
AP[®] English Literature and Composition

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

3 Questions

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In Ai's poem "The Man with the Saxophone," published in 1985, the speaker encounters a man playing a saxophone. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Ai uses literary elements and techniques to convey the complexity of the speaker's encounter with the saxophone player at that particular time and place.

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.

The Man with the Saxophone

New York. Five A.M.
 The sidewalks empty.
 Only the steam
 Line pouring from the manhole covers seems alive,
 5 as I amble from shop window to shop window,
 sometimes stopping to stare, sometimes not.
 Last week's snow is brittle now
 and unrecognizable as the soft, white hair
 that bearded the face of the city.
 10 I head farther down Fifth Avenue
 toward the thirties,
 my mind empty
 like the Buddhists tell you is possible
 if only you don't try.
 15 If only I could
 turn myself into a bird
 like the shaman¹ I was meant to be,
 but I can't,
 I'm earthbound
 20 and solitude is my companion,
 the only one you can count on.
 Don't, don't try to tell me otherwise.
 I've had it all and lost it
 and I never want it back,
 25 only give me this morning to keep,
 the city asleep
 and there on the corner of Thirty-fourth and Fifth,
 the man with the saxophone,

his fingerless gloves caked with grime,
 30 his face also,
 the layers of clothes welded to his skin.
 I set down my case,
 he steps backward
 to let me know I'm welcome,
 35 and we stand a few minutes
 in the silence so complete
 I think I must be somewhere else, not here,
 not in this city, this heartland of pure noise.
 Then he puts the sax to his lips again
 40 and I raise mine.
 I suck the air up from my diaphragm
 and bend over into the cold, golden reed,
 waiting for the notes to come,
 and when they do,
 45 for that one moment,
 I'm the unencumbered bird of my imagination,
 rising only to fall back
 toward concrete,
 each note a black flower,
 50 opening, mercifully opening
 into the unforgiving new day.

¹ A spiritual leader who is believed to be endowed with magical powers

"The Man with the Saxophone." Copyright © 1985 by Ai, from THE COLLECTED POEMS OF AI by Ai. Used by permission of W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.

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Question 2

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

The following excerpt is from Tim Winton’s novel *Breath*, published in 2008. In this passage, the main character, Bruce Pike, recalls an incident at a nearby river. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Winton uses literary elements and techniques to represent the complex response of the narrator to the incident at the riverbank.

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.

At the first signs of spring giving way to summer townie kids gathered after school near the bridge at the riverbank to dive off the crude springboard. The
 Line river was brown with tannin and cold as hell but it was
 5 very slow-flowing and safe to swim in. It was there that Loonie and I became friends.

Ivan Loon was twelve and a whole year older than me. He was the publican’s¹ son and although we’d been at school together half our lives we never had the
 10 remotest thing in common. That is, before we realized that we’d each independently perfected the art of causing riverside panic.

One November afternoon I coasted down to the river on my bike to have a jump off the plank but
 15 when I got there four girls and somebody’s mother were slithering up and down the bank, yanking at their own ears and screaming that there was a boy in the water, that he was drowning right beneath them. Naturally they didn’t know *which* boy because they
 20 were from out of town, but they knew he was *a* boy for he’d been there a minute ago and simply hadn’t come up from a dive and were there sharks and couldn’t I for God’s sake stop asking questions and just get on with doing something.

Sun blazed down in rods through the big old gums.² There were dragonflies in the air above us. I saw a towel near the diving plank and beside it a grubby pair of thongs,³ so I had no reason to doubt there was a crisis. Only the sluggish water seemed
 25 harmless and these females, who were making a frightful noise, looked so strangely out of place. I should have twigged.⁴ But I went into action on their behalf. As I bolted out to the sagging end of the springboard the wood was hot and familiar underfoot.

35 I looked down at the wind-ruffled surface of the river and tried to think. I decided that it would be best to wade in from the bank, to work my way out by feel, and just keep diving and groping in the hope of touching something human. There wasn’t time to go
 40 looking for help. I was it. I felt myself rise to the moment—put-upon but taller all of a sudden—and before I could embark upon my mission, or even pull my shirt off, Ivan Loon burst from the water. He came up so close to shore with such a feral shriek the
 45 woman fell back on the mud as if shot.

I stood bouncing on the plank while she lay in the muck. Then she reared up on her elbows. Loonie started to laugh, which didn’t really help her mood. I had never in my life seen a woman so angry. She
 50 charged into the water, lunging and swiping to no avail, while Loonie just ducked and fainted and giggled. He was a freckly sort of kid but he went so red with pleasure and exertion all his freckles disappeared. The poor woman never got close to him.
 55 Her frock ballooned about her. She made tanty⁵ noises like a toddler. Loonie sculled himself out of range, bobbed provocatively for a bit, then stroked off to the shadows of the far bank. Left alone with her once again, I realized it was more fun to pull this
 60 prank than it was to stand by while someone else did it. I began to feel more guilt than glee. Two Dr. Scholl’s sandals floated upstream in the breeze and I watched until I could bear it no longer and dived dutifully after them. As I snared them and sidestroked
 65 back to the bank they clunked together like firewood. It was embarrassing to see this grown woman standing there in her clinging dress with her dimpled knees and chubby legs all muddy.

70 There's tree roots down there, I told her. You just
dive down and hold on. It's easy.

75 She never said a thing, just snatched her shoes and
scrambled back to the girls higher up the bank, and
while I lay in the water trying to decide how to feel
about her she smoothed herself back into some kind
of authority and led the others up through the trees
and out of sight. I felt sympathy and contempt all at
once. Car doors slammed and there was the stammer
of a starter motor.

¹ Owner or manager of a pub

² Smooth-barked trees

³ A type of sandal

⁴ Understood or realized

⁵ Angry or tantrum-like

Excerpt from *BREATH* by Tim Winton. Copyright © 2008 by Tim Winton. Reprinted by permission of Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Extract from *Breath* © Tim Winton, 2008. Reproduced with permission.

Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.

Question 3

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In many works of fiction, houses take on symbolic importance. Such houses may be literal houses or unconventional ones (e.g., hotels, hospitals, monasteries, or boats).

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which a literal or unconventional house serves as a significant symbol. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how this house 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.

All Over Creation
All the Light We Cannot See
The Awakening
Beloved
Brown Girl, Brownstones
Death of a Salesman
Elmet
Fences
The God of Small Things
Great Expectations
The Haunting of Hill House
Homegoing
A House for Mr. Biswas
The House of Mirth
The House of the Seven Gables
The House on Mango Street
Housekeeping
Howards End
Jane Eyre
Kindred
Mrs. Dalloway
Native Son
Nervous Conditions
Never Let Me Go

Northanger Abbey
Passing
The Portrait of a Lady
The Professor's House
A Raisin in the Sun
The Remains of the Day
The Round House
Saturday
The Secret Garden
Sense and Sensibility
Sing, Unburied, Sing
A Streetcar Named Desire
Sula
To Kill a Mockingbird
The Turn of the Screw
Uncle Tom's Cabin
Where the Crawdads Sing
White Teeth
Wide Sargasso Sea
Wuthering Heights

Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.

STOP

END OF EXAM

AP® English Literature and Composition 2021 Score Legend

Question #/Prompt	Sample Identifier	Score Point
1	1A	1-4-1
1	1B	1-3-1
1	1C	1-3-0
1	1D	1-2-0
1	1E	1-1-0
2	2A	1-4-1
2	2B	1-4-0
2	2C	1-3-0
2	2D	1-2-0
2	2E	1-1-0
3	3A	1-4-1
3	3B	1-4-0
3	3C	1-3-0
3	3D	1-2-0
3	3E	0-1-0

Question 1

Responses to this question were expected to demonstrate how students could read and analyze a poem, then use that reading and analysis to construct a response, a “well-written essay,” that showed a complex understanding of the speaker’s encounter with the musician “at that particular time and place.”

Reading the poem, of course, involves more than simply understanding the words and syntax. Students were expected to recognize the text as a poem, understand the various literary elements and techniques familiar to poetry, and then analyze the poem using those techniques. For example, in this particular poem, students might have noticed line length and structure, they might have observed stanza shape and form, they could have compared and contrasted the descriptive language used for both the speaker and the musician, and they could have examined the figurative language in the poem, including the metaphors of birds and flowers. They were also asked to note the setting, “that particular time and place,” highlighted by the poem’s title.

Using those techniques, they could then analyze those pieces of the poetic text and determine what each contributed to the whole of the poem and how. Using that evidence, they could make a defensible claim.

Because this was a timed writing task with a never-before-seen text, most often that thinking process was worked out as the responses were being written. Responses demonstrated the interactions between thinking and writing.

Question 2

Responses to this question were, once again, expected to demonstrate how a student could carefully read a prose passage and then use an understanding of the literary elements and techniques associated with prose fiction to explain how the author represents the complex response of the narrator to the prank.

In this question, then, students had to think about the author’s construction of the passage and how it might be designed to produce a particular effect or convey a particular representation of the narrator’s response. This requires students to think both about the narrative of the text and about its construction and manipulation. It might also require them to think about how an author can affect a reader’s perceptions—not just a narrator’s response.

Question 3

Responses to this question were designed to demonstrate choice, comprehension, and ability to develop and support a claim. While the first two free-response questions build on a supplied text, this question includes both the opportunity and the challenge for students to choose a work to discuss. The framework for that choice was the idea of a house as a “significant symbol.” Using that choice, the students were to make a defensible claim and defend it using the chosen work. A few points here are worth remembering:

- When scoring the exam, readers do not judge the student’s choice of text. Whatever the student chooses to write about, the reader will read and score the response.
- Readers also did not judge how the students defined the concept of “house”—if the student identified a literal or figurative structure, variations were acceptable.
- Finally, readers gave students latitude with their understanding of “significant symbol,” allowing students to make claims about what and how a “house” might signify.

What readers were looking for was analysis and synthesis—what pieces and parts were chosen for discussion, what explanation and commentary were given, and how that explanation and commentary created a “line of reasoning.”

Question 1: Poetry Analysis

6 points

In Ai’s poem “The Man with the Saxophone,” published in 1985, the speaker encounters a man playing a saxophone. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Ai uses literary elements and techniques to convey the complexity of the speaker’s encounter with the saxophone player at that particular time and place.

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.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p>Row A Thesis (0-1 points)</p>	<p>0 points For any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no defensible thesis. • The intended thesis only restates the prompt. • The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. • There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt. 	<p>1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the poem.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only restate the prompt. • Make a generalized comment about the poem that doesn't respond to the prompt. • Describe the poem or features of the poem rather than making a claim that requires a defense. 		<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a defensible interpretation of the speaker's complex encounter with the saxophone player.
<p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Restate the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"The poet employs various literary techniques to convey the speaker's encounter with a saxophone player."</i> • <i>"In the poem 'The Man with the Saxophone,' the speaker has a complex encounter with a man playing the saxophone on the street."</i> <p>Do not relate to the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"Early morning is a magical time when anything can happen."</i> <p>Describe the poem or features of the poem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"Over the course of the poem, the speaker describes walking through the city until he finds the saxophonist. Then, instead of just listening to him play, the speaker pulls out his own saxophone and plays with him."</i> 		<p>Examples that earn this point:</p> <p>Provide a defensible interpretation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"Ai employs literary techniques like varying line lengths and specific diction to convey the speaker's encounter with the saxophone player as one of joyful union with a stranger."</i> • <i>"The poet's decision to set the speaker's encounter with the saxophonist on the empty streets of New York City at five in the morning lends a feeling of otherworldliness and magic to their connection."</i> • <i>"In 'The Man with the Saxophone,' Ai presents a speaker who is on a quest, searching through the deserted streets of a city. When the speaker comes upon the saxophone player, we see him as the speaker sees him—as an almost supernatural being bringing music to the city."</i>
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. • The thesis may be anywhere within the response. • For a thesis to be defensible, the poem must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. • The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point. • A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning. 		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
<p>Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points)</p>	<p>0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.</p>	<p>1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student’s argument.</p>	<p>2 points EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.</p>	<p>3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how at least one literary element or technique in the poem contributes to its meaning.</p>	<p>4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning. AND Explains how multiple literary elements or techniques in the poem contribute to its meaning.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes					
<p>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. • May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 1 point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tend to focus on summary or description of the poem rather than specific details or techniques. • Mention literary elements, devices, or techniques with little or no explanation. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. • May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument. • May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. • Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 3 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. • Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the poem to build an interpretation. • Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. • Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. • Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the poem to build an interpretation. • Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained. • Explain how the writer’s use of multiple literary techniques contributes to the student’s interpretation of the poem. 	
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. • To earn the fourth point in this row, the response may observe multiple instances of the same literary element or technique if each instance further contributes to the meaning of the poem. 					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0-1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or develops a complex literary argument.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempt to contextualize their interpretation, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>Human experiences always include...</i>” OR “<i>In a world where...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time...</i>”). • Only hint at or suggest other possible interpretations (“<i>While another reader may see...</i>” OR “<i>Though the poem could be said to...</i>”). • Make a single statement about how an interpretation of the poem comments on something thematic without consistently maintaining that thematic interpretation. • Oversimplify complexities in the poem. • Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the student’s argument. 	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument by doing any of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying and exploring complexities or tensions within the poem. 2. Illuminating the student’s interpretation by situating it within a broader context. 3. Accounting for alternative interpretations of the poem. 4. Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference. 		

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Music can ~~provide a soothing and~~ serve many purposes, depending on those involved and the particular circumstances involved. It is often uplifting and healing for those who partake or participate in it. In "The Man with the Saxophone", Ai uses figurative language, varying syntax, and ~~the~~ contrasting imagery to characterize the speaker's encounter with the saxophone player as a ~~respite~~^{reprieve} from the difficulties of life and its singularity in relation to the ~~specific~~ specific time and place it occurs.

~~The speaker's encounter and its beauty is contrasted~~
~~by~~ the figurative language used ~~and~~ displays the speaker's desires and how they are fulfilled through his encounter. He wishes to be "a bird", ~~but~~ but is instead "earthbound". This situation he is in is directly connected to his physical surroundings. He finds himself in a dismal city where the snow is "brittle" and ~~no longer~~ no longer "soft". The snow shows the negative way in which he perceives his surroundings. He is unhappy and full of worries, he feels as if he has failed in his ambitions religiously, and his surroundings exemplify that feeling. This description of the place he finds himself in contrasts the following events of encountering the saxophone player. When he is with the saxophone player, he becomes the "bird of my imagination". He is freed from his previous worries and cares that assailed his thoughts in the depressing city. The cold, unrelenting despair that encompasses the city at this early hour ~~is~~ melts away as he joins with the ~~man~~ other man in song.

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

The author changes and develops the encounter the speaker has, ~~is~~ creating ~~an~~ tension between the surroundings as the syntax changes. ~~As the~~ ~~speaker~~ the speaker describes the time and place he is in in ~~minimal~~ terms: "New York five A.M." The short sentences characterize the city as uncaring and ~~unpleasant~~ cold. ~~He~~ He does not find solace in the city but rather the music and the saxophone. ~~When~~ ~~describing~~ When describing his encounter, the speaker uses long, flowing sentences that convey beautiful melodies and further contrast his encounter with his surroundings. The speaker "sometimes" stops to stare and ~~not~~ "sometimes not". The anaphora implemented creates insignificance in relation to the ~~city~~ city he walks through. The sleep windows and empty streets pale in comparison to the notes that come from ~~the~~ the saxophone. ~~The~~ ~~author~~

Furthermore, imagery contrasts the setting he finds himself in with his encounter, ~~the~~ ~~music~~ adding to its uniqueness and importance to the speaker. The ~~contrast~~ ~~between~~ "concrete" that surrounds the speaker is in stark contrast to the "flower" that is the music created. This juxtaposition of ~~some~~ contrasting details gives the encounter a uniqueness in relation to the city. The only thing that has life is the music created. This is ~~is~~ exemplified by the "city asleep" in a place that is a "heartland of pure noise". This encounter ~~is~~ ~~essential~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ serves to transport the speaker away from his troubles. It allows him to be free and alive in a place that is hard and dead. This experience gives him purpose

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

and feeling as he ~~is~~ escapes the "unforgiving new day." The fact that the encounter takes place in the heart of a city made of metal and concrete, ~~but yet~~ ~~born~~ and creates life shows its power. ~~and~~ The ~~sleeping~~ ~~city~~ is emotionless city that ~~are~~ suffocates happiness and hope is kept at bay by the music. The encounter ~~through~~ ~~the~~ is essential to the speaker's happiness and ~~a~~ emotional survival.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In a world so vast, there are times in solitude where devoid mental health meets enlightenment. The findings of this enlightenment often come where one may least expect, as crafted in Ai's poem "The Man with the Saxophone," an enchanting discovery is made one New York morning. Reading around description, the elements of the setting are revealed with punctuation and rhythm forming progress from a walk down the street to an out of body enlightenment created through philosophical ideas and the physical aid of a stranger. The main character alone yet not lonely, wanders upon a saxist eradicating a break through into a new dawn.

From the introduction of the poem, the reader is ~~given~~ presented with a floppy, quick illustration of the setting. The short style of the sentences forces the reader to break, in a juxtaposition to the experience of the protagonist who is characterized as rather breathless, having to muster air deep from within the diaphragm. However, ~~this~~ the breathless allusion is quickly formed at the conclusion of the poem in which one sentence illustrated the entirety of the concluding eleven lines. Through this elaborate difference a shift is created, at this moment the character comes to a finding or seemingly ^{internal} an peace at the new dawn, accepting

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

the "unforgiving new day." In collaboration with the changing punctuation, the rhythm of the work prior to the introduction to the saxist expresses a rapid, contempt and almost defiant mood in the character. Moments prior to the shift or introduction to the man w/ the Saxophone, the protagonist ~~is~~^{appears to be} at an internal conflict, wishing to be strongminded alike spiritual and philosophical leaders yet trapped in an ~~earthbound~~^{loss of} state. At the introduction to the stranger who welcomes him in a warm tone of the gentle sax, the narrator loses the pessimistic thoughts of having lost it all. Written in first person, the perspective presented, creates a ~~close~~^{close} minded singular air, setting.

The protagonist, ~~is illustrated~~ enchanted by the playings of a talented ~~sax~~ man with a saxophone, illustrates a setting shifted from destitute and desprite ~~to~~ ~~fonds~~ yet breathless and enraptured. This setting is formed with clever usage of punctuation, rhythm, and spiritual allusions as well as perspective. In the big city of New York the solitude for many may be unbearable. Through the most unexpected moments one may feel content and ~~amazed~~ to earth finding a will to continue.

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

There is no better way to describe a story than by giving every detail of it with a relatable feeling. Using cold, proper imagery draws in a reader's interest, as well as painting a view that makes sense to a listener. Proper description helps set the tone of a story, which is arguably the most important aspect in terms of getting through to whoever may be paying attention. In the poem "The Man With The Saxophone," author Ai uses lonely imagery and dark tone to convey the complexity of the speaker's encounter with the man with the saxophone.

Ai begins his poem with a bleak description of the setting. The poem takes place in "New York... Five A.M.... sidewalks empty... only the steam pouring from the manhole covers seems alive..."
 (Ai 14) The speaker of the poem is clearly in a desolate area devoid of life besides himself. The author further expands on this idea when the speaker tells of how "I'm earthbound and solitude is my companion, the only one you can count on. I've had it all and lost it and I never want it back..." (Ai 21-24)"

The author is using a dark, depressing tone to convey the thoughts of the speaker before his interaction with the man with the saxophone. In the current moment, the speaker is caught up

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

in his reflection of his desolate life while mindlessly ambling the quiet streets of New York, as evidenced by the imagery of empty sidewalks and the speaker's solemn tonality.

The speaker's interaction with the saxophone alters the mood of the poem, however keeping the same use of lonely imagery and a dark tone. The speaker describes his interaction with the saxophone man as a quiet connection; "he steps backward to let me know I'm welcome, and we stand a few minutes in the silence so complete I think I must be somewhere else, not here, not in this city, this heartland of pure noise" (l. 33-38)

The speaker finally finds comfort in the waiting approach of the saxophone man, someone who shares a common interest. This image of two strangers meeting and having a silent but ~~agreed~~ mutual agreement helps paint a picture of the speaker's encounter with the saxophone man. The tone, however, is kept dull and hopeless by the speaker's own thoughts: "I'm the unencumbered bird of my imagination, rising only to fall back toward ~~the~~ concrete..." (l. 46-48)

Even with the speaker finding a connection amidst the deserted city, the high feeling felt is fleeting; the ~~man~~ speaker has his moment of triumph before faltering back to his own weeps. The use of lonely imagery and dark tone convey

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

The very complex confrontation between the speaker and saxophone man at the time and place. ~~MANA MANA MANA~~ The speaker is able to distract himself from his desolate demeanor in the abandoned city through his requited ~~MANA MANA~~ use of ~~sex~~ that the saxophone man offers him, even if the feeling is only temporary.

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Moments of tranquility inside of a large and bustling city are rare. These moments are to be treasured and sometimes, shared. That is what the speaker in this poem chooses to do. He steps back to appreciate this rare occurrence until he is the one that decides to break it. His meeting with the man with the saxophone is one that is unusual, but seemingly one that the speaker needs to tear him out of his solemn solitude. An emphasizes these things through the use of personification, imagery, and metaphor.

When the passage begins, imagery is used to show the bleak, empty landscape of the city. In lines 3-4, the steam from the manhole covers seems to be the only thing that adds dimension to this gray landscape. As the passage continues, imagery is used again to describe the man with the saxophone. He is not clean, not wealthy seemingly, and yet, seems content as he welcomes the speaker to his corner. In stark contrast to the gray city, the speaker mentions the cold, golden reed of the instrument, seemingly serving as a glimmer of hope for the narrator. The imagery allows for this contrast to be clear and shows how the speaker finds a release in music.

This is further highlighted through metaphor, as the speaker compares himself to a bird, rising from his imagination, only to be plummeted to the concrete

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

again. This is a repeated metaphor, as it was stated earlier in line 16. The narrator however shifts once he meets the sax man to wishing he could be a bird, to actually feeling like one through the release of music. This device is again used to describe the music itself. The speaker describes it as "a black flower... opening into the unforgiving new day". This shows that he views music as delicate and something that must be protected, and it draws him out of his empty and ambivalent mindset. The interaction with the sax man made the speaker regain a sense of purpose - to protect the sanctity of music and regain his appreciation for it. Previously, ~~the~~ through personification, his only friend was solitude and that was the only thing he could count on. He had a bleak outlook on that day, stating that the snow is now brittle, no longer the soft white hair that bearded the city. However, after playing with the sax man, his view is widened and the tone shifts to a more positive one that includes flowers opening to the new day.

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

"The man with a saxophone", ~~a poem with talking~~^{tells} the story of a man who showed someone what it was like to live in New York with complete silence. This was to the point where the man didn't think he was in very noisy New York city anymore. It was opened to an unforgivable new day. In the poem "The man with a saxophone", by Ai, the author uses literary elements + techniques to convey how the interactions with the saxophone player are complex at this place + time in the poem.

"New York, Five AM" (line 1), is where the poem starts. The author gives the time + place so that the reader can understand the sense the day is just beginning in New York city. "The sidewalks empty only the steam pouring from the manhole covers seems alive, as I amble from shop window to shop window," (lines 2-5), is when the man is walking to start his day. Both of these in ~~stanzas~~ the start of stanza one show imagery. With Imagery, you can imagine what the character is doing, as if you were looking, feeling, or doing it yourself. Imagery helps the reader understand how the character lives more than anything. Ai really does a phenomenal job using imagery right at the beginning of the poem. Using ~~it~~ at the beginning of the poem gives the reader a really good start to knowing the setting, environment, time, + place of the poem. Ai gives this to help the reader understand the rest of the poem a lot better. This helps with the encounter of the saxophone player because the reader will be able to have a better understanding of the complexity of how the saxophone player acts ~~toward~~ toward the man.

"~~read down further further down Fifth Avenue~~ towards ~~the thickets, with~~ next page →

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

"If I only could turn myself into ~~me~~ a bird like the Shaman" (lines 15-17) gives the reader a sense of what the reader is thinking, making the poem in first-person point of view. ~~Shaman is a~~ The definition of Shaman is, "A spiritual leader who is believed to be endowed with magical powers". The use of this word makes the poem more interesting. Ai uses this to catch the reader's attention. He also wants the reader to, again, understand the characters/narrator's feelings as the poem is in first person point of view.

The encounter with saxophone player may be hard to understand, but the techniques Ai uses, it makes this part of the poem more understandable. "The man with the saxophone, his fingers in gloves caked with grime" (lines 28-29), show the saxophone player's appearance, ~~using~~ ~~and~~ ~~again~~ ~~once~~ ~~again~~, using imagery. "I set my case down, he steps backward, to let me know I'm welcomed" (lines 32-34), ~~and~~ ~~he~~ shows the first real interactions with the narrator and the saxophone player. ~~Although this interaction is not a~~ "And we stand ~~in~~ ~~stare~~ a few minutes in silence so complete!" ~~This~~ ~~is~~ ~~no~~ (lines 35-36), are how they don't even talk at all. This is how Ai wanted it to be, to show that two people don't need words to communicate, they just need a common connection, in which then they both play their saxophones together.

Overall his techniques are very well thought out and gives the reader more of an understanding of how the saxophone player & narrator's interaction were complex but understandable, thanks to Ai's techniques.

Question 1

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Sample: 1A

Score: 1-4-1

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

This response earned the point in Row A because its thesis is defensible and linked to specific complexities within the poem: “Ai uses figurative language, varying syntax, and contrasting imagery to characterize the speaker’s encounter with the saxophone player as a reprieve from the difficulties of life and its singularity in relation to the specific time and place it occurs.”

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 4

This robust essay earned the point in Row B through its effective use of body paragraphs that provide specific evidence in support of the thesis. The response examines how Ai uses the literary devices mentioned in the thesis to convey the complexity of the speaker’s experience as he encounters a saxophonist on a cold winter morning. After quoting specific textual examples, it follows up with commentary that connects the evidence directly to the line of reasoning. For example, in paragraph 2, after pointing out the speaker’s characterization of the city as “dismal” and the snow as “brittle,” the response argues, “He is unhappy and full of worries. He feels as if he has failed in his ambitions religiously, and his surroundings exemplify that feeling.” By first examining the poet’s characterization of the city as “dismal,” the essay sets up an effective contrast that occurs when the speaker encounters the saxophonist: “When he is with the saxophone player, he becomes the ‘bird of my imagination.’ He is freed from his previous worries and cares that assailed his thoughts in the depressing city. The cold, unrelenting despair that encompasses the city of this early hour melts away as he joins with the other man in song.” Paragraph 3 offers a connection between the syntax of the poem and the tensions the speaker feels. The response contends that describing the city in “minimal terms: ‘New York Five A.M.’,” adds to the characterization of the city as “uncaring and cold.” It uses clear topic sentences and transitions to organize and support the argument as a line of reasoning. The essay skillfully weaves the multiple claims to connect them to this line of reasoning. For example, the essay states that the music “allows him to be free and alive in a place that is hard and dead.” The response also thoughtfully explains how the literary elements in the poem develop its meaning: (“Furthermore, imagery contrasts the setting”). An insightful interpretation of the poem is skillfully explained through this examination of Ai’s literary techniques.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 1

This response earned the sophistication point in Row C through its consistently vivid and persuasive use of language. The essay also fully explores the complexity of the encounter, discussing in paragraph 4 the “juxtaposition of contrasting details” that explains the life “created” by the music in the otherwise dead city. The introduction offers the observation that music “is often uplifting and healing.” The conclusion returns to the argument presented in the introduction and powerfully concludes, “The emotionless city that suffocates happiness and hope is kept at bay by the music.”

Sample: 1B

Score: 1-3-1

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

The response earned the point in Row A for its thesis presented in the introduction: “Revolving around description, the elements of the setting are revealed with punctuation and rhythm forming progress from a walk down the street to an out of body enlightenment created through philosophical ideas and the physical aid

Question 1 (continued)

of a stranger.” This thesis offers a defensible interpretation of the poem and establishes the line of reasoning—the experience of the speaker as an almost spiritual experience.

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 3

The response relies on specific evidence from the poem to support its claim and examines how Ai uses description, setting, punctuation, and rhythm to convey the complexity of the encounter. The line of reasoning focuses on the enlightenment the speaker experiences as a result of the chance meeting. Much of the evidence is clearly connected to the line of reasoning, as in “at this moment the character comes to a finding or seemingly an internal peace at the new dawn, accepting the ‘unforgiving new day’” (paragraph 2). The commentary explains how this evidence supports the line of reasoning: “At the introduction to the stranger who welcomes him in a warm tone of the gentle sax, the narrator loses the pessimistic thoughts of having lost it all.” However, in places, the evidence is not clearly connected to the line of reasoning, as in paragraph 2: “Written in first person, the perspective presented creates a close minded singular air setting.” The commentary neither explains the point nor connects it to the idea of enlightenment. The observation “one sentence illustrates the entirety of the concluding eleven lines” is not fully explained. Despite this unevenness, the response presents a line of reasoning about the enlightenment the speaker experiences and, thus, earned a score of 3 in Row B.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 1

Despite a few misspelled words, the essay employs a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive. For example, the final paragraph states the poem’s speaker “illustrates a setting shifted from destitute and desprite to found yet breathless and enraptured.” Paragraph 2 observes, “the protagonist appears to be at an internal conflict, wishing to be strongminded alike spiritual and philosorphical leaders yet trapped in an earthbound state.” Examples such as these elevate the argument. This response earned the point in Row C.

Sample: 1C

Score: 1-3-0

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

The thesis of this essay is defensible and articulated at the end of the response: “The speaker is able to distract himself from his desolate demeanor in the abandoned city through his requited use of sax that the saxophone man offers him, even if the feeling is only temporary.” This thesis earned the point in Row A.

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 3

The response begins with a general discussion of the author’s use of detail, imagery, and description before becoming more specifically focused in paragraph 2 on Ai’s use of imagery and description to develop a “dark, depressing tone” to describe the speaker’s “desolate life.” Paragraph 3 then argues that the encounter with the saxophone player briefly disturbs both the tone of the poem and the mindset of the speaker: “The speaker describes his interaction with the saxophone mas as a quiet connection.” The line of reasoning argues that the encounter with the saxophonist improves the speaker’s mood and is supported with textual evidence that focuses on the importance of specific words and details from the poem and through commentary that integrates most of the evidence offered. In paragraph 2, the response notes “a dark, depressing tone to convey the thoughts of the speaker” in the poem and supports this observation by citing lines 19-24 of the poem (“I’m earthbound ... I never want it back.”). While this evidence and commentary support the essay’s line of reasoning, some evidence is not clearly connected. In paragraph 3, for example, the response comments, “The tone, however, is kept dull and hopeless by the speaker’s own thoughts,” but the supporting evidence offered, “I’m the unencumbered bird of my imagination” is disconnected from the commentary. Observations, such as

Question 1 (continued)

“[t]his image of two strangers meeting and having a silent but mutual agreement helps paint a picture of the speaker’s encounter with the saxophone man,” do not advance the argument. The essay offers specific evidence, but in places the commentary fails to clearly connect that evidence to the line of reasoning. This essay, therefore, earned a 3 in Row B.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 0

The essay did not earn the sophistication point in Row C because of its oversimplification of the complexities in the poem. In both the introduction and conclusion, the response mentions the complexity of the speaker’s encounter but does not expound on it.

Sample: 1D

Score: 1-2-0

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

This response earned the point in Row A because it presents a defensible interpretation in the last two sentences of the introduction: “His meeting with the man with the saxophone is one that is unusual, but seemingly one that the speaker needs to tear him out of his solemn solitude. Ai emphasizes these things through the use of personification, imagery, and metaphor.”

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 2

The argument of the response is largely organized by literary device, and the response points out examples of imagery and metaphor found in the poem. The evidence is largely paraphrased. Paragraph 2 discusses the image of the “steam from the manhole covers” and suggests that this image “adds dimension to this gray landscape.” The response identifies the contrast between the city and the “cold, golden reed of the instrument,” which serves “as a glimmer of hope for the narrator.” The commentary, however, does not consistently clarify the evidence’s connection to the thesis; therefore, no line of reasoning is clearly established. For example, after describing the music of the saxophonist as “a black flower,” the response comments, “This shows that he views music as delicate and something that must be protected.” Here, the literary device is identified, but the explanation does not connect to the argument that the speaker’s encounter with the saxophonist is necessary. Additionally, the comment “Previously, through personification his only friend was solitude and that was the only thing he could count on,” is unrelated to earlier points. Because the essay does not clearly explain connections, the progression of the argument is not clearly established.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 0

The response did not earn the point in Row C because of its oversimplification of the poem’s complexities. While the introduction attempts to contextualize the poem (“Moments of tranquility inside of a large and bustling city are rare”), the essay does not explore that sense of tranquility.

Sample: 1E

Score: 1-1-0

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

This response earned the point in Row A for a defensible thesis, referenced in the last sentence of the first paragraph and articulated in the last sentence of the fourth paragraph: “This is how Ai wanted it to be, to show that two people don’t need words to communicate, they just need a common connection, in which then they both play their saxophones together.”

Question 1 (continued)

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 1

The essay provides evidence that is general and largely summarized. The essay mentions literary devices with little or no explanation. While it offers an example of imagery from the poem, “the sidewalks empty only the steam pouring from the manhole covers,” the commentary focuses on a definition of imagery and praise for the poet’s use of it: “Ai really does a phenomenal job using imagery right at the beginning of the poem.” There is no discussion of the effect of the imagery. Later in the essay, the response points out Ai’s reference to a shaman but merely quotes from the footnote. The comment, “The use of this word makes the poem more interesting” does not consider the purpose behind the use of the word “shaman.” No line of reasoning is established.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 0

This response did not meet the criteria for the score point in Row C as it does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument.

Question 2: Prose Fiction Analysis

6 points

The following excerpt is from Tim Winton’s novel *Breath*, published in 2008. In this passage, the main character, Bruce Pike, recalls an incident at a nearby river. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Winton uses literary elements and techniques to represent the complex response of the narrator to the incident at the riverbank.

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.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p>Row A Thesis (0-1 points)</p>	<p>0 points For any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no defensible thesis. • The intended thesis only restates the prompt. • The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. • There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt. 	<p>1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the passage.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only restate the prompt. • Make a generalized comment about the passage that doesn't respond to the prompt. • Describe the passage or features of the passage rather than making a claim that requires a defense. 		<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a defensible interpretation of the narrator's complex response to the incident at the riverbank.
<p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Restate the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"In this excerpt from <u>Breath</u>, Winton employs various literary techniques and elements to portray the narrator's response to the incident at the riverbank."</i> <p>Do not respond to the prompt but make a generalized comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"Many year-round residents of a place feel disdainful towards the tourists that visit their hometown only during a particular season."</i> <p>Describe the passage or features of the passage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"The narrator describes his memory of the prank at the river with his schoolmate Ivan Loon."</i> 		<p>Examples that earn this point:</p> <p>Provide a defensible interpretation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"In this excerpt, the narrator sees the fun in Loon's pulling the prank on the summer visitors and also feels conflicted about the lady's response."</i> • <i>"The author's use of the first-person point of view combined with the backward-looking perspective of a story that is being told some time later allows the narrator to reflect on the 'sympathy and contempt' he felt for the woman and girls during this incident."</i> • <i>"Winston uses first-person narration, vivid descriptions, and humor to convey the narrator's greater sense of connection to his friend Loon and his embarrassment on behalf of the woman who feels powerless in the situation."</i>
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. • The thesis may be anywhere within the response. • For a thesis to be defensible, the passage must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. • The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point. • A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning. 		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
<p>Row B</p> <p>Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points)</p>	<p>0 points</p> <p>Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.</p>	<p>1 point</p> <p>EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the student’s argument.</p>	<p>2 points</p> <p>EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.</p>	<p>3 points</p> <p>EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Explains how at least one literary element or technique in the passage contributes to its meaning.</p>	<p>4 points</p> <p>EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Explains how multiple literary elements or techniques in the passage contribute to its meaning.</p>
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
	<p>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. • May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 1 point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tend to focus on overarching narrative developments or description of a passage rather than specific details or techniques. • Mention literary elements, devices, or techniques with little or no explanation. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. • May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument. • May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. • Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 3 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. • Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an interpretation. • Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. • Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. • Focus on the importance of specific words and details from the passage to build an interpretation. • Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained. • Explain how the writer’s use of multiple literary techniques contributes to the student’s interpretation of the passage.
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. • To earn the fourth point in this row, the response may observe multiple instances of the same literary element or technique if each instance further contributes to the meaning of the passage. 					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p>Row C Sophistication (0-1 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p>1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or develops a complex literary argument.</p>
	<p>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</p>	
	<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempt to contextualize their interpretation, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>Human experiences always include...</i>” OR “<i>In a world where...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time...</i>”). • Only hint at or suggest other possible interpretations (“<i>While another reader may see...</i>” OR “<i>Though the passage could be said to...</i>”). • Make a single statement about how an interpretation of the passage comments on something thematic without consistently maintaining that thematic interpretation. • Oversimplify complexities in the passage. • Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the student’s argument. 	<p>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument by doing any of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying and exploring complexities or tensions within the passage. 2. Illuminating the student’s interpretation by situating it within a broader context. 3. Accounting for alternative interpretations of the passage. 4. Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference. 		

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In ~~the~~ Tim Winton's 2008 novel "Breath", he details an incident wherein a boy from his school tricks a woman into believing she is drowning, causing her to fall and drown herself. This incident leaves the narrator - ~~pro~~ a boy described as being one year younger than the instigator, Ivan, soon with conflicted feelings. Winton utilizes similes to ~~create~~ create vivid imagery that allows the reader to immerse themselves in the narrator's thought process, uses juxtaposition to emphasize the narrator's conflicted emotions & internally warring reactions, as well as choosing deliberate diction that changes in both denotation and connotation to demonstrate the narrator's changing emotions about the pro.

One of the most impactful literary techniques employed by Winton is the use of imagery to explore the narrator's surroundings and subsequent feelings. Winton writes, "Sun blazed down in rods through big old gums... there were

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as I bolted out to the soggy end of the springboard the mood was not a familiar underfoot." He also uses similes to create associations, writing "she made tarty noises like a toddler... they [her sandals] clunked together like firewood." This use of imagery and simile is twofold: firstly the initial ~~own~~ descriptions of the oppressively aggressive sunlight and warm, drooping and aged nature of the wooden springboard, all help to clearly establish the setting, and demonstrate how uncomfortable the weather was, thus justifying the narrator's sympathy for the woman's plight. The use of simile to underscore the petulant reaction of the woman also helps explain why the narrator might feel that she is humiliating herself.

Additionally the juxtaposition of the narrator's changing reactions assist in portraying his internal conflict. The narrator describes, "I realized it was more fun to pull this

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

prank than to stand by while someone else did it. I felt sympathy & contempt all at once." These excerpts highlight the crucial, core conflict within the narrator; previously, they had been the one pulling the prank themselves, leading to triumph & amusement when they successfully deceived someone and derided at their gullible nature. However, that experience is now being challenged by the narrator viewing firsthand the repercussions of this prank, portraying their inner conflict between feeling scorn for the woman for failing to recognize the prank while simultaneously feeling sympathy for the situation she must extricate herself from.

Winton also used specific diction and word choices to show the narrator's train of thought, he ~~was~~ says, "I began to feel more guilt than glee... It was embarrassing to see

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this grown woman standing there." This description depicts how the narrator initially feels of glee (implying that he felt some sort of triumph) in successfully tripping the woman, the duplicitous nature of the prank, and the inconvenience caused for her to reconsider, creating a moral dilemma within him. This is further emphasized by the use of the word "embarrassing" to describe the woman, conveying how he feels guilty for causing her to reach such a pathetic state.

Moreover, the social context of this story is also important to consider; the narrator is younger than Loo, and the narrator seems to feel uncomfortable around women, referring to them as "these females" - this hints at how the narrator's possibly intrinsically caring nature is being potentially overridden by his desire to fit in and impress an older boy.

In summation, Wharton creates imagery through descriptions and simile

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juxtaposes contrasting feelings, and uses specific diction to demonstrate his narrator's internal conflict upon witnessing the consequences of a seemingly harmless prank.

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Sometimes the most meaningless memories are the ones remembered most vividly. Especially if the memory left you emotionally confused. This is the case for Bruce Pike as he recalls an incident where his friend Ivan Loos pranks a lady by the riverbank. He pretended to be drowning and then burst from the water with a shriek. Bruce has mixed feelings towards the incident as he likes the prank but feels bad for the lady. Tim Wilton uses evocative diction, enthralling detail, and an indifferent tone towards the incident to illustrate Bruce's complex emotional response to the incident.

Wilton uses a variety of creative diction to present the vivid memory of the incident. He wrote ~~the~~ "her frock ballooned about her. She made tarty noises like a toddler," when describing the woman's reaction to Ivan's prank. It can clearly be deduced that he thought the lady's reaction to be comical and exaggerated due to the use of words such as "tarty noises" and "toddler." Bruce wants to recreate the ~~prank~~ prank but feels that it is childish when he recalls "He came up so close to shore with such a feral shriek." ~~the woman's~~ ~~prank~~ ~~prank~~ an Wilton's use of "feral shriek" portrays that Bruce ~~see~~ believes the ~~prank~~ prank was brutal and ~~not~~ too violent.

The insightful detail that Tim Wilton exhibits in the passage also creates juxtaposition as Bruce's sentiments

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

toward the prank are not consistent. This is illustrated when Wilton wrote "I lay in the water deciding how to feel about her as she smoothed herself back to some kind of authority." ~~This detail~~ Bruce does not know how he should feel towards the incident. He ~~did~~ knew that the prank was funny but also felt sympathy for the lady and the three other girls. He also contemplates how he should feel towards the lady after she "charged ~~the~~ into the water," lunging and swiping to no avail. She was attacking a twelve year old child over a harmless but ~~no~~ rude prank. This further confuses Bruce.

Wilton's tone towards the incident jumps from comical to sympathetic as the passage continues. ~~As~~ Bruce thought ~~the~~ ~~prank~~ that "it was more fun to pull this prank than it was to stand by while someone else did." Clearly he believes it is funny but he later says "I felt sympathy and contempt all at once." He even helped retrieve the lady's sandals which were floating away. He referred to her as "the poor woman never got close to him" ~~while~~ while describing her reaction. Bruce feels sympathy and happiness after the incident because although it was funny he still felt bad for the lady. Wilton's use of tone develops the complex response by ~~then~~ demonstrating how Bruce's tone towards the incident changes. It bounced back and

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

forth at times from contempt toward the prank to ~~anger~~ ~~dislike~~ ~~for the~~ dislike towards the prank due to the reaction it induces.

Tom Wilton develops Bruce's complex reaction through thoughtful diction that demonstrates his confusion, descriptive detail that illustrates his reaction towards the woman and the prank, and his ever shifting tone towards the ~~prank's reaction~~ ~~incident~~ ~~incident~~ incident in his novel Breath.

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

the right thing. These two sides of ~~the~~ Bruce are juxtaposed, creating a dissonance between the demonstrated bravery of the boy, and his conscious enjoyment of the prank.

Foreshadowing is used primarily to exemplify the different layers of young Pike's decision. In telling the audience that Bruce met Ivan under panicked circumstances, he foreshadows the events of the subsequent story. It can be inferred that no one is in danger, thus isolating the protagonist's decision. Everyone knows the outcome, so the question becomes how will he react. His friendship with Ivan will grow from this experience, showing how even though their actions completely opposed each other, the two boys could still forge a friendship.

Friends can change lives. Both for better and worse, the people one chooses to spend time with each leave their impact. Bruce demonstrated his maturity, but ultimately abandoned ~~it~~ it for a new friend. Friendship can be found anywhere, but it's not always a good thing. The differences among friends decides who affects who, ~~and those differences~~. It's important to choose friends wisely, for they will change you. For better or for worse.

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

As a kid, swimming in a lake, pond or river with friends was one of the highlights of summer. This excerpt from ~~the~~ Tom Winton's novel "Breath" describes a river side incident, that led to main character, Bruce Pike, to meeting a new friend. Tom Winton represents the complex response of the narrator using imagery and extreme detail to show the long lasting impact the incident had on the narrator.

As the narrator recalls the river incident, he uses imagery to describe the scenario. When he first arrives at the river, he describes the scenery saying, "Sun blazed ~~down~~ down in rods through the big old gums. There were dragon flies in the air above us. I saw a towel near the diving plank and a grubby pair of thongs." By using imagery when describing the scene, it shows that this event was important and impactful enough for him to be able to so accurately describe it later.

Winton also goes into extreme detail in describing the incident. He says, "He came ~~up~~ up so close to shore with such a feral shriek the woman fell back on the mud as if shot." The narrator then goes into detail about Ivan Loon's initial appearance, describing

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

him as, "a freckly sort of kid, but he went so red with pleasure and exertion all his freckles disappeared." Again, the ability to recall extreme detail of appearance and the situation shows how this incident had a lasting impact on the narrator.

Throughout the story, the narrator describes each scene with imagery and extreme detail. In addition, he gained a ~~friend~~ friend from the incident, further showing the long lasting impact.

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In this excerpt from Tim Winton's novel Breath, the ~~author~~ speaker recounts an ^{incident} ~~moment~~ that occurs at a riverside and causes him to feel conflicted. The author employs playful diction, blunt observations, and ~~point~~ ~~of~~ ~~view~~ a revealing point of view to convey both the dismay and astonishment, ~~that the speaker feels after~~ ~~witnessing a~~ childish as well as the resulting guilt that the reader ~~may~~ feels after witnessing the childish prank at the river.

The author begins the passage with a short introduction ~~regarding~~ of the speaker's friendship with ~~the~~ Ivan Luon. The speaker reflects fondly upon his friendship with Ivan, before ~~then~~ revealing that they didn't have much in common ~~but~~ except that they'd each become proficient at causing, "riverside panic". The speaker's proud admission to causing such panic reflects his childish outlook on life, as well as his admiration for Ivan for having the same priorities as himself. It is evident that he sees his behavior as something to be shared and celebrated.

Question 2

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Sample: 2A

Score: 1-4-1

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

This response earned the point in Row A because it responds to the prompt with a defensible interpretation of the passage in the introduction: “Winton utilizes similes to create vivid imagery that allows the reader to immerse themselves in the narrator’s thought process, uses juxtaposition to emphasise the narrator’s conflicted emotions & internally warring reactions, as well as choosing deliberate diction that changes in both denotation and connotation to demonstrate the narrator’s changing emotions about the prank.”

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 4

The response weaves textual evidence and perceptive commentary to build a line of reasoning around literary elements in order to explore the narrator’s “conflicted emotions.” It focuses on Winton’s use of the literary devices identified in the thesis and provides specific examples of each of these. Beyond the mere presentation of examples, the response explores the connections of Winton’s uses of imagery and similes, then comments: “This use of imagery and simile is twofold: firstly, the initial descriptions of the oppressively aggressive sunlight, and warm, drooping and aged nature of the wooden springboard, all help to clearly establish the setting” and “The use of simile to underscore the petulant reaction of the woman also helps explain why the narrator might feel that she is humiliating herself.” The response consistently provides specific evidence, then explains how all the evidence supports the line of reasoning: “These excerpts highlight the crucial, core conflict within the narrator.” In paragraph 4, the response considers the significance of specific word choices and argues “the duplicitous nature of the prank and the inconvenience caused force him to reconsider, creating a moral dilemma within him.” The response concludes by noting how the use of literary techniques demonstrates the narrator’s internal conflict due to “the consequences of a seemingly harmless prank.” Each piece of evidence and commentary builds upon the others to create a cogent and persuasive argument centered around the angst the narrator feels as he remembers the incident at the riverbank.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 1

This response earned the point for sophistication in Row C through its perceptive exploration of the tensions within the passage and through a vivid and persuasive style. The response asserts that social context plays an important role in the complexity of the situation and “the narrator seems to feel uncomfortabl around women, referring to them as ‘these females’—this hints at how the narrator’s possibly intrinsically caring nature is being potentially overridden by his desire to fit in and impress an older boy.” The essay demonstrates sophistication of thought and develops a complex literary argument.

Sample: 2B

Score: 1-4-0

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

In the introduction, the essay presents a defensible interpretation of the narrator’s complex response to the incident: “Bruce has mixed feeling towards the incident as he likes the prank but feels bad for the lady. Tim Wilton uses evocative diction, enthralling detail, and an indifferent tone towards the incident to illustrate Bruce’s complex emotional response to the incident.” This response earned the point in Row A.

Question 2 (continued)

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 4

This response incorporates multiple pieces of textual evidence of the narrator’s complex response and consistently explains their relevance. In paragraph 2, it considers the diction Winton uses, including his description of the woman making her way out of the water: “Her frock ballooned about her. She made tanty noises like a toddler.” The commentary suggests from the description that it “can clearly be deduced that he thought the lady’s reaction to be comical and exaggerated.” Paragraph 3 considers the conflict in the narrator’s thoughts that comes about through the narrator’s moment of contemplation: “Bruce does not know how he should feel towards the incident. He knew that the prank was funny but also felt sympathy for the lady and the three other girls.” Additionally, the response argues, “Wilton’s tone towards the incident jumps from comical to sympathetic as the passage continues.” The evidence and commentary work hand in hand to develop the line of reasoning—that the narrator struggles with mixed feelings about the incident. The evidence offered uniformly supports the claims, and the essay’s focus on specific words and passages builds the interpretation. The analysis of multiple literary techniques strengthens both the argument and the essay.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 0

While the essay does attempt to explain Bruce’s complex reaction to the events (“Bruce feels sympathy and happiness after the incident because although it was funny he still felt bad for the lady”), the essay does not demonstrate the level of sophistication of thought needed to earn a point in Row C.

Sample: 2C

Score: 1-3-0

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

This essay responds to the prompt with a thesis in the introduction that presents a defensible interpretation of the passage: “A moral compass is developing, and in Tim Winton’s novel, ‘Breath,’ he uses diction, characterization, and foreshadowing to illustrate the maturing conscience of a boy, ultimately conveying how friendship can be sought even among differing people.” This thesis earned the point in Row A.

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 3

The response focuses on Winton’s characterization of the two boys described in the passage and the development of the friendship between them. It argues that “Bruce’s encounter at the riverbank with Ivan Loon is a defining moment” and that his “friendship with Ivan will grow from this experience.” Specific evidence is provided throughout the essay, including consideration of the first-person point of view and Winton’s word choice. The line of reasoning focuses on the claim that “even though their actions completely opposed each other, the two boys could still forge a friendship.” The essay presents the claim that the conflict Bruce feels after the prank is revealed creates “a dissonance between the demonstrated bravery of the boy, and his conscious enjoyment of the prank,” but the claim about the maturation of the narrator is not fully developed. Because all claims are not fully supported, the response earned a 3 in Row B.

Question 2 (continued)

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 0

While the response addresses the complexity of a developing friendship, it speaks of the friendship in sweeping generalities: “Both for better and worse, the people one chooses to spend time with each leave their impact.” The attempt to contextualize the interpretation does not strengthen the argument; therefore, the response did not earn the sophistication point in Row C.

Sample: 2D

Score: 1-2-0

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

The essay earned the point in Row A through the thesis presented in the introductory paragraph: “Tim Winton represents the complex response of the narrator using imagery and extreme detail to show the long lasting impact the incident had on the narrator.”

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 2

The response provides some specific textual evidence, particularly of the narrator’s description of his arrival at the riverbank, and some imagery used in the description. The essay also points out the reaction of the woman when Ivan bursts from the water. The commentary offered focuses on the narrator’s “ability to recall extreme detail of appearance” and makes the point that “this incident had a lasting impact on the narrator.” However, no line of reasoning is established, and the essay contains simplistic explanations. Pointing out examples of imagery and “extreme detail” does not explain the complexity of the passage. These characteristics earned the essay a score of 2 for Row B.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 0

The response unsuccessfully attempts to develop an argument and oversimplifies the complexities of the passage. It did not earn the sophistication point in Row C.

Sample: 2E

Score: 1-1-0

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

This response earned the point in Row A by offering a defensible thesis in the introductory paragraph: “The author employs playful diction, blunt observations, and a revealing point of view to convey both the dismay and astonishment, as well as the resulting guilt that the reader feels after witnessing the childish prank at the river.”

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 1

The essay earned 1 point in Row B because it offers a single piece of textual evidence: “The speaker reflects fondly upon his friendship with Ivan, before revealing that they didn’t have much in common except that they’d each become proficient at causing, ‘riverside panic.’” The significance of this evidence is not explained, however, and no line of reasoning is established. While the response asserts, “It is evident he sees his behavior as something to be shared and celebrated,” the discussion is thin and offers no explanation of the complexity of the situation.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 0

This essay did not earn the sophistication point in Row C due to its lack of a complex literary argument. The response does have instances of insight, such as noting the narrator’s “proud admission to causing such panic reflects his childish outlook on life,” but these moments are not adequately sustained.

Question 3: Literary Argument

6 points

In many works of fiction, houses take on symbolic importance. Such houses may be literal houses or unconventional ones (e.g., hotels, hospitals, monasteries, or boats).

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which a literal or unconventional house serves as a significant symbol. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how this house 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.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p>Row A Thesis (0-1 points)</p>	<p>0 points</p> <p>For any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no defensible thesis. • The intended thesis only restates the prompt. • The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent thesis. • There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt. 	<p>1 point</p> <p>Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the selected work.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only restate the prompt. • Make a generalized comment about the selected work that doesn't respond to the prompt. 		<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a defensible interpretation of a literal or unconventional house that serves as a significant symbol in the selected work. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a claim about how the symbolism of a literal or unconventional house contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole.
<p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Restate the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"Houses—either literal houses or unconventional ones like hospitals or hotels—often serve as significant symbols in fiction."</i> <p>Do not respond to the prompt but make a generalized comment about the selected work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"The 'house' in the title of Edith Wharton's <u>The House of Mirth</u> is actually a Biblical reference."</i> • <i>"In <u>A Streetcar Named Desire</u>, Stella and Stanley find that their life is not what they had hoped it would be."</i> 		<p>Examples that earn this point:</p> <p>Provide a defensible interpretation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"The house on Bluestone Road symbolizes Sethe's escape from slavery and her inability to escape from her traumatic memories."</i> • <i>"The Pequod, and its destruction, represents the futility of Ahab's obsessive pursuit of Moby Dick, which brings about his own death."</i> • <i>"The Pyncheon mansion in <u>The House of the Seven Gables</u> symbolizes how the sins of the past are revisited on subsequent generations."</i>
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity. • The thesis may be anywhere within the response. • For a thesis to be defensible, the selected work must include at least minimal evidence that <i>could</i> be used to support that thesis; however, the student need not cite that evidence to earn the thesis point. • The thesis <i>may</i> establish a line of reasoning that structures the essay, but it needn't do so to earn the thesis point. • A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning. 		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
<p>Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points)</p>	<p>0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.</p>	<p>1 point EVIDENCE: Provides evidence that is mostly general. AND COMMENTARY: Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the argument.</p>	<p>2 points EVIDENCE: Provides some specific, relevant evidence. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence relates to the student’s argument, but no line of reasoning is established, or the line of reasoning is faulty.</p>	<p>3 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning.</p>	<p>4 points EVIDENCE: Provides specific evidence to support all claims in a line of reasoning. AND COMMENTARY: Consistently explains how the evidence supports a line of reasoning.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes					
<p>Typical responses that earn 0 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are incoherent or do not address the prompt. • May be just opinion with no textual references or references that are irrelevant. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 1 point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tend to focus on overarching narrative developments or description of a selected work rather than specific details. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 2 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consist of a mix of specific evidence and broad generalities. • May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument. • May make one point well but either do not make multiple supporting claims or do not adequately support more than one claim. • Do not explain the connections or progression between the student’s claims, so a line of reasoning is not clearly established. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 3 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. • Focus on the importance of specific details from the selected work to build an interpretation. • Organize an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. • Commentary may fail to integrate some evidence or fail to support a key claim. 	<p>Typical responses that earn 4 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniformly offer evidence to support claims. • Focus on the importance of specific details from the selected works to build an interpretation. • Organize and support an argument as a line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained. 	
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. • To earn the fourth point in this row, the response must address the interpretation of the selected work as a whole. 					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0-1 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or develops a complex literary argument.
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempt to contextualize their interpretation, but such attempts consist predominantly of sweeping generalizations (“<i>Human experiences always include...</i>” OR “<i>In a world where...</i>” OR “<i>Since the beginning of time...</i>”). • Only hint at or suggest other possible interpretations (“<i>While another reader may see...</i>” OR “<i>Though the text could be said to...</i>”). • Oversimplify complexities of the topic and/or the selected work. • Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the student’s argument. 	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument by doing any of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying and exploring complexities or tensions within the selected work. 2. Illuminating the student’s interpretation by situating it within a broader context. 3. Accounting for alternative interpretations of the text. 4. Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.
	Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This point should be awarded only if the sophistication of thought or complex understanding is part of the student’s argument, not merely a phrase or reference. 	

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In her novel The God of Small Things, Arundhati Roy frequently uses setting and small details to emphasize the deeper meaning of the plot. Her inclusion and description of the "History House" ~~also~~ is used to illustrate how the past is treated by people in the present and how that past affects them.

The History House was originally the abode of a white man described as a "Kurtz" with "Ayemenem his private Heart of Darkness". These allusions to the novella by Joseph Conrad give the man - and ~~the~~ the house - an evil and wild air. The reference, deployed sarcastically, also points out colonial problems in India, allowing the house to represent problematic encounters between white people and the people of Ayemenem. ~~The~~ Its continued existence long after its residence's death shows the continued impact of colonialism on Ayemenem ~~and~~ while providing an abandoned shelter ~~also~~ for fugitives.

Twins Rachel and Estha believe the History House is where the past is contained because of their uncle's stories. However, they are too young to understand what the past represents, and therefore only see it as an abandoned place to build a fort. Disaster strikes when both Estha, traumatized by sexual assault and the words of ~~his~~ his mother, and Velutha, an ~~untouchable~~ Untouchable being persecuted for his

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Relationship, ^{with a Touchable} seek shelter there on the same night, and Velutha is beaten ^{by police} before Estha and Rachel's eyes. The History House, ~~there~~ ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~setting~~ then, is the setting for the past clashing with the present: all of their individual choices, societal ideas, and political struggles of the past cannot be escaped, and Roy shows how these factors build into violent confrontation. At the History House, Estha and Rachel learn that "history" or "past" is not simply stored in a building but is active and affects their ability to find happiness and peace.

The History House is eventually destroyed to make room for a hotel for foreign tourists seeking a "native" experience. This only continues the location's legacy as a place of colonialism. It also shows the tourists' ignorance as to the history they stand on: forbidden love, political conflict, and police brutality are swept under the rug. According to the twins' childlike perspective, they literally destroyed History for white people's comfort. This shows how an ugly past like what transpired at the History House is often ignored in favor of comfort, at the cost of acknowledgement or closure for the people affected by it.

The God of Small Things is largely a book about the past and how it can adversely

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

affect those involved in it. The History House, therefore, is an important symbol in the novel, ~~and should not be overlooked~~. While some consider the past is a journey, Arundhati Roy points out it can be a house, too: composed of many factors and holding its inhabitants, not allowing them to move on.

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Although one often hears that looks can deceive, it is usually associated with people, not a place. However, in ~~the~~ ~~the~~ The Dutch House, a novel by Ann Patchett, the glittering family home of the Conroy's may appear to one as the perfect property, but actually represents isolation and a broken family, further expressing the idea that where one is does not determine their home, but the people they are with.

When Cyril Conroy, the patriarch of the family, purchased the expansive and eclectic Dutch House for his wife, Elna, and daughter, Maeve, he intended it to bring them together and give them a great change in status compared to the small, military housing they resided at. However, the size of the house, as well as Cyril's infatuation with it, began to pull Elna away from her family and newborn son, Danny. Thus, she left them and returned to helping people and travelling the world. While Elna was in the presence of her children, her love for Cyril did not run as deep for him because he took her out of a covenant to marry her and thus separated her from her dream. Therefore, because she is thought of as more down-to-earth and a wandering soul, the Dutch House was not considered her home because she did not love the man who bought it for her (with her whole heart). Furthermore, her departure brought on a deep divide between the children and their father because he felt

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

part of the blame and also had more of a focus on keeping up appearances and pushing problems to the side. Overall, although the Dutch House may have been sizeable and expensive, Elna was driven away and created a new meaning of the house for its remaining inhabitants—loneliness.

In addition, while Maere and Danny grow up in the rich house, they begin to feel its evergrowing chill. Cyril rarely speaks to them, if only to correct their posture or manners, so Maere and Danny turn to ~~themselves~~ each other. Danny often recalls Maere staying home on Friday nights or weekends to keep him company so that he "wouldn't have to be alone" in the Dutch House. If Maere did not ~~be~~ stay, Danny would have been stuck alone in his room—isolated from human interaction in the giant house. Likewise, both Maere and Danny state that "no one—[including their friends,]—came to the Dutch House" because ~~is~~ even though it looked nice from the outside, ~~the~~ classmates knew that it was no fun place to hang out and instead a symbol of melancholy. As a result, Maere continued to come home to Danny, even when she was in college, in order to give him "something he could count on" in a house of cold relations and damaged relationships. Because Danny felt safe when Maere came around and often ~~was~~ ~~left~~ ~~out~~ neglected when she was absent, it became clear to him that the Dutch House was not his home, but rather his sister,

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P3

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Maere, was.

Finally, once Cyril remarries a younger woman, Andrea, who adores the house, unlike Elna, Maere and Danny eventually feel the final schism between them and their father. Cyril constantly prioritizes Andrea's daughters, Norma and Bright, over his own children, and Andrea adds to the cold atmosphere by berating Maere, Danny, and their beloved maids. Once again, Maere and Danny rely on one another for support in a house that is nothing more than a representation of their family's failures, though it may appear beautiful from the curb. When Andrea kicks them out after Cyril dies, Danny is forced to move in with Maere, but finds it better than life in the breathtaking Dutch House because he is with someone who truly cares for him and no longer lives in the wretched house. Maere and Danny continue to drive back into their old neighborhood to sit and look at the house from the curb, but are constantly reminded of the path it brought them, which they can't seem to escape, and how the only comfort they have is each other.

To conclude, while Maere and Danny supported one another, it does not matter who it is—a parent, a sister, a best friend—that helps one, but the value of their loyalty and care that proves their devotion.

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre, Jane spends time in numerous housing situations ranging all of the way from Gateshead to Thorn Dean. However, the Gateshead residence, in which she grew up, serves as an important symbol of loneliness, ostracism, and fear in Jane's life and it reveals the power and strength that Jane gained throughout the book as she had the courage to return.

Gateshead itself is a rather large estate. For the most part, it is pretty desolate and has a sort of eerie gloom within it. The feeling that is evoked upon entering Gateshead is already full of darkness and fear. ~~Jane's experiences in growing up at Gateshead were miserable. Due to the fact that her Aunt Reed did not like her, Jane was ostracized. Jane was treated by the Reeds as less than even a servant and this took a mental toll on her. Furthermore, Jane's experience within the Red Room of Gateshead convinced her that the house was haunted by the ghost of her dead uncle. This terrified Jane and as a result she had a great fear of the Red Room that carried on with her through her life. The overall appearance and feeling of Gateshead was unwelcoming due to its gloomy look and feel as well as its haunted rooms.~~

Jane's experiences in growing up at Gateshead were miserable. Due to the fact that her Aunt Reed did not like her, Jane experience ostracism. This feeling of ostracism was associated with Gateshead and it motivated Jane to find some sort of way out. ~~She~~ Jane was treated poorly by her cousins as well. Her cousin John would always torment her and her other two cousins would rarely engage with her. These actions furthered her feelings of ostracism and loneliness. All of these poor experiences that Jane suffered through are linked to the Gateshead residence. For that reason, ~~she~~ upon leaving

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

Gateshead, Jane hoped to never return to the wretched place.

However, many years later Jane did return to Gateshead upon hearing about her Aunt Reed's poor health. Jane had a tough decision to make, in choosing to return to a place that caused her so much harm. Ultimately, Jane had a feeling that she was meant to return and face her Aunt Reed one last time. This decision took enormous courage on Jane's part and demonstrates how she has transformed into a strong young woman. As Jane ~~returned~~ returned to Gateshead, it was even more barren than before. Despite slight discomfort, Jane was powerful enough to endure ~~her return~~ the return and she even stayed several weeks. Her extended visit shows that Jane really had overcome her past fears of Gateshead. During her stay, she connected with her sisters and confronted her aunt. In all that she did, she was assertive and in charge of the situation. This demonstrates incredible transformation from being controlled by the Reeds to being the one in control.

Through her two different experiences with the dreaded Gateshead, Jane shows tremendous growth as she overcomes the loneliness, ostracism, and fear that Gateshead embodies, demonstrating her improved strength and confidence as a character.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In the novel, ~~the novel~~ To Kill a Mockingbird, Harper Lee presents a young girl's relationship with a mysterious house, and utilizes eerie imagery, and mysterious symbols, ~~to~~ ultimately illustrating that the unknown, is sometimes more terrifying than actually knowing.

First, Lee utilizes eerie imagery to convey Scout's relationship with the house. Throughout the novel, the house is portrayed as falling apart, being dirty, and scaring the neighborhood children, so much so they choose to go out of their way to move past the house. Despite rumors, no one has the slightest idea of what is actually happening in the house, which is a direct symbol for Atticus' case in the novel. The case is filled with mystery, a black man is charged with raping a white woman, and like the house, no one knows the actual truth about the case.

Next, Lee uses mysterious symbols to convey the house's importance. Boo Radley is the man who lives in the house, and he is thought to also be a symbol. Like the house, Boo is a complete mystery, besides the occasional

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

outing he is never seen. He is the supposed murderer of his family, which causes great fear among the neighborhood children. Boo works to symbolize the mystery within his home's walls, defending the secrets that lay within. It is no secret that through the novel, no one trusts or isn't scared of Boo, ~~not Boo~~ and many believe he is actually a suspicious person, when in reality, no one truly knows his story, so they choose to believe in the rumors.

To conclude, due to the mysterious symbols and eerie imagery created in the novel, he shows how Boo Radley's house acts as a symbol for the trial, and for other parts of the novel. The house as a symbol provides enough mystery to make the town question what truly is going on, ultimately illustrating that sometimes, the unknown is much scarier than the truth.

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

"Of Mice and Men" is a literary work that uses a house for symbolic importance. ~~It~~ It uses a combination of literal houses and unconventional houses throughout the novel. George and Lenny are the two main ~~characters~~ characters in this novel. ~~Lenny~~ Lenny is disabled, and people want to kill him because he was seen as a "threat" to the well being of the rest of the community. People from Lenny's household didn't have an issue with him obviously, but other people from George's household did. That all just depended on ~~how~~ how people were raised. This helps contribute to the whole novel and its interpretation because it shows how people felt about Lenny. George ended up having to choose between shooting Lenny for Lenny's own good, or letting him get killed ~~in~~ in a harsh way by strangers that hated him. Out of love for Lenny, George ~~chose~~ chose to shoot Lenny. This ~~represents~~ represents the type of house that ~~George~~ George grew up in, and shows that George was raised to want the best for everyone no matter who they are.

Question 3

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Sample: 3A—*The God of Small Things*

Score: 1-4-1

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

This essay earned the point in Row A by responding to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the novel. The introduction asserts, “Her inclusion and description of the ‘History House’ is used to illustrate how the past is treated by people in the present and how that past affects them.”

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 4

The response provides specific evidence to support the argument that the History House in the novel symbolizes the past. The evidence provided in the essay is specific and used effectively to support the claims. The line of reasoning of the essay focuses on the power of the past and how it “affects their ability to find happiness and peace” (paragraph 3). In paragraph 2, the response identifies an allusion to Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* through the History House’s original owner, “a white man described as a ‘Kurtz.’” The response explains that the colonial connection “shows the continued impact of colonialism in Ayemenem while providing an abandoned shelter for fugitives.” In paragraph 3 it also offers the stories of the twins Rahel and Estha as further evidence of the significance of the house and argues that “[t]he History House, then, is the setting for the past clashing with the present: all of their individual choices, societal ideas, and political struggles of the past cannot be escaped.” The destruction of the house is presented in paragraph 4 as symbolic of “how an ugly past like what transpired at the History House is often ignored in favor of comfort, at the cost of acknowledgement or closure for the people affected by it.” Each piece of evidence offered relates directly to the line of reasoning that the brutal past of colonization continues to harm contemporary people. The intertwining of specific evidence and insightful commentary (for example, in paragraph 3: “At the History House, Estha and Rahel learn that ‘history’ or ‘past’ is not simply stored in a building but is active and affects their ability to find happiness and peace”) builds an essay that thoroughly examines the symbolism of the History House.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 1

The response earned the point in Row C because of its sophistication of thought and perceptive exploration of the complexities between the past and the present. Additionally, the response concludes with an alternative interpretation of the text: “While some consider the past is a journey, Arundhati Roy points out it can be a house, too: composed of many factors and holding its inhabitants, not allowing them to move on.”

Sample: 3B—*The Dutch House*

Score: 1-4-0

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

This essay earned the point in Row A through its defensible interpretation presented in the introduction: “However, in The Dutch House, a novel by Ann Patchett, the glittering family home of the Conroy’s may appear to one as the perfect property, but actually represents isolation and a broken family, further expressing the idea that where one is does not determine their home, but the people they are with.”

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 4

In support of the thesis, the essay uniformly offers evidence, such as the wife’s departure from the beautiful house, the children’s feelings of coldness and melancholy in it, and the newcomer’s disparaging treatment of Cyril’s children. The evidence is supported by commentary that establishes a clear line of reasoning, that

Question 3 (continued)

despite the house’s beauty, “it represents isolation and a broken family.” The specific details of the story, then, are used to build the interpretation that the physical beauty of a home does not necessarily reflect the family relationships. Commentary, such as “a new meaning of the house for its remaining inhabitants—loneliness” in paragraph 2, and “Because Danny felt safe when Maeve came around and often neglected when she was absent, it became clear to him that the Dutch House was not his home, but rather his sister, Maeve was” in paragraph 3, build a scaffolding of support and clear explanations of the significance of the plentitude of details offered.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 0

While this essay provides ample details from the work and clearly supports its claim, it does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument. The concluding sentence, “[It] does not matter who it is—a parent, a sister, a best friend—that helps one, but the value of their loyalty and care that proves their devotion,” is an attempt to contextualize the interpretation but makes a broad, generalized statement. The essay did not earn the point in Row C.

Sample: 3C—*Jane Eyre*

Score: 1-3-0

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

This essay responds to the prompt with a defensible interpretation of the novel: “However, the Gateshead residence, in which she grew up, serves as an important symbol of loneliness, ostracism, and fear in Jane’s life and it reveals the power and strength that Jane gained throughout the book as she had the courage to return.” This thesis earned the point in Row A.

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 3

The essay focuses particularly on Gateshead, the home where Jane spends much of her childhood, and in paragraph 2 offers specific details describing the hall as “full of darkness and fear” and having “a sort of eerie gloom.” The evidence also focuses on Jane’s fear of Gateshead and specifically of the Red Room, which the essay suggests “was haunted by the ghost of her dead uncle”; these experiences “motivated Jane to find some sort of way out.” The response also explains the significance of Jane’s eventual return to Gateshead to care for her aunt, demonstrating that despite Jane’s fear of Gateshead, she grew past her fears. The decision to return to Aunt Reed’s house “took enormous courage on Janes part and demonstrates how she has transformed into a strong young woman.” The line of reasoning of the essay, then, is built upon Jane’s ability to overcome her fears and to be “the one in control.” The essay is clearly organized, although some of the analysis is oversimplified, such as in “Due to the fact that her Aunt Reed did not like her, Jane experiences ostracism,” and the process of Jane’s transformation is not explained.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 0

The essay did not earn the point in Row C as it lacks sophistication of thought and a complex literary argument. There is some attempt to explain why Jane is unhappy; the explanation offers a cursory analysis of her situation: “Her extended visit shows that Jane really had overcome her past fears of Gateshead.” The response tends to oversimplify the complexities of the novel and for these reasons did not earn a point in Row C.

Question 3 (continued)

Sample: 3D—*To Kill a Mockingbird*

Score: 1-2-0

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 1

The response earned the point for a thesis in Row A through its introductory sentence: “In the novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee presents a young girl’s relationship with a mysterious house, and utilizes eerie imagery, and mysterious symbols, ultimately illustrating that the unknown is sometimes more terrifying than actually knowing.” This sentence offers a defensible interpretation.

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 2

The essay focuses on Scout’s connection to Boo Radley’s house. It says, “[T]he house is portrayed as falling apart, being dirty, and scaring the neighborhood children” and suggests that “Lee uses mysterious symbols to convey the house’s importance.” The evidence presented is a mix of simplistic explanations and generalities: “Despite rumors, no one has the slightest idea of what is actually happening in the house, which is a direct symbol for Atticus’ case in the novel.” The attempt to connect the unknown element of Boo’s house to the trial in paragraph 2 is not fully realized. No clear line of reasoning is established beyond the description of the house as “mysterious,” and that point is repeated throughout the essay: “Like the house, Boo is a complete mystery.” The response does make the point that “sometimes, the unknown is much scarier than the truth,” but, again, the argument is not adequately supported. The argument that “Boo Radley’s house acts as a symbol for the trial, and for other parts of the novel” is an example of the oversimplification of the complexity of the house’s symbolism.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 0

The response lacks a complex literary argument or the sophistication of thought necessary to have earned the point in Row C.

Sample: 3E—*Of Mice and Men*

Score: 0-1-0

A. Thesis (0–1 points): 0

The first two sentences of the essay essentially restate the prompt: “‘Of Mice and Men’ is a literary work that uses a house for symbolic importance. It uses a combination of literal houses and unconventional houses throughout the novel.” The essay did not earn the point for a thesis in Row A.

B. Evidence and Commentary (0–4 points): 1

The essay focuses on the two characters in the novel, George and Lenny, and offers mostly general information about them: “Lenny is disabled, and people want to kill him because he was seen as a ‘threat’ to the well being of the rest of the community.” The response makes reference to “Lenny’s household” and “George’s household,” but it does not connect those references to any argument. The essay refers to overarching narrative developments in the work, particularly George’s critical decision: “Out of love for Lenny, George chose to shoot Lenny.” The essay concludes with an unsupported generalization about George’s past: “This represents the type of house that George grew up in, and shows that George was raised to want the best for everyone no matter who they are.” No line of reasoning is established.

C. Sophistication (0–1 points): 0

Because the essay relies so heavily on generalization, no sophistication of thought is present, nor does the essay demonstrate a complex argument, it did not earn the point in Row C.