

2024



AP[®] English Literature and Composition

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

DRAFT

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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 George Moses Horton’s poem “On Summer,” published in 1829, the author describes multiple aspects of summer in a rural area. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Horton uses literary elements and techniques to develop a complex portrayal of the setting.

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.

On Summer

<p>Esteville¹ fire begins to burn; The auburn fields of harvest rise; The torrid flames again return, <i>Line</i> And thunders roll along the skies.</p> <p>5 Perspiring Cancer² lifts his head, And roars terrific from on high; Whose voice the timid creatures dread; From which they strive with awe to fly.</p> <p>The night-hawk ventures from his cell, <i>10</i> And starts his note in evening air; He feels the heat his bosom swell, Which drives away the gloom of fear.</p> <p>Thou noisy insect, start thy drum; Rise lamp-like bugs to light the train; <i>15</i> And bid sweet Philomela³ come, And sound in front the nightly strain.</p> <p>The bee begins her ceaseless hum, And doth with sweet exertions rise; And with delight she stores her comb, <i>20</i> And well her rising stock supplies.</p>	<p>Let sportive children well beware, While sprightly frisking o’er the green; And carefully avoid the snare, Which lurks beneath the smiling scene.</p> <p>25 The mistress bird assumes her nest, And broods in silence on the tree, Her note to cease, her wings at rest, She patient waits her young to see.</p> <p>The farmer hastens from the heat; <i>30</i> The weary plough-horse droops his head; The cattle all at noon retreat; And ruminates beneath the shade.</p> <p>The burdened ox with dauntless rage, Flies heedless to the liquid flood, <i>35</i> From which he quaffs,⁴ devoid of gauge,⁵ Regardless of his driver’s rod.</p> <p>Pomaceous⁶ orchards now expand Their laden branches o’er the lea; And with their bounty fill the land, <i>40</i> While plenty smiles on every tree.</p>
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On fertile borders, near the stream,
Now gaze with pleasure and delight;
See loaded vines with melons teem—
'Tis paradise to human sight.

- 45 With rapture view the smiling fields,
Adorn the mountain and the plain,
Each, on the eve of Autumn, yields
A large supply of golden grain.

¹ a town in North Carolina

² zodiac constellation associated with midsummer

³ a character in Greek mythology who was transformed
into a nightingale

⁴ drinks

⁵ measure

⁶ of or relating to apples

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 1: Poetry Analysis**6 points**

In George Moses Horton’s poem “On Summer,” published in 1829, the author describes multiple aspects of summer in a rural area. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Horton uses literary elements and techniques to develop a complex portrayal of the setting.

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	
Row A Thesis (0-1 points)	0 points For any of the following: <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. 	1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the poem.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
Responses that do not earn this point: <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. 		Responses that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a defensible interpretation of the complex portrayal of the setting.
Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "The poet describes through various literary elements the complexity of summer in the country." "In the poem 'On Summer,' the poet develops a complex portrayal of a summer setting." Do not relate to the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "We all have a favorite season, a time of year in which we are happiest and look forward to the most." Describe the poem or features of the poem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Over the course of the poem, the speaker describes scenes from both nature and the human world during summer. We see how the farmer and children react to the summer setting as well as how creatures such as insects, birds, and farm animals react. In addition, the speaker also vividly describes how the natural world around them appears in summer." 		Examples that earn this point: Provide a defensible interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "The speaker in 'On Summer' presents both the negative and positive aspects of summer in the country. These aspects come together to form a complete portrayal of the season as a sort of paradox." "In this poem, the poet uses description to point out that the heat of summer is helpful for some, but difficult for others." "Throughout the poem 'On Summer,' the poet employs literary elements such as personification, vivid descriptions, rhyme, and classical references to convey a complex setting that is fearsome, playful, challenging, and restful in the summer months."
Additional Notes: <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 a 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 a 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. 		

The poem "On Summer" paints a vivid, detailed picture of what the season of summer consists of for the land and inhabitants of rural North Carolina. Through use of intense imagery and personification, as well as a shift in tone, the speaker illustrates the complex combination of both fearsome power and delicate beauty found in the important and active season for the farm, ultimately reflecting the contrast between the everyday buzz of small life forms and the strong, steady permanence of nature as a whole.

Prior to the shift in lines 36-37, the speaker uses personification in describing both the natural changes in weather and the instinctual reactions of various animals on the farm in order to cast a forboding yet awe-inspiring tone over the idea of summer's approach. In the first line, the start of summer is introduced with the announcement of "fire begin[ning] to burn," providing both a literal description of the fires that the fields are exposed to in hotter months as well as a figurative expression of the forthcoming heat and intensity of summer. The poem progresses alongside the chronological changes of the season, with the threat behind summer's approach reinforced through ominous, almost predatory descriptions of the weather. Personifying actions such as "roars terrific" and "lurks beneath" that are scattered throughout the mentioning of the animals' actions give a sense of inescapability. This attention towards tiny detail in the descriptions of natural activity immerse one completely in the workings of the natural world, with only small mentions of other perspectives--like that of "sportive children...frisking o'er the green"--to provide brief perspective before returning to the intensity of nature viewed up-close.

After line 36, the attention of the poem shifts from the specific actions of the animals to the appearance of the land as a whole, and with it shifts the overall appearance of summer, showing the beauty that is all too easily overlooked when the scope of vision is too zoomed-in. Take, for example, how the speaker goes from examining the "burdened ox with dauntless rage"--an image showcasing the extremes on the spectrum of outlooks on summer heat--to examining the "fertile borders...[of] paradise." The descriptions used when looking at the land from a greater distance create a feeling of peacefulness and serenity, as a sudden perspective seems to be acquired: one of the stability and predictability of mother nature. Amongst this are mentions of the plentiful bounty of later summer: vines are now "loaded...with melons", "pomaceous orchards now expand", and on the fields are "a large supply of golden grain." This illustrates, much like the idea of a thunderstorm on its own, the necessity of patience--for summer is a focal point on the farm for a reason.

The way in which summer is seen in the busy actions of each farm animal provides a stark contrast to the way it can be viewed from a greater distance, illustrating the comfort that can be found in predictability. The idea that the farm looks the same way it always has each and every summer turns the idea of power within nature from something terrifying to something calming; much like humans, the animals' and insects' lives, despite seeming vastly important to their owners, are impermanent on a large and powerful Earth that is, in comparison, very much permanent.

While the power that nature holds is vast and complex, the effects it has reaches far past living creatures and becomes a way of life for all living and non living things. This is shown in the vibrant and descriptive work of "On Summer" which reveals a complex portrayal of how nature is a powerful and influential figure that has vast effects on the everyday life of creatures and people on a farm which the author shows by mainly using summer as a symbol for change. The author also uses personification to create a connection between the audience and the life in the poem to highlight how summer affects the setting and ritualistic tendencies of both living and nonliving creature alike. The author also uses vivid imagery in order to paint a clear picture as to how the setting around the farm changes vastly depending on summer, which can be both beneficial and non-beneficial to nature.

To begin with, the author utilizes personification to emphasize how summer effects the ritualistic tendencies of living and non living creature alike which serves to show summer is a source of power and change. This can be seen when the "Perspiring Cancer lifts his head and roars terrific from on high" which indicates that although the constellation is non living, it still holds a powerful influence over the lives of many of the animals nearby on the farm (5). It represents the coming of summer which holds influence over many of the creatures lives "From which they strive with awe to fly" (8). This shows how creatures respect the change in climate and know it to be a sign of change over their lives which is why many of them flee to seek shade from the harsh climate.

Secondly, the author uses vivid imagery to depict the vast change in the setting that summer causes to happen. The author describes the melodic rythm of the insects and compares their rythm to a "drum" which indicate how the sound around the farm changes around summer time (13). The author also describes "lamp-like bugs" which light the night sky which is another indication of how even the color changes in the farm due to summer which further emphasizes the vast and influential effects that summer has on the setting.

While summer can be considered a nusicance to some, it still plays a large role in shaping the way of life in farms and affecting the lives of many creatures. It holds influence over the lives of living and non-living creatures. It also can have a change on the sound and color of a setting. Overall, summer is a large part of nature that hold much influence over many lives, it represents the harmony that nature plays within the cycle of our daily lives and should be respected and cherished.

The poem "On Summer" achieves its idyllic quality by its personification of nature. The human-like description of the animals, plants, and stars and evokes vividness and harmony to the setting as the poem celebrates summer.

Although the animals are depicted performing animal-like behaviour, there is a distinct human quality to them. A bee "begins her ceaseless hum" (17) and feels "delight" when "she stores her comb" (19). Here the bee is given the human qualities of an ambition and the feelings of pride when they are accomplished. Meanwhile a bird approaches her responsibility of motherhood with human-like care and quality. She "assumes her nest" (25) and "patient waits her young to see" (28). The thoughtfulness in which the bird thinks about its young is reminiscent of a human mother taking care of her children. Prescribing human characteristics to animals serves to endear the animals to the humans.

The fauna exert their will in the way a human would. Trees are given free will as "pomaceous orchards now expand" (37) and "their bounty fill the land" (39). The trees do not expand and grow because it is in their nature to do so as the seasons change, but rather they do so because, they are endowed with their own wishes and desires. The trees "smile" and "gaze with pleasure and delight" (42). The description of joy felt by the trees demonstrates the similarities of man and nature as both celebrate the summer. The summer, filled with the animals and plants is "paradise to human sight" (44).

Humanity attributes their own qualities onto flora and fauna in order to share their joy. The personification of the flora and fauna gives nuance to the setting.

"Summer" is a poem in which the author, displays the setting in Esteville, North Carolina. As the town begins to burn the author incorporates different literary elements to help strengthen the eerie and spectral mood. The author demonstrates hyperbole frequently throughout the poem to enhance the exaggerated feelings on the description of the environment. Following this the reader begins to see anaphora as the author begins to appeal to the reader's emotions and spiritual view. The author closes out with an evident use of asyndeton to help draw an effect to the dramatic personifications embedded in the description of the setting.

Through this poem the red flames symbolize destruction and fear along with the color red offering a sense of risk. Promptly after this intense symbol is described the author follows up with hyperboles and different exaggerations. Implying "And thunders roll along the skies (line 4)" this helps magnify the effect of the loudness the thunder brings, but it also creates a foundation for the reader to use their imagination to explore and really hear and feel the strength of the thunder. The author then proceeds to follow up with "Which drives away the gloom of fear (Line 12)". This is a pure example of an exaggerated feeling and action. But with adding these different literary devices it amplifies the magnitude of different feelings brought onto the reader resulting in a eager mood.

As the author maintains the reader's attention the use of anaphora enforces the repetition of the same words creating the clause to be memorable. The author states "The farer hastens from the heat; The weary plough-horse droops his head; The cattle all at noon retreat... (Lines 29-31). The repetition of the word "The" at the beginning of each clause forms a more forceful statement. All of these events that the author stating are placed back to back also creating a faster tempo as they are read generating different opinions and thoughts. While each action is a different emotional experience, since the first word is the same of each clause the reader begins to engage in the literature even more picking up on the structure.

With the poem coming to an end, the author leaves a memorable number of events using the structure of asyndeton and personification. By omitting the conjunctions the rhythmic structure is changed and the thrilling feeling is amplified. Closing out with "With rapture view the smiling fields, Adorn the mountain and the plain, Each, on the eve of Autumn yields A large supply of golden grain (Lines 45-48). The personification gives human qualities to the fields giving off a sense of happiness and positivity. With the author using asyndeton purposely to close off this poem it's crucial to recognize the emphasis on the emotional attachment to this environment. The delicacy of the fields, the power behind the mountains, and the greed in the golden grain are all placed back to back in the asyndeton to help enhance each of these feelings.

The beauty captures the reader's emotions and reveals the author's literary element choices throughout. By incorporating different devices the impact the poem has on the audience is much more greater, and creates a more everlasting effect.

In "On Summer" the author portrays the speaker's complex feelings that come with the summer and how although the summer can bring delight, it can also be a negative time. Through the author's use of imagery, contrasts and metaphors they are able to illuminate the how situation have multiple aspects to them.

The imagery of the poem allows the reader to visualize both the pros and cons of the summer in a farming area. When the speaker describes the "torrid flames" arriving again, there is a negative connotation allowing the reader to understand why the speaker is dreadful towards the summer.

Although there are negative feelings towards the summer as one continues to read the text there is a shift in how the author describes the summer. In the fifth stanza, the author then begins to describe some of the delights that come with the speaker instead of just the negatives. They describe the how the bees finally come out and their stock begins to grow.

Question 1 – Poetry Analysis

Sample Identifier: A

Score: 1-4-1

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This cogent essay provides an insightful consideration of how George Moses Horton develops a complex portrayal of summer in a rural area in the poem “On Summer.”
- The response addresses the prompt with a defensible interpretation of the poem in its first paragraph where it states, “Through use of intense imagery and personification, as well as a shift in tone, the speaker illustrates the complex combination of both fearsome power and delicate beauty found in the important and active season for the farm, ultimately reflecting the contrast between the everyday buzz of small life forms and the strong, steady permanence of nature as a whole.” This thesis earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 4

- The response provides specific evidence to support all claims in its line of reasoning, which focuses on the contrast between the small, individual responses to summer and the vast influence of the larger environment. This line of reasoning is thoroughly supported through evidence such as “Personifying actions such as ‘roars terrific’ and ‘lurks beneath’ that are scattered throughout the mentioning of the animals’ actions give a sense of inescapability” (paragraph 2). In the same paragraph, the essay argues “This attention towards tiny detail in the descriptions of natural activity immerse one completely in the workings of the natural world, with only small mentions of other perspectives—like that of ‘sportive children...frisking o’er the green’—to provide brief perspective before returning to the intensity of nature viewed up-close.” Additionally, in paragraph 4, the essay presents the point that “each farm animal provides a stark contrast to the way it can be viewed from a greater distance, illustrating the comfort that can be found in predictability” as evidence of the complex combination of small and vast perspectives on the season.
- The discerning commentary of the essay consistently explains how the evidence supports the line of reasoning, such as in paragraph 3 where the response states, “Amongst this are mentions of the plentiful bounty of later summer: vines are now ‘loaded... with melons’, ‘pomaceous orchards now expand’, and on the fields are ‘a large supply of golden grain.’ This illustrates, much like the idea of a thunderstorm on its own, the necessity of patience—for summer is a focal point in the farm for a reason.” This commentary strengthens the line of reasoning.
- The response carefully considers how multiple literary devices or techniques contribute to the meaning of the poem. The essay discusses the role of description, personification, and the shifts in point of view. In paragraph 2, the essay states, “In the first line, the start of summer is introduced with the announcement of ‘fire begin[ning] to burn,’ providing both a literal description of the fires that the fields are exposed to in hotter months as well as a figurative expression of the forthcoming heat and intensity of summer.” Additionally, the essay astutely notes the shift in the poem’s perspective from “the specific actions of the animals to the appearance of the land as a whole” to the “beauty that is all too easily overlooked when the scope of vision is too zoomed-in” (paragraph 3). This combination of

specific evidence, effective commentary, and perceptive analysis of the role of literary elements results in this essay earning 4 points in Row B.

C. Sophistication Score: 1

- The complexities and tensions of the speaker’s portrayal of the summer setting are conveyed through the essay’s sustained exploration of the vulnerability of “small life forms,” seasonal change, and the “steady permanence of nature as a whole.” Additionally, the response employs a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive. For example, in paragraph 4, the response concludes with the argument that “The idea that the farm looks the same way it always has each and every summer turns the idea of power within nature from something terrifying to something calming; much like humans, the animals’ and insects’ lives, despite seeming vastly important to their owners, are impermanent on a large and powerful Earth that is, in comparison, very much permanent.” For these compelling reasons, the essay earned 1 point in Row C.

Sample Identifier: B

Score: 1-4-0

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This essay presents a clear analysis of how George Moses Horton describes multiple aspects of summer in a rural area and develops a complex portrayal of the setting in the poem, “On Summer.”
- The essay presents its thesis in paragraph 1: “This is shown in the vibrant and descriptive work of ‘On Summer’ which reveals a complex portrayal of how nature is a powerful and influential figure that has vast effects on the everyday life of creatures and people on a farm which the author shows by mainly using summer as a symbol for change.” Because the essay responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the poem, it earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 4

- The line of reasoning of the essay focuses on the versatility of the summer setting, and the response provides evidence to support its claims. For example, in paragraph 2, the essay contends that “summer is a source of power and change” and cites the evidence, “‘Perspiring Cancer lifts his head and roars terrific from on high’ which indicates that although the constellation is non living, it still holds a powerful influence over the lives of many of the animals nearby on the farm (5).” This evidence is used to support the argument that summer (personified by the constellation of Cancer) influences all living things within the hot, rural setting.
- The commentary consistently explains how the evidence supports the line of reasoning as can be seen in paragraph 3 where the response states, “The author describes the melodic rhythm of the insects and compares their rhythm to a ‘drum’ which indicate how the sound around the farm changes around summer time (13). The author also describes ‘lamp-like bugs’ which light the night sky which is another indication of how even the color changes in the farm due to summer which further emphasizes the vast and influential effects that

summer has on the setting.” In both cases, the response first cites the evidence, then explains how it serves to support its claim that “the author uses vivid imagery to depict the vast change in the setting that summer causes to happen.”

- The essay explains how literary elements such as personification and imagery contribute to the poem’s meaning. For example, at the end of paragraph 2, the essay points out the personification found in the line “From which they strive with awe to fly” and argues “This shows how creatures respect the change in climate and know it to be a sign of change over their lives which is why many of them flee to seek shade from the harsh climate.” Because the essay provides specific evidence, clear commentary, and thoughtful explanation of the role of literary elements, this essay earned 4 points in Row B.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- Although the response attempts to set its interpretation in a broader context in the first sentence of the concluding paragraph (“While summer can be considered a nuisance to some, it still plays a large role in shaping the way of life in farms and affecting the lives of many creatures”), this contextualization is only a single moment in the essay rather than a sustained effort to engage with the complexity of the poem. The essay did not, therefore, earn the point in Row C.

Sample Identifier: C

Score: 1-3-0

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This essay considers how George Moses Horton describes multiple aspects of summer in a rural setting through his poem “On Summer.”
- The response presents a defensible interpretation of the poem at the end of the first paragraph: “The human-like description of the animals, plants, and stars evokes vividness and harmony to the setting as the poem celebrates summer.” This thesis earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 3

- The essay establishes a line of reasoning that focuses on the joys of summer and supports it with specific evidence. For example, in paragraph 3, the essay cites, “The trees ‘smile’ and ‘gaze with pleasure and delight’ (42). The description of joy felt by the trees demonstrates the similarities of man and nature as both celebrate the summer.”
- Commentary within the response explains how some of the evidence supports the line of reasoning. Paragraph 2, for example, considers how specific animals relate to summer. The essay points out “A bee ‘begins her ceaseless hum’ (17) and feels ‘delight’ when ‘she stores her comb’ (19)” as support for the claim that “Although the animals are depicted performing animal-like behaviour, there is a distinct human quality to them.”
- Paragraph 2 focuses on the connection between animals and humans as in the sentences “The thoughtfulness in which the bird thinks about its young is reminiscent of a human mother taking care of her children. Prescribing human characteristics to animals serves to

endear the animals to the humans.” This claim does not, however, support the reasoning established in paragraph 1.

- The response explains how personification contributes to the meaning of the poem, as in the sentence “Here the bee is given the human qualities of an ambition and the feelings of pride when they are accomplished” (paragraph 2). Additionally, paragraph 4 asserts “Humanity attributes their own qualities onto flora and fauna in order to share their joy.” The essay provides specific evidence, explains how some of the evidence supports the line of reasoning, and explains the role of a literary element in contributing to the meaning of the poem. The essay, thus, earned 3 points in Row B.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- The response does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument; therefore, it did not earn the point in Row C.

Sample Identifier: D

Score: 1-2-0

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This response attempts to analyze how George Moses Horton uses literary techniques and elements to describe summer in a rural setting.
- The essay responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the poem. The thesis, “As the town begins to burn the author incorporates different literary elements to help strengthen the eerie and spectral mood,” appears in the first paragraph. The essay earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 2

- The essay provides some specific, relevant evidence as seen in paragraph 2: “And thunders roll along the sky.” Paragraph 3 also mentions, “The farer hastens from the heat; The weary plough-horse droops his head; The cattle all at noon retreat...(Lines 29-31).”
- In commentary such as “this helps magnify the effect of the loudness the thunder brings, but it also creates a foundation for the reader to use their imagination to explore and really hear and feel the strength of the thunder,” the essay strives to connect the evidence to the thesis, but the commentary does not explain the connection or progression between the claims, so no line of reasoning is established.
- The essay offers a variety of literary terms (“hyperbole,” “anaphora,” “asyndeton,” “personifications,” and “rhythmic structure,”); however, the explanations of how these elements contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole are simplistic and do not strengthen the argument. For example, in paragraph 3, the essay suggests “The repetition of the word ‘The’ at the beginning of each clause forms a more forceful statement.” Because the essay offers some specific evidence and commentary but does not explain the connections and progressions between its claims, it earned 2 points in Row B.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- The response did not earn the point in Row C because it did not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument.

Sample Identifier: E

Score: 1-1-0

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This essay considers the conflicting feelings summer evokes in George Moses Horton’s poem “On Summer.”
- The essay offers a defensible interpretation in the first sentence of paragraph 1 where it states, “In ‘On Summer’ the author portrays the speakers complex feelings that come with the summer and how although the summer can bring delight, it can also be a negative time.” The essay earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 1

- The evidence provided in the essay is largely general. For example, in paragraph two, the essay observes “When the speaker describes the ‘torrid flames’ arriving again, there is a negative connotation allowing the reader to understand why the speaker is dreadful towards the summer.”
- The commentary tends to summarize the evidence, such as “They describe the how the bees finally come out and their stock begins to grow.” It does not draw a connection between the evidence and the interpretation; therefore, no line of reasoning is established in the essay.
- The response mentions “imagery, contrasts and metaphores” in paragraph 1 but does not provide examples or any explanation as to how they function in the poem. For these reasons, the essay earned 1 point in Row B.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- The essay does not develop a complex literary argument or demonstrate sophistication of thought; therefore, it did not earn the point in Row C.

Question 2

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

The following excerpt is from Jane Urquhart’s novel *The Night Stages*, published in 2015. In this passage, an artist named Kenneth is finishing a mural for a new airline terminal using the long-established medium of egg tempera, a paint made of egg yolk, pigment, and water. He thinks about the influences on his work and how his mural may be received. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Urquhart uses literary elements and techniques to convey Kenneth’s complex perspective as he completes his mural.

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.

Line It had taken him three months to complete the
thirty-six four-by-six-foot panels that would join
together, like a huge puzzle, to form the immense
mural. The last thing he painted, on the final morning,
5 was a third apple—airborne—tossed by a child
 juggler. The apples were like tiny planets, and the
 child, otherwise small and unexceptional, gained
 power through his manipulation of them. Kenneth had
 to break one last egg to paint this, and as he passed it
10 from hand to hand, letting the white drain to the floor,
 and allowing the clean yolk to settle in his palm, he
 looked at this boy—his serene, confident expression,
 the three apples aloft, the face calm with the
 knowledge that they would be kept in the air
15 indefinitely. While Kenneth mixed the yolk with the
 warm shades of ground pigment, he remembered the
 critic telling him to keep things on the picture plane
 flat, two-dimensional, and he smiled as the apple
 became spherical under his brush. When he could
20 imagine the weight of it in his hand, he knew he was
 finished. Then he began to toss brushes, palettes, and
 pigments down to the floor below. There was a drill
 shrieking somewhere in the building. The clatter his
 tools made on landing must have been drowned out by
25 its noise.

Kenneth figured he had broken five thousand eggs,
 more or less, in the making of the mural, and each
 time he broke the shell, he thought of the critic’s head,
 the smooth baldness of the top of it. Humpty-
30 Dumpty,¹ he thought, this wall, and the wall of
 cultural fashion that could keep you out, for a while,
 until the great fall. By now he knew that fashion
 always fell, it failed and fell. He was happy to be free
 of it. And as he used the shell to separate the white

35 from the yolk, he thought about Harding,² a man who
 had never made use of egg tempera. He wondered
 what had become of him. And the woman Harding
 had loved, whether she had ever painted again, and
 whether or not he himself would ever come across a
40 painting by Gentleman.³ The girl in Germany, the
 couple in Italy,⁴ floated by, a sense of them here and
 there in the mural. These narratives fought for space
 in his mind. But the mural itself, he knew, was
 divorced from narrative. As it should be, he whispered
45 to himself, as it should be. *Flight and Its Allegories*.⁵

Once he was on the ground, he rifled through a
 canvas sack until he found the camera he was looking
 for, a Brownie Starflex, with six exposures still
 available. He shot the mural from left to right. Then
50 he walked across the full length of the half-tiled floor.
 This was the last exposure and it would make the
 mural look incredibly small, like a two-inch-long
 piece of ribbon with an unreadable pattern on it. But
 he wanted to show its proportions to a friend and, in
55 any case, the more professional pictures would be
 taken later, after he was gone, when the mural had
 begun to live its own independent life in the presence
 of an audience.

For months now there had been noise, the
60 workmen’s power tools and, in the odd moments
 when those were silent, the roar of the planes arriving
 and departing at the old, soon-to-be abandoned
 terminal. He had seen the passengers, through the
 plate glass of the windows, rivers of them, pouring
65 down the steps that were pushed up to airliners, then
 flowing darkly across the tarmac. What would they
 make of *Flight and Its Allegories*? Would they be
 struck by it? Or would they simply pass it by,

preoccupied by the mysteries of their individual lives
70 as they walked forward or waited in the lounge? He
was not unaware that public art could be—and often
was—ignored. Still, what pleasure he had taken in the
making of it.

¹ Humpty-Dumpty is a nursery-rhyme character, typically depicted as an egg. He falls from a wall, breaks, and cannot be put together again.

² Kenneth’s former art teacher, who cautioned Kenneth against appropriating the ideas, styles, and techniques of other artists

³ Alexander Gentleman, an obscure artist that Harding once knew; another artist later copied his style and gained fame as a result

⁴ “The girl in Germany” and “the couple in Italy” are people Kenneth met while backpacking through Europe.

⁵ Allegories are works of literature or art that express moral or political messages, often through the use of symbols.

From *THE NIGHT STAGES* by Jane Urquhart. Copyright © 2015 by Jane Urquhart. Published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. All Rights Reserved.

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 2: Prose Fiction Analysis**6 points**

The following excerpt is from Jane Urquhart’s novel *The Night Stages*, published in 2015. In this passage, an artist named Kenneth is finishing a mural for a new airline terminal using the long-established medium of egg tempera, a paint made of egg yolk, pigment, and water. He thinks about the influences on his work and how his mural may be received. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Urquhart uses literary elements and techniques to convey Kenneth’s complex perspective as he completes his mural.

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	
Row A Thesis (0-1 points)	0 points For any of the following: <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. 	1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the passage.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
Responses that do not earn this point: <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. 		Responses that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a defensible interpretation of Kenneth's complex perspective as he completes his mural.
Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"In this excerpt, the author shows Kenneth thinking about how complex the experience of making art can be."</i> Do not respond to the prompt but make a generalized comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"Great works of art can have an amazingly powerful effect on our emotions."</i> Describe the passage or features of the passage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"Kenneth uses eggs to make paint for his mural, and afterwards he takes pictures to show his friends."</i> 		Examples that earn this point: Provide a defensible interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"The passage shows Kenneth realizing that the experience of painting the mural is a worthwhile endeavor no matter what may happen to it afterwards."</i> • <i>"Kenneth's experience of completing the mural causes him to consider the impact of artistic tradition and its continued value in the future."</i> • <i>"Although Kenneth works alone, he recognizes that he does not really create alone—he is aware that his art is always influenced by other people, both those he has known personally as well as complete strangers."</i>
Additional Notes: <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				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points)	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present), repeats provided information, or offers information irrelevant to the prompt.	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.	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.	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 passage contributes to its meaning.	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 passage contribute to its meaning.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes					
Typical responses that earn 0 points: <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. 	Typical responses that earn 1 point: <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. 	Typical responses that earn 2 points: <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. 	Typical responses that earn 3 points: <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. 	Typical responses that earn 4 points: <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. 	
Additional Notes: <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	
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 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. 	Responses that earn this point may demonstrate a 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 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.
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. 		

In this passage from *The Night Stages*, author Jane Urquhart uses rhetorical questions and juxtaposition in order to convey Kenneth's contradicting desire to be noticed and want for freedom of expression, all in order to show how true freedom comes from freeing yourself from the expectations of others.

At the end of the passage, Urquhart uses two rhetorical questions regarding Kenneth's audience and what they would "make of *Flight and its Allegories*?" as well as if they would even notice it, or would "simply pass by it, preoccupied by the mysteries of their individual lives?" These questions function as a way to show that despite Kenneth insisting that he doesn't care what people think of his art, he still does wonder what their opinions might be. His primary purpose of making art is to fulfill an innate drive to create, and his primary pleasure comes from simply creating. However, these rhetorical questions are used to indicate that he has not yet fully released himself from his desire for outside approval. He has come a long way from adhering to "cultural fashion," but his facade of not caring what others think is exposed by these questions. Kenneth is still thinking about what others think of him, so he is not yet truly free. He still desires to be noticed and a small part of him hopes that his "public art" is not "ignored." This goes to show that although true freedom involves removing the pressures of others' expectations from oneself, it is nearly impossible to live a life totally free of a desire for notice and appreciation. Due to this, people are always a work in progress, constantly working to fully free themselves from the desire for approval.

Throughout the passage, the author juxtaposes images of breaking eggs and creating art in order to convey that Kenneth needed to be "broken" and shaped by critics and past teachers in order to emerge as the best version of himself, free from others' expectations. The passage describes how Kenneth had to break "five thousand eggs" in order to create the masterpiece that he has today. In a way, the masterpiece mural he has created is him. Through all of the breaking and bruising of his ego by critics and teachers, Kenneth has developed a style unique to himself, and now this style will be displayed in public. Kenneth was able to paint this mural in a way contrary to what critics had told him was "correct," and has truly "broken free" from his own shell and matured into an artist. Though he still does care a little about what others think of him, this is not necessarily a weakness, but an area for growth. Kenneth is a work in progress, and the "breaking" of him leads to a contrasting image of his masterpiece being created, both on the canvas and in himself.

In this passage, Urquhart uses rhetorical questions and juxtaposing images of brokenness and masterpieces in order to show how Kenneth has grown through his experiences on the journey to free himself from the binds of others' expectations, but that he is still on this journey, all to show that our best selves come from when we are able to care less about what others think, but that the work to get to this point is continuous and never quite complete.

In the short story *The Night Stages* by Jane Urquhart, an artist by the name of Kenneth joyfully and confidently conceives his mural until he finds himself conflicted with worrying and fearful thoughts.

The authors use of enlightening diction helps to convey a sense of confidence in Kenneth's work through words such as, "serene," "happy," and "independent." These words illustrates his joy in his art because a man who can describe his work as serene understands the beauty of his own work and also is able to prevent the negative thinking from overshadowing his hard work. The use of the words happy and independent also demonstrate his attitude throughout his work as any artist who is satisfied with their own efforts would find no reason to be disdainful and disliking, and that through it all, their continuous efforts and undying determination would instill a sense of independence into the creator because of how much time they have devoted along with their will to persist despite their own criticism and overthinking. Along with this, the speaker also employs visual imagery to display his calm and positive minded attitude through the following: "he thought of the critic's head, the smooth baldness of the top of it." As odd of a description as it is, Kenneth's ability to portray the critic's smoothness is enough to show his own comfort and confidence he has developed as someone who is insecure about their work would not describe their critic in a relaxed manner because that sense of urgency or their annoyance would infuriate the artist and only unleash hateful descriptions of their critics.

However, Kenneth also begins to develop feelings of uncertainty as shown through the author's worrisome diction with words like, "ignored," "darkly," and, "abandoned." These are all words that will surely create a feeling of fear as the worry of one's work to go unnoticed is enough to instill doubt within anyone, and to describe a crowd as moving darkly only serves to show his lack of humanistic identity to the masses as they flow because of the monstrous fear the artists has of their opinions. Along with this, to say that the airport will soon be abandoned does not instill a sense of security in the artist's mural as who will be there to witness such an amazing painting if it will soon be vacuous? To add to the his fear, the author utilizes visual imagery as well, stating, "He has seen the passengers... rivers of them, pouring down the steps..." This revelation before Kenneth's eyes would surely have had his mind going at the prospects of what to expect because the sight of a terrifying presence of so many people would surely open the mind to the imagined opinions of so many people that it will soon become overwhelming for the artist. Along with this, it is also stated throughout the short story that, "fashion always fell," a line that Kenneth understood deeply and tries to combat. The idea that one's work will soon find its own demise and lose fame creates a sense of despair due to the fear of their efforts being forgotten and abandoned, that it was all for nothing if their work will not be remembered.

In the novel *The Night Stage* by Jane Urquhart, Kenneth, an artist, gleefully and proudly paints his mural and meets the finished product with nervousness.

In Jane Urquhart's novel *The Night Stages*, Urquhart uses diction as well as metaphors to convey Kenneth's affection for his work despite knowing it may be rejected by society as he completes his mural.

Urquhart's description of how Kenneth "smiled as the apple became spherical" despite being told by a critic to "keep things" "two-dimensional" portrays Kenneth as knowing his work may contradict societal opinions yet still remaining optimistic. Urquhart's specific word choice of Kenneth as "smil[ing]" while disregarding the critic depicts Kenneth as in peace with his art through the connotation of smiles as bringing feelings of happiness and comfort. Being in peace with his art even though there is opposition against it conveys Kenneth as affectionate of his work despite understanding society's potential rejection of it.

Additionally, Kenneth's love for his work despite potential opposition to it is further highlighted through Urquhart's use of a metaphor illustrating the large amount of people viewing Kenneth's art. Urquhart's description of Kenneth as still having "pleasure" while creating his art despite the "rivers" of passengers "pouring" and "flowing" by his art that may simply "ignore" it illustrates Kenneth as understanding people could disregard his art yet as still affectionate for his work. The metaphor of the passengers as "rivers" that are "pouring" and "flowing" emphasizes the large size of the number of people viewing and judging Kenneth's art, which highlights that society may simply "ignore" and disregard it. Urquhart's emphasis on the large amount of people potentially disregarding Kenneth's art through his use of metaphor combined with his description of Kenneth as still finding "pleasure" in the creation of it depicts Kenneth as affectionate for his work despite society's potential opposition of it.

The literary elements present convey Kenneth's complex perspective as he continues his mural. One literary element that conveys this perspective is imagery by showing the intricate details of Kenneth's work through his own eyes; another literary element that helps convey the complexities of this perspective is personification by presenting the mural as its own being with its own experiences.

The imagery present convey's Kenneth's complex perspective about his mural by depicting said mural through his eyes. In the passage in the first paragraph, there is a detailed description of his paints and the process of the mural itself, it coming to life in the eyes of the artist. The imagery present gives a look into the view of Kenneth and provides some perspective into the thought process behind the mural. This consistent imagery continues into paragraph 4 with the details of the daily life the mural would experience. Kenneth's thought process brings the narrative into an imagined future that the mural would experience and the details that would be present, how his mural could be received. This use of imagery conveys a different meaning behind it, though the use of it in paragraph 1 gave insight into Kenneth's past regarding the mural - the history behind his style and medium, the use of imagery in paragraph 4 gives insight into the future of the mural after its completion and how it would be received as a piece of public art.

The personification within the excerpt conveys Kenneth's view of the mural as its own being with its own experiences. This is obvious in paragraph 3 of the excerpt when Kenneth is taking photos of the mural for a friend; during this process, Kenneth describes the mural living on its own in front of an audience. This description shows Kenneth's perspective regarding the mural and how he believes his art has a life of its own after it has been created. This personification can be explained by Kenneth's painting style; in paragraph 1 it depicts Kenneth not stopping painting until he could imagine the weight of the apple in his hand, it is also described in this paragraph about how he was critiqued on his work and encourages to keep it two dimensional. The fact that he resented this critic and continued to paint until he could see his painting come to life explains his perspective of viewing his mural of having its own life and experiences separate to him.

In the excerpt from Jane Urquhart's novel, "The Night Stages," Urquhart starts the excerpt by stating the amount of time and work that Kenneth has put into his work. After that, he shows us how rigorously Kenneth works on his mural. Next he talks about the influences of Kenneth's work and how he hopes his work will be appreciated as professionally later on. Urquhart ends the excerpt by showcasing Kenneth's fears of his work not being appreciated. Urquhart uses descriptive language in order to paint a picture of pride of Kenneth's work, he uses rhetorical questions to show Kenneth's fear of his hard work being forgotten but he uses humor in order to show the extent to how serious Kenneth takes his work.

In order to show Kenneth's pride in his work, Urquhart employs imagery language. For example, in the first paragraph he says, "The face calm with the knowledge that they would be kept in the air indefinitely." This shows us that

Question 2 – Prose Fiction Analysis

Sample Identifier: A

Score: 1-4-1

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This articulate essay examines how, in an excerpt from the novel *The Night Stages*, Jane Urquhart uses literary elements and techniques to convey Kenneth’s complex perspective as he completes his mural in an airport.
- The essay responds to the prompt with a thesis which comprises its first paragraph: “In this passage from *The Night Stages*, author Jane Urquhart uses rhetorical questions and juxtaposition in order to convey Kenneth's contradicting desire to be noticed and want for freedom of expression, all in order to show how true freedom comes from freeing yourself from the expectations of others.” Because the thesis presents a defensible interpretation of the passage, the essay earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 4

- The thesis establishes a line of reasoning focused on the dichotomy between Kenneth’s desire for attention and his desire for free expression, and this line of reasoning is expounded on throughout the essay. The response puts forth specific evidence of this conflict in paragraph 2, where it cites Kenneth’s curiosity about “what they would ‘make of *Flight and its Allegories?*’ as well as if they would even notice it, or would “simply pass by it, preoccupied by the mysteries of their individual lives?” (paragraph 2) as evidence of the claim about Kenneth’s “contradicting desire” for both notice and “freedom of expression” (paragraph 1).
- The commentary of the essay consistently explains how the evidence supports the line of reasoning, such as in paragraph 3, where the response suggests, “the author juxtaposes images of breaking eggs and creating art in order to convey that Kenneth needed to be ‘broken’ and shaped by critics and past teachers in order to emerge as the best version of himself, free from others expectations.” Additionally, the evidence that Kenneth has “truly ‘broken free’ from his own shell” (paragraph 3) is followed by the astute commentary “Though he still does care a little about what others think of him, this is not necessarily a weakness, but an area for growth. Kenneth is a work in progress, and the ‘breaking’ of him leads to a contrasting image of his masterpiece being created, both on the canvas and in himself.”
- The response explains how multiple literary techniques contribute to the meaning of the passage. In addition to juxtaposition, the essay explains the role of rhetorical questions by asserting, “However, these rhetorical questions are used indicate that he has not yet full released himself from his desire for outside approval” (paragraph 2). This combination of specific evidence, consistent commentary that develops a clear line of reasoning, and a thoughtful explanation of Urquhart’s use of multiple literary devices earned this essay 4 points in Row B.

C. Sophistication Score: 1

- Through its thorough exploration of the tension between Kenneth’s desire for artistic freedom and his desire for the approval of others, this essay demonstrates sophistication of thought. The concluding sentence clearly shows this sophistication in its assertion that “In this passage, Urquhart uses rhetorical questions and juxtaposing images of brokenness and masterpieces in order to show how Kenneth has grown through his experiences on the journey to free himself from the binds of others’ expectations, but that he is still on this journey, all to show that our best selves come from when we are able to care less about what others think, but that the work to get to this point is continuous and never quite complete.”

Sample Identifier: B

Score: 1-4-0

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This essay responds to the prompt with an insightful analysis of Jane Urquhart’s use of literary elements and techniques to convey Kenneth’s complex perspective as he puts the finishing touches on his mural as described in an excerpt from the novel, *The Night Stages*.
- The thesis for the essay appears in paragraph 1 and states, “In the short story *The Night Stages* by Jane Urquhart, an artist by the name of Kenneth joyfully and confidently conceives his mural until he finds himself conflicted with worrying and fearful thoughts.” The thesis responds to the prompt with a defensible interpretation of the passage; therefore, the essay earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 4

- The response provides specific evidence to support all claims in its line of reasoning about the ambivalent feelings Kenneth has about his mural. Paragraph 2 of the essay focuses on Kenneth’s positive feelings about his work. For example, the essay examines Urquhart’s word choice and notes, “The authors use of enlightening diction helps to convey a sense of confidence in Kenneth’s work through words such as, ‘serene,’ ‘happy,’ and ‘independent.’” In contrast, paragraph 3 looks at Kenneth’s “feelings of uncertainty through the author’s worrisome diction with words like, ‘ignored,’ ‘darkly,’ and ‘abandoned.’”
- The commentary offered throughout the essay consistently relates the evidence back to the thesis and the line of reasoning. In paragraph 3, the essay presents Urquhart’s use of the phrase “‘fashion always fell’” and notes in the commentary that follows, “The idea that one’s work will soon find its own demise and lose fame creates a sense of despair due to the fear of their efforts being forgotten and abandoned, that it was all for nothing if their work will not be remembered.”
- The essay analyzes how multiple literary elements or techniques in the passage contribute to its meaning. In addition to diction, the essay considers the role of imagery in the passage: “To add to his fear, the author utilizes visual imagery as well, stating, ‘He has seen the passengers... rivers of them, pouring down the steps...’ This revelation

before Kenneth's eyes would surely have had his mind going at the prospects of what to expect because the sight of a terrifying presence of so many people would surely open the mind to the imagined opinions of so many people that it will soon become overwhelming for the artist” (paragraph 3). The blending of apt evidence, insightful commentary, and clear explanation of the role of literary elements result in a score of 4 for this response.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- While the essay does attempt to address complexities and tensions within the passage, it offers commentary that oversimplifies those complexities with generalizations. For example, the last sentence of paragraph 2 argues, “Kenneth's ability to portray the critic's smoothness is enough to show his own comfort and confidence he has developed as someone who is insecure about their work would not describe their critic in a relaxign manner because that sense of urgency or their annoyance would infuriate the artist and only unleash hateful descriptions of their critics.” The essay did not, therefore, earn 1 point in Row C.

Sample Identifier: C

Score: 1-3-0

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This essay considers how Jane Urquhart in an excerpt from her novel, *The Night Stages*, uses literary elements and techniques to convey Kenneth’s complex perspective as he completes his mural in an airport.
- The introductory paragraph of the essay presents the thesis: “In Jane Urquhart's novel *The Night Stages*, Urquhart uses diction as well as metaphors to convey Kenneth's affection for his work despite knowing it may be rejected by society as he completes his mural.” The thesis presents a defensible interpretation of the passage and earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 3

- The essay provides specific evidence to support the line of reasoning that focuses on Kenneth’s “affection for his work” (paragraph 1) despite “society’s potential opposition to it” (paragraph 3.) Paragraph 2 cites, “Urquhart's description of how Kenneth ‘smiled as the apple became spherical’ despite being told by a critic to ‘keep things’ ‘two-dimensional’ portrays Kenneth as knowing his work may contradict societal opinions yet still remaining optimistic” as evidence in support of the claim.
- Commentary offered in the essay explains how some of the evidence supports the line of reasoning, such as in paragraph 3 where the response states, “The metaphor of the passengers as ‘rivers’ that are ‘pouring’ and ‘flowing’ emphasizes the large size of the number of people viewing and judging Kenneth’s art, which highlights that society may simply ‘ignore’ and disregard it.” The evidence and commentary in paragraph 3 focus on the potential judgment of passersby of his mural; however, it does not fully integrate

evidence of Kenneth’s “still having ‘pleasure’ while creating his art” to support the claim that Kenneth is “affectionate for his work despite society's potential opposition of it.”

- The response examines Urquhart’s use of diction and metaphor in the excerpt. In paragraph 2, for example, the essay suggests that “Urquhart's specific word choice of Kenneth as ‘smil[ing]’ while disregarding the critic depicts Kenneth as in peace with his art through the connotation of smiles as bringing feelings of happiness and comfort.” Because the essay provides specific evidence, commentary that explains how some of the evidence supports a line of reasoning, and an explanation of how literary elements contribute to the meaning of the work, the essay earned 3 points in Row B.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- The response does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument. It did not earn the point in Row C.

Sample Identifier: D

Score: 1-2-0

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This essay attempts to analyze how Jane Urquhart uses literary elements and techniques to convey Kenneth’s complex perspectives as he completes his mural as described in an excerpt from the novel, *The Night Stages*.
- The thesis of the essay, “One literary element that conveys this perspective is imagery by showing the intricate details of Kenneth's work through his own eyes; another literary element that helps convey the complexities of this perspective is personification by presenting the mural as its own being with its own experiences” appears in the introductory paragraph and presents a defensible interpretation in the passage. This thesis earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 2

- The essay is organized around Urquhart’s use of imagery and personification. In paragraph 3 of the response, some specific evidence is provided: “in paragraph 1 it depicts Kenneth not stopping painting until he could imagine the weight of the apple in his hand, it is also described in this paragraph about how he was critiqued on his work and encourages to keep it two dimensional.” The evidence also consists, however, of broad generalities, such as “there is a detailed description of his paints and the process of the mural itself, it coming to life in the eyes of the artist” (paragraph 2) and “This use of imagery conveys a different meaning behind it” (paragraph 2).
- The commentary of the response explains how some of the evidence relates to the thesis. For example, in paragraph 3, the essay suggests, “This description shows Kenneth's perspective regarding the mural and how he believes his art has a life of it's own after it has been created.” The essay does not, however, explain the connections or progression between the response’s claims. No clear line of reasoning is established within the response.

- The response contains repetitive comments about “the daily life the mural would experience,” but these explanations do not relate to the thesis or support any claim.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- Because the essay does not develop a complex literary argument or demonstrate sophistication of thought, it did not earn the point in Row C.

Sample Identifier: E

Score: 1-1-0

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This essay considers how Jane Urquhart uses literary techniques to convey Kenneth’s reaction as he completes his mural as conveyed in the excerpt from the novel *The Night Stages*.
- The essay responds to the prompt with its thesis presented as the last sentence of paragraph 1: “Urquhart uses descriptive language in order to paint a picture of pride of Kenneth's work, he uses rhetorical questions to show Kenneth's fear of his hard work being forgotten but he uses humor in order to show the extent to how serious Kenneth takes his work.” This thesis offers a defensible interpretation of the passage and, therefore, earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 1

- The evidence of the essay focuses on the overarching narrative of the passage rather than on specific, relevant evidence. For example, in paragraph 1, the essay offers the general statement, “Next he talks about the influences of Kenneth's work and how he hopes his work will be appreciated as professionally later on.”
- No line of reasoning is established through the evidence and commentary. Instead, the commentary summarizes the evidence in observations such as, “Urquhart ends the excerpt by showcasing Kenneth's fears of his work not being appreciated.” No connection is made between the evidence and the student’s argument.
- The response mentions “descriptive language” and “rhetorical questions” but provides little explanation as to how they function in the passage.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- This essay does not demonstrate sophistication of thought, nor does it develop a complex literary argument. Therefore, it did not earn the point in Row C.

Question 3

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

Many works of literature explore a character’s sense of lacking something important in life. The character perceives an unfulfilled need which may be emotional, spiritual, financial, or something the character does not understand or cannot articulate. Either from your own reading or from the following list, choose a work of fiction in which such a feeling is explored. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how the character’s sense of an unfulfilled need 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.

Antigone

The Awakening

The Bell Jar

Brave New World

Ceremony

Death of a Salesman

Don Quixote

Fences

Frankenstein

The Goldfinch

The Handmaid’s Tale

How the García Girls Lost Their Accents

Howards End

The Hundred Secret Senses

If Beale Street Could Talk

Invisible Man

Jane Eyre

Kindred

Little Fires Everywhere

Macbeth

Moby-Dick

Native Son

On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous

One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest

Passing

A Raisin in the Sun

Sag Harbor

The Scarlet Letter

The Secret Life of Bees

Song of Solomon

Sweat

Swing Time

The Tempest

There There

A Thousand Splendid Suns

To the Lighthouse

The Visit

When the Emperor Was Divine

White Noise

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.

Question 3: Literary Argument**6 points**

Many works of literature explore a character's sense of lacking something important in life. The character perceives an unfulfilled need which may be emotional, spiritual, financial, or something the character does not understand or cannot articulate. Either from your own reading or from the following list, choose a work of fiction in which such a feeling is explored. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how the character's sense of an unfulfilled need 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	
Row A Thesis (0-1 points)	0 points For any of the following: <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. 	1 point Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the selected work.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
Responses that do not earn this point: <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. 		Responses that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a defensible interpretation of a character's sense of an unfulfilled need in the selected work. OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a claim about how a character's sense of an unfulfilled need contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole.
Examples that do not earn this point: Restate the prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"A common theme in literature is a character who feels like one of their needs has not been met, or they are missing something that they want out of life."</i> Do not respond to the prompt but make a generalized comment about the selected work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"Gatsby is never really satisfied with anything in his life."</i> <i>"The Bell Jar follows the life of the protagonist, Esther, through a short period of time in her young adulthood."</i> <i>"In Ceremony, Tayo feels like something is missing from his life."</i> 		Examples that earn this point: Provides a defensible interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"Edna's lack of freedom to pursue her desires, in Chopin's <u>The Awakening</u>, highlights how societal constraints can drive a person to both rebellion and submission."</i> <i>"In <u>The Bluest Eye</u>, Pecola's need to be loved goes unfulfilled and contributes to the violence of the world in which she lives."</i> <i>"Throughout <u>The Age of Innocence</u>, Newland Archer believes he needs more excitement than his traditional, comfortable life with his wife provides. This drives him to consider a relationship with Ellen Olenska and makes him realize that this 'unfulfilled need' is really a foolish idea."</i>
Additional Notes: <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. A thesis that offers a defensible claim about a character's sense of an unfulfilled need in the selected work may earn the point; any reasonable student interpretation of "an unfulfilled need" is acceptable. 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				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points)	<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 work 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 a 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. 		

The American Dream is often depicted in literature as it carries great importance to the understanding of American culture. In F. Scott Fitzgerald's classic *The Great Gatsby*, the titular character Jay Gatsby exemplifies the unfulfilled needs that have come with the American Dream. Gatsby's sense of being unfulfilled in various aspects of his life, such as romantically, socially, and financially, serve as an example of the potentially destructive culture that America and all it represents exert on individuals. Gatsby's unfulfilled needs represent a larger cultural phenomenon and American attitudes.

From the beginning of the novel, Fitzgerald develops the idea of "otherness" through the narrator, Nick Carraway. Nick is generally distanced from those around him, whether this is by his monetary status in comparison to the wealth around him or his physical distance. However, Nick being an "other" in this world of rich lives makes his interactions with Gatsby reveal just how unfulfilled Gatsby happens to be. If Nick is "othered," then Gatsby in comparison must be one who fits in with the crowd as his dauntingly large mansion and parties seem to express. However, this is proven to not be true. Gatsby, who should be one who is completely fulfilled compared to Nick, a newcomer to the social climate, still is portrayed as longing for something unfulfilled through the metaphor of the green light. Gatsby's concentration on this light, far away from his home yet enticingly close as it lays across the water, represents his desires that have been unfulfilled. The green light is at Daisy's house, an old lover who he wishes to return to.

The green light at Daisy's house exemplifies all the needs of Gatsby: romantic desire, social acceptance, and monetary success. Green is of course most related to money, yet the phrase "green with envy" comes to mind. Gatsby's actions throughout the novel show how envious he can be; Gatsby convinces Daisy to come over privately though she is married, he throws lavish parties in an attempt to look the best, and he scams by illegal means to earn the money to feed his lifestyle. It is apparent that Gatsby is compensating for his feelings of lacking his needs through these excessive measures.

Gatsby's want for Daisy also reflects his past where his needs were not met. Gatsby's backstory, where he was impoverished, made it impossible for him to pursue the rich Daisy. The social attitudes at the time would have made this romantic need hard to fulfill; while Gatsby is in love, economic barriers prevent his desires from coming true. Therefore, his past love for Daisy kickstarted the social acceptance he desired (by being rich, fitting in), the romantic love he needed, and the money he would have to have in order to meet the previous needs.

The present day Gatsby's actions are all due to his hardworking nature, where he tries to fulfill every expectation that American culture has shown, specifically in the rich New York community. His intense efforts to meet his needs, like decorating Nick's home lavishly just for tea with Daisy or earning tons from illegal alcohol sales, represent just how desperate his climate has forced him to become. If it were not for the social expectations placed upon Gatsby (that one should be rich, old money not new, never a bachelor), he may have never found himself in the position he happened to be in. The tenacity in which he followed the

American Dream, where anyone can fulfill their needs in America with hard work, ended up being the demise of many.

Gatsby's actions eventually culminate in the love affair between Tom (Daisy's husband) and Myrtle being heavily complicated by Gatsby's own feelings for Daisy. The normative social expectation that one should be faithful and monogamous has been destroyed by Gatsby's intense needs warping his desires and causing conflict with Tom. Tom's own unfulfilled desires then clash with Gatsby's own, resulting in the death of Myrtle and finally Gatsby. At this point, all semblance of social belonging has been destroyed. The outcasts (new money Gatsby and poor Myrtle) have been eliminated from the rich American social circle Daisy and Tom belong to through their deaths. Even as Gatsby fought to meet his needs and fit in with American culture in the area, it resulted in his own downfall.

The American Dream for Gatsby served as an example of how the expectations and needs imposed by a culture can end up being destructive. Gatsby's failure to successfully meet his needs were due to his social environment, where American expectations were nearly impossible to meet from the start and laborious to follow.

In the book *Fences*, the main character Troy had a very poor childhood and young adult life. His unfortunate circumstances and lack of freedom led him to want that sense of youth back as an adult, which is unfortunately something that can't be restored, and leads to the idea that youth is something that must be taken advantage of at the right time because it only fades away as one grows older.

During the novel, Troy cheats on his wife, Rose, with someone named Alberta, which is later revealed to Rose when he tells her Alberta is going to have a baby. One of the excuses he gives for being unfaithful is that Alberta made him feel something new, something he hadn't really experienced with Rose. Whether Troy knew it or not, this feeling is that of being young and carefree, something he didn't get to experience when he was younger. Being with Alberta gave him a sense of rebellion, one that is often associated with teenagers and younger people wanting to go against the system and do whatever they want. Since he had an extremely strict father, this wasn't something he could ever do, and so he compensates in his older years in hopes of getting to experience it. The consequences are much worse when you're older however, because much more responsibility is in your hands, and Troy learned this the hard way when Rose gave up on him.

Troy has a son named Cory who is on the football team at his high school. He is very successful and even has a talent agent come to scout him out. When Troy was younger, he played baseball, but due to his skin color, he was never able to go anywhere with it. However, Cory had a very high possibility of getting to play in college, which made Troy jealous and force Cory to stop playing. Baseball was something very important to Troy, and to see somebody else accomplish his own dreams would have been very difficult to witness, even if it was his own son. He longed for the ability to go back and play baseball again, which was evident whenever he went and swung his bat at the tree in their yard. His time in jail when he was a young adult also did not help his chances at going far in baseball, which places more of the blame on himself, that if he stayed out of trouble and tried harder, he could have gone on to play baseball for the pros. Since that time is gone, he can never have that opportunity again.

Troy also has a second son names Lyons. Lyons doesn't have a job that supports him well, and often has to rely on Troy or his girlfriend for support. This is something that makes Troy extremely angry, because he refuses to grow up and get a real job that he can use to be independent. Although part of the reason he is so angry is because Lyons always asks him for money, another is that Lyons is in his thirties and yet still behaving as if he is a teenager. Troy is exasperated at the idea of someone who is a full adult still acting so young, and yet he likely feels a bit jealous that he can't have that as well. He will never be able to retain that youth however, because he has nobody else that he can rely on, since his parents are both dead and he ran away from home when he was younger. He has had to support himself since the beginning, which is unfair in his mind, since his son doesn't need to support himself at all. It becomes something always in the back of his mind, something he really can't unsee, and it hurts because he desperately needs to feel that. He's never had someone take care of him and he needs to feel that, but he can't because his time has passed for that opportunity.

Youth is an extremely coveted thing in many people because many people didn't get to experience being carefree and not having to worry about taking care of yourself from such a young age. This became the thing that Troy needed the most in his adult life, but it is not something he ever was able to get. The things that go along with being young slowly go away as you age until eventually they are out of the picture and no longer possible to achieve.

In the novel *Sing Unburied Sing* the main character Jojo experiences hunger. Throughout the book the idea of not having enough and needing more is common. Jojo comes from a lowerclass family living in rural Mississippi. During the duration of the story Jojo and his little sister Kayla struggle with nourishing themselves and finding people who will help care for them.

In Jojo's life he doesn't have many people to care for him. He lives with his grandparents, mother, and sister. His grandmother is dying, so his grandfather is often busy taking care of her. This leaves his mother, Leonie, to take care of him, but she often neglects his needs and cares more for herself. This is especially shown when Jojo, Kayla, and Leonie take a trip down to Parchman prison to bring Jojo's father back home. They leave for the trip before they get a chance to eat breakfast which leaves the two kids malnourished the entire trip. When they do end up stopping Leonie gives Jojo money to buy her a coke and leaves nothing for him. These examples show how Jojo has no one to care for him and is often left with less than he needs. This paints Leonie in a negative light and makes the reader sympathetic towards Jojo. This view of the characters helps the reader to infer what actions they will take later in the book and how they will respond to hardship.

Throughout the book Jojo sometimes resorts to stealing from others to fulfill his sister and his own needs. On the way to the prison Leonie makes a stop at a friend's house. While there, she declines food and doesn't check on Jojo or Kayla. As a last resort Jojo steals crackers and juice from the house and shares them with his sister in the car. If Jojo had enough to eat he would not need to steal from others. This shows how great these unfulfilled needs are and the lengths he has to go to resolve them. Jojo is seen as independent because he cannot rely on others to care for him.

Unfulfilled needs are commonplace for Jojo throughout the book. This theme of hunger contributes to the overall interpretation by setting up expectations and character actions. This theme allows the reader to read into the complex relationships the characters have with one another and why they act in the way that they do. Without the context of unfulfilled needs the reader wouldn't understand the environment the characters live in.

In the novel *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Tennessee Williams presents characterization and symbolism to convey the interpretation of the story, this illuminates the deep affects that one's desires can have on their life.

Throughout the story, readers learn in depth about each character and understand how they contribute to the meaning of that story. Blanche plays the biggest role of the story and constantly sees her character changing. Williams uses her characterization to prove that one's desires will cause them to crash and burn. Her need to be liked by others around her and always be seen as beautiful caused her to build up plenty of lies and bridges that ultimately collapsed around her, which led to her being seen as crazy and being forced into a mental institute. Another character that helps readers interpret the story's meaning is Blanche's sister, Stella. Stella's desire to feel the love of her husband Stanley and failure to react to the signs her sister tried to warn her about caused her to be stuck with someone who is very temperamental. This proves to enforce the story's overall theme because Stella's lack of sense and listening caused her sister to be taken against her will.

William's futhers the characters identities through use of symbolism. Blanche lets her desires control her actions and it causes her to build up a wall of lies to protect it. Her continual bathing throughout the novel is very significant because it shows that she wants to keep herself "clean" in the eyes of others so that they view her in the way she wants. This helps push the theme of the story because her desire to be loved by many and to keep her youth causes her to continue to lie. These lies in turn make her feel dirty which explains why she is always bathing.

Within *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo feels a sense of unfulfilled need. With this need it drives him to go and try to defy fate by falling in love with Juliet. This contributes to the theme of the play as it shows how inevitable fate is no matter how hard a character can try to change it.

For example Romeo throughout the play is shown to be smitten with Juliet who is with the rival family. Due to this they are fated to be enemies instead of star crossed lovers. This is evident with how Romeo interacts with the side characters. This can be seen with Romeo interacting with Juliet's cousin Tybalt. Tybalt is very aggressive against Romeo's family due to the rivalry which highlights how fate cannot be changed.

Moreover within the final moments of the play, Romeo arrives too late to the meeting place and assumes Juliet is dead. This causes him to take his life, and which has Juliet waking up from the coma-like status. Upon waking up she sees Romeo dead next to her, which shows how they are destined to not be together.

All in all *Romeo and Juliet* is a prime example of how a character's sense of an unfulfilled need can contribute to the interpretation of the theme within the work.

Question 3 – Literary Argument

Sample Identifier: A

Score: 1-4-1

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This essay astutely analyzes Jay Gatsby’s sense of unfulfilled needs as conveyed in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s novel, *The Great Gatsby*.
- The essay responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the selected work. The thesis, “Gatsby’s sense of being unfulfilled in various aspects of his life, such as romantically, socially, and financially, serve as an example of the potentially destructive culture that America and all it represents exert on individuals,” appears in the first paragraph of the essay and earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 4

- The response provides specific evidence to support the line of reasoning that focuses on the connection between Gatsby’s unfulfilled needs and “a larger cultural phenomenon and American attitudes” (paragraph 1). The evidence centers around specific details from the novel to build an interpretation. For example, paragraph 2 makes a claim about Nick Carraway’s “being an ‘other’ in this world of rich lives” and supports the claim by noting Nick’s lack of “monetary status,” especially in comparison to Gatsby’s “dauntingly large mansion and parties.” Paragraph 3 builds on the argument about Gatsby’s desire to reconnect with Daisy by describing how “The green light at Daisy’s house exemplifies all the needs of Gatsby: romantic desire, social acceptance, and monetary success.” Additionally, paragraph 5 offers the evidence that Gatsby’s “intense efforts to meet his needs like decorating Nick’s home lavishly just for tea with Daisy or earning tons from illegal alcohol sales, represent just how desperate his climate has forced him to become.” By focusing on specific details from the text, the line of reasoning is clearly developed.
- The commentary in the essay consistently explains how the evidence supports the line of reasoning. For instance, in paragraph 3 after a detailed description of Gatsby’s efforts to win over Daisy, the essay contends, “It is apparent that Gatsby is compensating for his feelings of lacking his needs through these excessive measures.” Additionally, the commentary supporting the significance of Gatsby’s unfulfilled needs in paragraph 6 explains, “Even as Gatsby fought to meet his needs and fit in with American culture in the area, it resulted in his own downfall.” Finally, the concluding paragraph begins with the statement, “The American Dream for Gatsby served as an example of how the expectations and needs imposed by a culture can end up being destructive.” This commentary displays a keen awareness of the complexity of achieving the American dream as presented in the thesis. The essay’s effective combination of specific evidence and consistent commentary thoroughly supports the line of reasoning composed of multiple supporting claims. This essay, therefore, earned 1 point in Row B.

C. Sophistication Score: 1

- This response demonstrates sophistication of thought through its ability to situate Gatsby’s lack of fulfillment within a broader context, stating that “The American Dream

for *Gatsby* served as an example of how the expectations and needs imposed by a culture can end up being destructive” (paragraph 7). This sentence supports the response’s earlier claim in paragraph 1 that “*Gatsby*’s unfulfilled needs represent a larger cultural phenomenon and American attitudes” and situates the argument within a broader context. Additionally, the essay identifies and explores complexities or tensions within the novel by concluding, “*Gatsby*’s failure to successfully meet his needs were due to his social environment, where American expectations were nearly impossible to meet from the start and laborious to follow” (paragraph 7). For these reasons, the essay earned 1 point in Row C.

Sample Identifier: B**Score: 1-4-0****A. Thesis Score: 1**

- The essay earned 1 point in Row A. This essay clearly examines the lack of fulfillment that haunts the character Troy Maxson as portrayed in August Wilson’s play, *Fences*.
- The response offers a defensible interpretation of the play in the first paragraph where it states, “In the book *Fences*, the main character Troy had a very poor childhood and young adult life. His unfortunate circumstances and lack of freedom led him to want that sense of youth back as an adult, which is unfortunately something that can’t be restored, and leads to the idea that youth is something that must be taken advantage of at the right time because it only fades away as one grows older.” The essay, therefore, earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 4

- The essay offers specific details from the play to build a line of reasoning that focuses on Troy’s regrets about his lost youth and his lack of fulfillment with his current life. The response focuses primarily on Troy’s relationships with his wife, Rose, and his sons, Cory and Lyons. Specific evidence of Troy’s unhappiness is offered in paragraph 2, which states, “One of the excuses he gives for being unfaithful is that Alberta made him feel something new, something he hadn’t really experienced with Rose.” In paragraph 3, the essay offers further evidence of Troy’s regrets about his lost youth when it cites, “He longed for the ability to go back and play baseball again, which was evident whenever he went and swung his bat at the tree in their yard.” In presenting Troy’s relationship with his son Lyons, the essay offers the example that “Lyons doesn’t have a job that supports him well, and often has to rely on Troy or his girlfriend for support” (paragraph 4), which supports the claim in paragraph 4 about Troy being “exasperated at the idea of someone who is a full adult still acting so young, and yet he likely feels a bit jealous that he can’t have that as well.”
- The commentary of the essay consistently explains how the evidence supports the line of reasoning. In paragraph 2, for example, the commentary contemplates why Troy had an affair with Alberta: “Being with Alberta gave him a sense of rebellion, one that is often associated with teenagers and younger people wanting to go against the system and do whatever they want.” Additionally, paragraph 3 presents an explanation of the significance of Troy’s jail time when it states, “His time in jail when he was a young adult

also did not help his chances at going far in baseball, which places more of the blame on himself, that if he stayed out of trouble and tried harder, he could have gone on to play baseball for the pros. Since that time is gone, he can never have that opportunity again.” Because the essay provides specific evidence to support all claims in its line of reasoning and consistently explains how the evidence supports it, the essay earned 4 points in Row B.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- While this essay makes a persuasive argument, it does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument. The essay does not address complexities within the play, and while it attempts to situate the interpretation in a broader context of youth, it does not develop “the idea of youth” (paragraph 1) beyond generalities. This essay, therefore, did not earn the point in Row C.

Sample Identifier: C

Score: 1-3-0

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This response analyzes how Jojo, a character in Jesmyn Ward’s novel, *Sing, Unburied, Sing*, deals with a sense of physical hunger and a larger unfulfilled need to be cared for.
- The concluding paragraph of the essay presents the thesis, “Unfulfilled needs are commonplace for Jojo throughout the book. This theme of hunger contributes to the overall interpretation by setting up expectations and character actions.” Because the thesis presents a defensible interpretation of the novel, the essay earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 3

- The response provides specific evidence to support its line of reasoning that focuses on Jojo’s unfulfilled need for people to care for him. Evidence includes Jojo’s relationship with his mother who “often neglects his needs and cares more for herself” (paragraph 2). The essay adds the specific details about their “trip down to parchman prison to bring Jojo’s father back home. They leave for the trip before they get a chance to eat breakfast which leaves the two kids malnourished the entire trip” (paragraph 2). Additionally, in paragraph 3, the response further develops the claim about malnourishment by observing that “As a last resort Jojo steals crackers and juice from the house and shares them with his sister in the car.”
- Commentary is incorporated to explain how some evidence supports the line of reasoning. For example, the essay follows up examples of Jojo’s hunger with the observation that “Jojo has no one to care for him and is often left with less than he needs” (paragraph 2). The response, however, does not consistently explain how all the evidence supports the line of reasoning. In the third paragraph, for example, the claim about Jojo’s independence (“Jojo is seen as independent because he cannot rely on others to care for him”) is underdeveloped. The conclusion also asserts, “This theme allows the reader to read into the complex relationships the characters have with one another and why they

act in the way that they do,” but again this point is not clearly related to the line of reasoning. For these reasons, the essay earned 3 points in Row B.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- The essay does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument; therefore, it did not earn the point in Row C.

Sample Identifier: D

Score: 1-2-0

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This essay considers the sense of unfulfillment found in the character of Blanche DuBois, a character in Tennessee Williams’s play, *A Streetcar Named Desire*.
- The essay responds to the prompt with a thesis located in paragraph 2: “Williams uses her characterization to prove that one’s desires will cause them to crash and burn.” Because the response offers a defensible interpretation of the play, it earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 2

- The response provides some specific, relevant evidence, such as “Her need to be liked by others around her and always be seen as beautiful caused her to build up plenty of lies and bridges that ultimately collapsed around her, which led to her being seen as crazy and being forced into a mental institute” (paragraph 2). Paragraph 3 suggests Blanche’s “continual bathing throughout the novel is very significant because it shows that she wants to keep herself ‘clean’ in the eyes of others so that they view her in the way she wants.”
- While these details are presented in an attempt to develop a line of reasoning around the danger of pursuing one’s desire to fulfill a need, the commentary fails to make the connection clear. The claims in paragraph 2, “Throughout the story, readers learn in depth about each character and understand how they contribute to the meaning of that story,” and in paragraph 3, “William’s fathers the characters identities through use of symbolism,” do not adequately support the thesis. The essay refers to literary devices, such as characterization, symbolism, and theme but does not explain how they contribute to the interpretation of the work as a whole. The response therefore received 2 points in Row B.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- Because the essay does not develop a complex literary argument or demonstrate sophistication of thought, it did not earn the point in Row C.

Sample Identifier: E

Score: 1-1-0

A. Thesis Score: 1

- This essay considers Romeo’s sense of lacking something important in his life as depicted in William Shakespeare’s play, *Romeo and Juliet*.
- The essay offers a defensible interpretation in the opening paragraph where it states, “With this need it drives him to go and try to defy fate by falling in love with Juliet. This contributes to the theme of the play as it shows how inevitable fate is no matter how hard a character can try to change it.” This thesis earned 1 point in Row A.

B. Evidence Score: 1

- The evidence provided in the essay is primarily general and consists largely of plot summary: “Tybalt is very aggressive against Romeo's family due to the rivalry which highlights how fate cannot be changed” (paragraph 2) and “Upon waking up she sees Romeo dead next to her” (paragraph 3).
- No line of reasoning is established because the commentary summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the argument. The essay attempts to connect fate and an unfulfilled need through commentary such as, “which highlights how fate cannot be changed” (paragraph 2) and “which shows how they are destined to not be together” (paragraph 3), but the relationship is never clarified.

C. Sophistication Score: 0

- The response did not earn the point in Row C because it does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument.