sharply”. In contrast, he describes Elizabeth’s response to her father as said in a “low, humble, voice”. Elizabeth’s father speaks to her sharply, while she speaks to him a low, humble manner, further displaying the lack of balance in their relationship.

Another interesting method, exaggerating certain details, also helps Hardy expose their relationship. For example, he devotes an entire paragraph to telling all the words Elizabeth

changes in her speech after her father instructs her to do so. Although her changed vocabulary may not seem a significant enough detail to devote an entire paragraph to, Hardy does this to fully encompass all that Elizabeth must change to please her father. He makes a point to show us all of the details of Elizabeth's misery, no matter how insignificant they may seem.

Hardy details the negativity in Elizabeth and Michael Henchard's relationship with his use of tone, word choice, and selection of detail.

7-6 These essays offer a reasonable analysis of Hardy's portrayal of the complex relationship between the two characters. The writers provide a sustained, competent reading of the passage, with attention to elements such as tone, word choice, and detail. Although these essays may not be error-free and are less perceptive or less convincing than 9-8 essays, the writers present their ideas with clarity and control and refer to the text for support. Essays scored a seven (7) present better developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than do essays scored as six (6).

Sample E Score 7

In the excerpt from Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Elizabeth-Jane is reunited with her father, Michael Henchard. Their interactions with each other during this time reveal the complex relationship between father and daughter. It is only made more complicated by Henchard's varying degrees of "passion" and "coldness" and Elizabeth's meek nature, resulting in a relationship devoid of real communication where neither person really understands the other.

Since the very beginning, Henchard's reappearance in Elizabeth's life has been nothing short of an "enigma" to her. His original announcement is full of "an ardour and an agitation" that makes Elizabeth almost think he cares for her, but then he becomes "constrained" and cold. Henchard also possesses a penchant for pointing out the pettiest of Elizabeth's mistakes; so often in fact, that with her obedient humble nature, she begins to believe that speaking and acting the way she does is her own fault, calling it a "grievous failing" when she speaks how she is used to speaking, in "pretty and picturesque" common dialect, and believing it an "improvement" each time she "no longer" says a word in the improper way.

From Elizabeth's point of view, it seems as though her father does not care for her. However, since Henchard tends to hide his emotions or be unable to express them, there is no way to know exactly why he behaves the way he does towards Elizabeth-Jane. It is possible that, having risen from rags to riches himself, he may want the same for his daughter, for her to end up in a better place than he is in. He does ask whether Elizabeth is "only fit to carry wash to a pig-trough when she errs in her speech, implying that he wants her to be doing far greater things than manual labor. Unfortunately for Henchard, Elizabeth's docile character causes her to willingly do work, "manual labor" to ensure that she would not be burdening another. This kindness and generosity is not what Henchard wants from his daughter; he wants a "proper young girl" who will uphold his reputation. In contrast to him, however, Elizabeth is the type to have been a strong figure for women had it been many years later, but "other ideas reigned then."

Due to their many differences and Elizabeth's status as a young woman in the late 19th century, father and daughter are unable to communicate their differences and their relationship stays in a sort of limbo, with "protruding needle-racks" which only hint at "what was underneath, and which only served to further "estrangle him" from her.

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Sample F Score 8

Human relationships are usually incredibly complex in that there are both combative and affectionate aspects to it. The crux of the human relationship is paradoxical in nature. In this passage from Thomas Hardy's The Mayor of Casterbridge, Hardy exposes such a relationship in the dynamics between Michael Henchard and his daughter, Elizabeth-Jane. Estranged for many years, both know the face of poverty but Elizabeth's father rises above it and tries to model himself after the upper-echelons of society as he becomes a wealthy mayor. Their relationship is rooted in a dominant-subservient dynamic with Elizabeth changing her identity to her father's every tune and wish. Yet, paradoxically, as her father begins to transform her, he feels increasingly estranged to Elizabeth. In this Hardy exposes the root of their relationship: Henchard finds a connection to his daughter in her backwards and common ways and fails to love the idealized version he holds in his head. He grows detached to his daughter as she becomes socially perfect but farther from an identity truer to his own.

Elizabeth's deference to her father and his chiding remarks on her ways exposes a contrast between coldness and passion in their relationship as well as an understanding and respect. Hardy writes that Henchard's announcement of himself to Elizabeth as her father "half carried the point of affection with her" and a "coldness and constraint." This characterization exposes the contrasting duality in the father-daughter relationship as there is both a connection and an estrangement. Hardy establishes the relationship with the father as the dominant character and use a mix of passionate and cold diction to reveal the father's compassion yet estrangement with his daughter. The father is described as the "bitterest critic," to "sharply echo" his critiques and to deliver "sharp reprimands." These characterizations and diction expose both the harshful demanding nature the father has for his daughter but also his caring nature towards her. In passionate diction, Hardy veils the father's affection for his daughter. Henchard cares for his daughter but the combination of estrangement and his ideal vision come out as cold and harsh.

Hardy uses poignant diction and heavily contrasting ideas to expose the paradox in Henchard and Elizabeth's relationship: the more Elizabeth grows to be the daughter that Henchard envisions of, the more he grows detached of her. Hardy reveals that slowly, slowly, Elizabeth sheds of her common skin and begins "improving." It's interesting to note that Henchard is concerned primarily with trivial social artifacts such as how Elizabeth speaks or writes. This concern exposes Henchard's dream for a daughter unlike himself that is accustomed to the perfect social ways in a way that "seasonal farmworker from a small country town" could never be. As Elizabeth progresses and heeds her father's words, showing her deference to and respect for him, he grows "cold." Hardy writes that Henchard's "passionate" reprimands of her ways had "less terror for [Elizabeth] than his coldness." The passionate scoldings at least held affection. In contrast, the colder language exposes an estrangement and dislike. Though Henchard wishes for a daughter of refined appearance and manner, he needs one who is true to her identity and true to him.

In conclusion, Henchard and Elizabeth have a complex relationship that is rooted in both estrangement and affection. Elizabeth naturally defers to the power of her father out of respect or simply out of her nature. Her father in turn tries to shape her to the socially perfect person he could never be. But, in this, their relationship takes a paradoxical twist as the father grows to not like his "new" daughter. Ironically, he finds true connection in the "common" daughter he had as she was closer to his true identity. With this, Hardy reveals that relationships might be complex for a reason; a perfect one is too simple for the complexity that is human nature.

9-8 These essays offer a persuasive analysis of Hardy's portrayal of the complex relationship between the two characters, Michael Henchard and his daughter Elizabeth-Jane. The writers make a strong case for their interpretation of the complex relationship between two characters. They may consider elements such as tone, word choice, and detail, and they engage the text through apt and specific references. Although these essays may not be error-free, their perceptive analysis is apparent in writing that is clear and effectively organized. Essays scored a nine (9) reveal a more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do essays scored an eight (8).

Sample D Score 9

In Thomas Hardy's "The Mayor of Casterbridge," Hardy depicts an inherently one-sided relationship, where one party valiantly attempts to please the other to no avail. By using irony, tone, and contrasting diction that indicates both Henchard's coldness as well as Elizabeth's docile warmth, Hardy reveals Henchard to be a harsh, misogynistic, and elitist individual that entirely contrasts with Elizabeth's humble and innocent personality. Although Henchard loves his daughter inwardly, he outwardly can only express his shame and distaste, increasing the distance between father and daughter. Henchard's shame in regards to his daughter and her social status is indicative of his shame in regards to his failings as a father and his past.

Henchard is introduced to Elizabeth as an "enigma," evoking images of something distant and foreign to her. They are from entirely different social classes, making it difficult for them to relate to each other with a sense of shared experiences. Henchard exacerbates this distance with his immediate "agitation ... his manner was constrained." This constrained behavior reflects the love for his daughter that is constrained within him; perhaps he is not ready to reveal it, and thus emotionally shields himself with a veil of cold distaste. While Elizabeth is described with diction evoking warmth such as "pretty and picturesque," Henchard is described with "coldness ... truly genteel." This cold refusal to look upon his daughter, in addition to his own elitist views, are revealed by his belief that dialect words are "terrible marks of the beast." Perhaps it is because he was not always rich that Henchard tries so hard to associate himself with the upper-class and adopt their elite and condescending notions. He cannot bear to look upon his daughter, as she reminds him both of the social class he once belonged to as well as the pitiful existence he abandoned her in. In other words, Henchard's coldness may be indicative of his guilt for the manner in which Elizabeth lived.

This preoccupation with elitism and social class is repeated when Henchard declares his daughter "fit to carry wash to a pig-trough," to which Elizabeth reddens "with shame." This act of reddening is repeated by Henchard later, implying that their feelings of shame may not be so different. While Elizabeth is ashamed to have disappointing her father, Henchard is ashamed that her "disappointing" behavior is his own fault. Hardy shows Elizabeth's humility and obedience by listing her changes in lexicon, including "greggles" to "wild hyacinths" as well as "hag-rid" to "indigestion." But her father remains her "bitterest" critic, especially of her handwriting; this is ironic because he himself is "uncultivated ... a poor tool with a pen." This hypocrisy reveals two things: one, that her father's views are partially built on unfair and misogynistic standards, and two, that his expectations for his daughter are based just as much on her "failures" as they are on his own. He is ashamed by his own "uncultivated" nature, which he attempts to hide by having Elizabeth write his legal document for him. But Elizabeth remains unchanged, with "elephantine ... round, bold" handwriting, and an undying obedience and willingness to "saddle herself with manual labor." But for all her efforts, she is never able to receive the warmth hidden "underneath" Henchard; the more she changes to meet his expectations, "the more she seemed to estrange him." Once again, this is indicative of the fact that Henchard's lack of affection has less to do with her social class or behavior and more to do with his failures. He cannot look upon her without being ashamed of both his past and present;

he is ashamed by his own harshness, even as it reforms his daughter in a manner of his supposed liking.

By using diction and tone contrasting the two characters, Hardy establishes their relationship as one filled with distance, torn by Henchard's shame in regards to both his past mistakes and social class.

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