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AP English Literature and Composition
Tackling Question 3
Student Samples 2017



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2017 AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Question 3

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

Select a novel, play, or epic poem that features a character whose origins are unusual or mysterious. Then write an essay in which you analyze how these origins shape the character and that character’s relationships, and how the origins contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole.

You may choose a work from the list below or one of comparable literary merit. Do not merely summarize the plot.

Beloved
Brave New World
Dracula
The English Patient
Frankenstein
Great Expectations
Grendel
The Iliad
The Importance of Being Earnest
Jane Eyre
Light in August
Macbeth
The Mayor of Casterbridge
The Metamorphosis

Middlemarch
No Country for Old Men
The Odyssey
Oedipus Rex
Orlando
Oryx and Crake
The Playboy of the Western World
A Prayer for Owen Meany
Their Eyes Were Watching God
Tom Jones
Twelfth Night
Waiting for Godot
Wuthering Heights

STOP

END OF EXAM

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2017 SCORING GUIDELINES — Version 1.0

Question 3: Mysterious Origins

General Directions: This scoring guide will be useful for most of the essays that you read, but in problematic cases, please consult your table leader. The score that you assign should reflect your judgment of the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, style, and mechanics. **Reward the writers for what they do well.** The score for an exceptionally well written essay may be raised by one point above the otherwise appropriate score. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a three (3).

9-8 These essays offer a well-focused and persuasive analysis of how unusual or mysterious origins shape the character and his or her relationships, and how these origins contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole. Using apt and specific textual support, these essays analyze how unusual or mysterious origins affect the character, his or her relationships, and the meaning of the work as a whole. Although these essays may not be error-free, they make a strong case for their interpretation and discuss the literary work with significant insight and understanding. Essays scored a nine (9) reveal more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do essays scored an eight (8).

7-6 These essays offer a reasonable analysis of how unusual or mysterious origins shape the character and his or her relationships, and how these origins contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole. While these papers have insight and understanding, their analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of the 9-8 essays. Essays scored a seven (7) present better developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than do essays scored a six (6).

5 These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading, but they tend to be superficial or thinly developed in analysis. They often rely upon plot summary that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Although the writers attempt to analyze how unusual or mysterious origins shape the character and his or her relationships, and how these origins contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole, they may demonstrate a rather simplistic understanding of the significance of the origins, and support from the text may be too general. While these writers demonstrate adequate control of language, their essays may be marred by surface errors. These essays are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as 7-6 essays.

4-3 These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of how unusual or mysterious origins shape the character and his or her relationships, and how these origins contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant; the essays may reflect an incomplete or oversimplified understanding of the character's origins. These essays may be characterized by an unfocused or repetitive presentation of ideas or an accumulation of errors; they may lack control over the elements of college-level composition. Evidence from the text may be slight or misconstrued, or the essays may rely on plot summary only. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreading and/or demonstrate inept writing.

2-1 Although these essays make some attempt to respond to the prompt, they compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 4-3 range. Often, they are unacceptably brief or incoherent in presenting their ideas. They may be poorly written on several counts and contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. The writers' remarks may be presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Essays scored a one (1) contain little coherent discussion of the text.

0 These essays give a response that is completely off-topic or inadequate; there may be some mark or a drawing or a brief reference to the task.

-- These essays are entirely blank.

2017 Question 3 Sample Essays

Character of unusual or mysterious origins

K In "The Great Gatsby" the reader does not know much about Gatsby's past. We don't know how he became rich or how his childhood was. This affects his relationships because now Gatsby is mysterious and people want to hang around because of the mystery and not because they actually want to be his friend.

However, the writer wants to actually be his friend and starts to get to know him. Unlike Daisy who is just using him while he is in love with her. Towards the middle we start to discover who Gatsby is and how he is actually trying to relive the past that he had with Daisy and believes that maybe since he has money now she would leave her husband to be with him.

This mystery of who Gatsby is makes up the novel yet he dies with no one except the writer knowing who he truly is. # (151 words)

L "Frankenstein by Mary Shelley explores the nature of humanity and creation as well as the consequences of isolation and social rejection. In the novel, the "creature" is a manifestation of the barbaric and unusual experimentations conducted by Victor Frankenstein. Due to his inhumane, monstrous appearance and the nature of his origin, the creature is denied entry to human society and is deconstructed for his unusual exterior image. The creature's lack of social experience and desire for companionship contributes to the rage and hurt that he feels when he is isolated from the world that he is placed in.

The creature's origin is not natural; he is a character that is not born, he is created from dead bodies and scientific genetic modification. As a result, the creature has no introduction to the society in which he is unfamiliar with. Victor's abandonment significantly reduces the creature because it is Victor who first brings him into the world. Without the guidance of the one whom he considers to be his "creator" and friend, the creature is forced to confront isolation and rejection from society on his own.

The creature's few interactions with humans contribute to the "otherness" that he feels. The novel depicts the creature as an "it" that has feelings and a desire to join the human world. However, the brutal

treatment that he receives and the betrayal that he is forced to feel manifests within himself over the course of the novel, making him commit acts of violence against Victor Frankenstein. In different scenarios, Shelley demonstrates the way in which the creature's hopes are shattered by human ignorance. For example, when the creature goes to explore on his own and to gain the attributes of humankind, he meets a small family living in a cabin. He comes to value this family dearly, watching from afar, and learning from them what Victor failed to accomplish teaching him. However, this trust is brutally destroyed when the family fails to accept him and treats him as a monstrous being like the rest of society. By the end of her novel, Shelley depicts the creature as a character that is first good but then corrupted by human feelings.

The creation of the creature can then be associated with human desire for excellence and the greed that comes with greater accomplishment. Frankenstein is a novel that not only addresses the cruelty of isolation, but the dangers of experimentation and attempting to surpass nature's abilities. In the same way that the creature's origins exemplify the consequences that can arise, Walton's journey for his own ambitions also demonstrates the limits of willpower and human capabilities. The work addresses the way in which the boundaries of nature are to be respected and that human nature can certainly be more hideous than we can imagine. # (466 words)

M If your friend jumped off a bridge would you? A common question asked by authoritative figures to make you more aware you were becoming subject to conformity. Today's society places a lot of emphasis on conformity sometimes going as far to say things such as "If you don't have (*insert name of trendy item*) then you are missing out, all the cool people have it." In the novel "1984" by George Orwell, a society functioning by conformity is satirized and warned against, because of the fact Orwell thought our world was actually going to come to that if we weren't careful. 1984 tries to persuade the reader towards non-conformity by making the reader envision this terrible society.

In the novel, the head government figure is Big Brother and Orwell emphasizes his role in the novel by depicting several posters of Big Brother with the slogan, "Big Brother is watching you." The idea that the government is always watching you even in your home is supposed to be an uncomfortable topic for the reader to think about because of the absolute lack of privacy. Orwell strives to make the reader uncomfortable in this way because it means he is getting his message across that everyone should be their own person and have their own ideas and emotions.

The main character in the novel is a middle aged man named Winston Smith who works for one of the branches of the government called "the Ministry of Truth" where he goes and changes recorded history to make the government look good. Winston's origins are unusual and mysterious throughout the novel because of the fact, he never can remember his childhood. In the story, Winston starts having dreams and flashbacks that allude to his mother and his past, but they are only snippets and ultimately leave Winston wondering and confused about where he comes from. In his visions of his family, he sees his mother and siblings stuck on a boat that is sinking to the bottom of the ocean leading him to believe their deaths were because of him somehow, but that is all he remembers. Winston, without being able to remember his past, feels lost and doesn't know where he belongs which leads to a lot of self exploration where he realizes he hates Big Brother and starts to commit thought crime. All of this inner conflict causes Winston to be inquisitive of secretive subjects but very private and guarded in his mannerisms. Because Winston strives to learn where he came from and what happened to his mother, he starts reaching out for a maternal figure to quell his need for information about his own mother. Winston eventually finds Julia to be a girl he wants and their relationship becomes very passionate. The two are both fueled by rage against the government but Winston is also subconsciously fueled by his need to feel he belongs and is wanted. So a lot of the passion between Julia and Winston is from the fact Winston has a mysterious origin. Because of all the passion between the two and the inquisitiveness of Winston, the two carelessly commit thought crime by not only not conforming, but seeking more ways to go against the government. The two lovebirds are then taken, and tortured until they forget their rebellious thoughts

and then are returned to society like nothing happened. # (558 words)

N The book *Beloved* is mysterious in a way that deals with ghosts. The ghosts in the story also make it unusual. The characters' relationships in the stories shape all the other aspects of the story such as the tone, mood, plot, settings, and the theme and attitude of the story. The meaning of the book gives insight into how the characters' reactions with each other but also determines the tone of the story. # (73 words)

O The novel *Blood Meridian* written by Cormac McCarthy prominently features a dynamic main protagonist named throughout the novel as merely, 'the Kid.' Although the main character, very little insight is given into the origins of the Kid, other than his mother's passing during labor, and the fact that his life until this point [in the novel] has been troubled.

In this novel, the Kid joined a gang of individuals who scalp Native American people for money, named, 'the gang.' In the Southwest and Mexico, the gang is forced to spend copious amounts of time with each other in less than adequate conditions, which tends to develop close-knit bonds between individuals. While the gang does sacrifice for each other, and provide for one another, the relationship between the men can be described as cold and detached because they only speak to each other when necessary, and do not mourn each other's death. While much of this relationship can be attributed to the harsh nature of the war the men are fighting, it can be argued that the Kid has a minute reaction to death because of the familiarity he has to death, and that's why he remains detached from his constituents because he wouldn't want to risk developing a close relationship with someone likely to die, which is his whole gang.

An apparent theme throughout the novel is the savagery of the human race when unchained by the law of civilization. The Kid in particular acts as a savage when he and the gang are hunting Native Americans, this may be because the Kid lacks basic and fundamental truths taught from his mother; like the shame in raping, killing, and stealing. Instead he is influenced by the gang, who teach him an opposing set of moral codes, which allows him to justify his

malicious actions. Having a troubled past full of fighting also made 'the Kid' a vulnerable target to the gang to draft him, because of his stunning ability to win a fight. Although the loss of their mother cannot describe each member of the gang, the theme is represented in them through continual shifts in and out of savagery. When the men ventured out into the open land to hunt, their morals seem to disappear and while they never fully came back (their morals), the gang would act more human when they would enter a large town. By doing this McCarthy makes commentary on the human instinct to be around other people, and illustrate the inhumanity present in those who feel as though they are not tied to the judgment of other human beings. This is clearly presented in the Kid's past because he never had close people he feared the judgment of, which shaped him into becoming the dynamic character of both righteous and despicable action. # (464 words)

P In Ken Kesey's novel, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, a mental ward is portrayed as a microcosm for society and government, revealing the relationship between the two. In the story, there are "Acutes" and "Chronics." The Acutes have potential to be "fixed" and eventually return to society outside of the ward. The Chronics, however, are unable to be "fixed" and may spend the rest of their lives in the ward under the control of "Big Nurse." Told from the perspective of Bromden, a native American, former World War II fighter, the story starts with the arrival of McMurphy, a patient with mysterious origins. McMurphy was originally arrested and put to work on a farm for assault and rape. However, he decided to check into the mental ward for a chance at being released early. McMurphy is a symbol of rebellion, hope, and change for all of the patients who have succumbed to the dominating power of Big Nurse. McMurphy's unusual origins before the mental ward, allow him to stand out as a hero and symbol for change for those who have become submissive to Nurse Ratched's power. McMurphy reveals the ways that Big Nurse enforces her power, shows the patients that they can be powerful, and causes the patients to leave the mental ward to be free and one with nature, showing that anyone can be a leader in society when the government becomes too powerful.

When McMurphy arrives, Bromden describes him to be a tall, muscular, and powerful redhead. McMurphy immediately has the attention of all of the patients,

despite the fact that the patients have no background information about him. After less than one week in the ward, McMurphy questions the authority of the Big Nurse's "logbook". The logbook was used by Acutes to report any out of line behavior. When something was written down, that Acute was rewarded. The logbook instilled a sense of fear in all of the patients and allowed Big Nurse to remain in control. McMurphy also revealed the patients' group therapy sessions to be a "pecking party." Big Nurse would target one patient and force all of the other patients to attack. McMurphy made it clear that if anything was to be done about Big Nurse's power, the patients would need to work together. However, the primary reason why McMurphy was able to unite the patients was because of his mysterious origins. Instead of having a history that everyone knew about, McMurphy came out of nowhere and was able to unite the group in order to "shatter the glass" between society and government.

Later in the novel, McMurphy takes the group on a fishing trip without anyone's approval. He shows each of the patients that they are capable of fishing for themselves; they have the power to do something by themselves. On this trip, each of the patients trusts McMurphy, but they quickly come to learn that he does not really know how to properly fish either. As a result, because no one knew his history or his origins, McMurphy was able to evoke a sense of freedom and carefreeness among the patients. He caused them to laugh, a symbol of power throughout the novel. Bromden, the narrator, later even states that, "sometimes you have to be able to laugh at yourself." McMurphy and each of the patients laughed at each other and laughed at themselves, gaining more power. With McMurphy's mysterious origins, the patients were able to fully trust him and learn to have the power and control they needed to rebel against Big Nurse and her strict rules.

Finally, McMurphy's origins contribute to the final escape of all of the patients. McMurphy's vague past involved prostitutes, who he called one night to the mental ward. When they arrived, all of the patients learned and remembered what it is like to be free and carefree. These unusual connections encouraged Billy Bibbit to lose his fear of women and for Bromden to drink and have fun. The party that McMurphy throws ultimately causes the patients to question how "insane" they really are. In reality, they are just like any other member of society, only Big Nurse and the government have rejected them. One by one, the

patients check out of the mental ward. Bromden finally escaped by throwing the "control panel" at the window and shattering the glass outward. He symbolically breaks the glass between society and government with no new control, thanks to McMurphy.

McMurphy's origins, which are never clearly stated in the novel, allow the patients to trust him without judgment. He is able to question the authority of Big Nurse and finally, allows the patients to escape. His mysterious origins are a symbol for the dynamic leader who can come from anywhere and can inspire society to rebel against the government and "shatter the glass." # (806 words)

Q In Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night," Viola masks herself as a man, calling herself 'Cesario.' She does this to get close to the Duke, Orsino, whom she claims to love.

Without giving herself away, she must act the part of a servant. Her plan is to get close to the Duke to make him love her, but Viola shortly learns the Duke is in love with a noblewoman named Olivia, who despises the Duke.

When Orsino orders Viola to woo Olivia in his name, Viola accidentally makes Olivia fall in love with her.

Later in the play, Viola's twin brother, Sebastian comes to the city. Viola thought he died at sea & Sebastian thought Viola died as well. Olivia sees Sebastian, thinking it's Viola and woos him. Eventually the two marry in secret.

When Orsino, Viola, Sebastian & Olivia happen upon each other, accusations & confusion fly. Orsino believes one of the twins is an imposter but eventually Viola & Sebastian realize that they are siblings! They reunite happily.

At the end of the play, Viola & Orsino marry after she discloses the truth about her gender.

Without the shipwreck, Viola & Sebastian would have probably never married – without Viola's acting as a man, the play, as a whole would have been dull and not as dramatic. Viola was a main character that added a lot of foreshadowing and situational irony to "Twelfth Night" and without her, Shakespeare's play would not have been so successful. It was because of Viola & Sebastian's origin in the story that gave the story its meaning. William Shakespeare, often known to mock love, wanted to show how petty and

dramatic infatuation was and used a "love triangle" to describe just that. # (285 words)

R In Light in August, Faulkner uses the mysterious origins of Joe Christmas to show that one's past shapes oneself.

Initially Joe Christmas is described as a loner bootlegger, and his first scene is when he is leaving after seemingly murdering Mrs. Joan Joanna Burden.

A central character of William Faulkner's novel Light in August, is Joe Christmas. Christmas' first bewildering introduction is as a loner bootlegger fleeing after having committed possibly committed murder. Faulkner uses the origins of Christmas to show that one's past shapes oneself.

One of the first aspects of Christmas's character to be revealed is his baseline aversion to religion. As he first leaves the at the beginning of the novel he says "she complains about some woman's "praying over" him. It is later revealed that the woman with whom he was involved, Joanna Burden, was very religious and saw her deeply sexual relationship with a black man as being wrong. She attempted to find some way to justify their relationship. It appears as though her praying may have moved Christmas to kill her. While this is later shown to not be the case, Christmas does greatly dislike Christianity, stemming from early childhood events. As a child, Christmas was adopted by the McEacherns. His adoptive father, Mr. McEachern was deeply religious and routinely beat Christmas for failing to memorize catechisms. After one such incident, he forced Christmas to kneel before him and prayed that God would make Christmas a better person. Due to his previous experiences, Christmas views others praying over him as a method of control, and this attitude greatly affects his other relationship with Burden.

Another aspect of his relationship with Burden was his keeping his bootlegging a secret from her. He himself is not certain why he did so as he knows that she would not have repented him. His inability to trust or confide in women stems from initial childhood abandonment. As a young orphan, there had been an older girl who had helped take care of him. One day she disappeared and never returned, likely having been adopted, and Christmas was too young to understand the situation. He now associates women with abandonment and broken promises. This attitude also affects his relationship with Mrs.

McEachern. He is not at all reciprocal to her attempts to create a deeper relationship and ignores her acts of kindness. Another motive of this is her failure to intervene when Mr. McEachern beats him. Although she seems to truly want to be close to him, she is not able to help or protect him. Christmas' early disappointing experiences with women makes it so that he is incapable of trusting Burden.

Lastly, Christmas' feelings about race affect his relationship with Burden. Burden believes that it is the responsibility of white people to attempt to lift the black race. A large part of Burden's interest in a relationship with Christmas is the thrill of breaking taboo, both of having sex out of marriage and being with a black man. As a white woman, she believes that it is her responsibility to raise and elevate the black race. She hopes to justify their relationship through having a child, but she is too old. Her last hope at legitimizing is to send Christmas to law school. She hopes to alleviate her guilt by "bettering" a black man. Christmas, however, is deeply offended at the notion of attending a school for blacks. His mixed race and unknown racial background is a key part of his internal conflict, and he is hurt by the realization that Burden sees him as a black man. This experience mirrors that of his first romantic relationship. He was in love with Bobbie Allen, a white prostitute, and naïvely hoped they would marry. His hopes are crushed, and he is deeply hurt when Bobbie reveals that she sees him as a black man. Christmas' insecurity and internal conflict over his race is due to his early experiences. The aspect of race is the last puzzle piece into understanding what happened between Christmas and Burden.

Faulkner uses the origins of the mysterious Joe Christmas to show that one's past creates one's present. Both Christmas' relationship with Joanna Burden and his deeper past are initially a mystery, and it is only through the understanding of the latter that one can unlock the former. # (743 words)

S The novel *Dracula* tells the story of a supernatural character with unknown origins that drives the novel. Each relationship Dracula has creates a whole new insight into this strange character. Dracula's origins drive the novel as the other characters try to defeat him.

Dracula is a vampire that feeds on the blood of others. However no one else knew what he was until he chooses Mina as his victim. As her beloved friends

try to figure out what is wrong with her, they uncover Dracula's secret.

Early in the novel, Dracula invites Mina's fiancé to his castle for business but he soon realizes something is not right. Dracula protected this man from the three lady vampires to create a sense of trust only to use him as a victim as well. Dracula's mysterious relationships with each of the characters unfold and lead to the demise of both Mina and Dracula.

A theme present in this novel is science against western folk tales. Due to Dracula's mysterious origin, science had to be mixed with old western remedies to ward off the evil being. Dracula's unusual origin spurred this theme throughout the novel.

The vampire in which this novel is centered around had both a mysterious and unusual origin. The unusual origin both shaped characters through relationships and brought the theme science versus western ideologies into focus. # (225 words)

A Refer to my answer in prompt 2. # (7 words)

B Mice of Men had a few characters whose origins were unusual and mysterious. The character who gets killed at the end was very mysterious and weird. This shaped the character because he needed to be weird to make the novel better. The character wanted to be killed by a specific person instead of the person who wanted to kill him just to not give that person the satisfaction of killing him. # (71 words)

C In Diana Gabaldon's novel, "Outlander", a woman accidentally falls through time into 1742. Unable to explain her arrival, and entirely stuck there, she attempts to adjust to her new life in the Scottish highlands.

Going from 1947 to 1742, Claire Beauchamp is understandably discombobulated. Unable to explain her unusual arrival, or past life to the superstitious Scots that she finds herself surrounded by, she must lie and deceive to gain the trust and help of the people around her.

Having foreknowledge of the Jacobite Rising of '45, she attempts to save the clans from decimation.

People become skeptical and suspicious of her knowing things that are not possible, as a result she gains many enemies. # (115 words)

D In the *Great Gatsby*, the main character Jay Gatsby has criminal-like origins that are mysterious. Gatsby came into his money later in life than the people in East Egg. The characters in East Egg, Tom and Daisy, are from old money and are considered the best. The people from West Egg, Nick and Gatsby are the new money generation. They were thought to be not important.

In order to win the love of his life Gatsby must be rich. Gatsby is a secret boot-legger, and this is how he is able to buy the massive mansion of a house. The house lies right across from Daisy's house. Nobody knows how Gatsby was acquired with all of this money. With this money, he was able to throw the most extravagant parties. And at one of his parties he meets Nick.

Nick is a cousin of Daisy, which Gatsby is intrigued by because Daisy is his lost love. All throughout this story Gatsby has mysterious phone calls that Nick is alarmed about. Nick asks around about Gatsby, but nobody seems to know him, even though they were at his parties. People just told Nick things they have heard about Gatsby. Nobody seems to know the true origin of Gatsby.

Despite all of his efforts of selling and providing alcohol it is not enough to win Daisy's heart. At the end of the story Gatsby dies an unrightful death when Daisy was the one in the wrong. Only Nick was the one who saw Gatsby's true colors and knew he did not do it. No one shows up at Gatsby's funeral, except Nick and his Dad, because nobody really knew the real Gatsby or where he came from. # (285 words)

E In Herman Melville's "Moby Dick," the origins of Ahab are mysterious in order to explicate how fate is unknown. The physical features of Ahab enhance how peculiar he is. The scar that travels along his body are said to originate from worshipping fire in the past. Also one of his legs is completely gone because it was bitten off by Moby Dick. Throughout the novel Ahab's history with the whale drive his crew into a quest for revenge. This demonstrates how Ahab's past, encounters with his present in order to solve his dues with the whale. In this novel Ahab allows his revenge to drive him to his death. The

relationships he establishes with the crew of the Pequot are negative, he converts his crew into a seek revenge group to kill the whale. Ahab sacrifices his crew to try to arrive to his justice, and completely fail against the white whale.

At the beginning of the novel, the reader learns about Ahab in a bad situation. Melville builds tension by not allowing the reader to get to know Ahab until the middle of the novel. The description of Ahab is known as strict and demanding. Although, the reader learns very few details about Ahab's past, Melville shows the outcome of his unanswered goals revive in the present. Throughout the novel, Ahab spends a lot of time inside his cabin away from everyone else. He does not show any signs of happiness. The revenge that he wants to conduct against Moby Dick consumes his spirit. This demonstrates that his drive to kill can lead him into bitterness and despair. The anger he feels against the whale blind him from continuing his present.

His crew follows his guidance and also become vengeful. Ahab conducts a ceremony that seals their fate to kill Moby Dick. In the novel there is numerous imagery of fire and hell. Melville does this to symbolize how their quest will end bad. His past follows Ahab and deteriorates his relationship with his family. Towards the end of the novel, we learned that Ahab gave up his wife and his son to get revenge. Ahab does not give up his quest and keeps going until he finds Moby Dick. At the end he cannot save himself from his fate and dies along with the rest of his crew. Melville shows how tragic and empty revenge can be. # (399 words)

F In the Greek tragedy Antigone the author character Antigone is one of four children born to from the result of sexual relations between her father and his mother. The author Sophocles uses this unusual relationship between his Antigone's father and grandmother as a source of explanation to the most of, if not all, the events that take place in Antigone's life. Being born from such unusual circumstances shapes Antigone to being forced to deal with a life of judgement and tragedy. It affects her relationship with both family and lovers because such unusual relations resulting in the birth of Antigone affect both her relationship with her family and her relationship with lovers by causing there to be an amount of disconnection. The author's decision to bring upon the life of Antigone in such a matter as

he has forces Antigone to go through his play with the issues of having to overcome obstacles such as allows him to use all of the embarrassment, betrayal and longing for death that comes with Antigones birth to help contribute and move along to the message story he is trying to get across to his reader.

Antigones unusual cause of origin shapes her very character. She is alive because her father slept with had sexual relations with his own mother. Then after the birth of her and her three siblings, her father mother hung herself and her father took removed his own eyes. She has had to deal with tragedies from the day she was born and much more during the continuation of her life. This shapes her to be strong in all aspects of her life regardless of all obstacles thrown at her.

When constantly having to deal with the embarrassment that comes when with her own birth, Antigone's relationships with her family and lovers are questioned. Antigone and Ismene (Antigones sister) have been through alot together, but when another trying tragedy enters their lives, the bond of the between Antigone and Ismene falls apart. The cause of Antigone's origins causes a clear disconnect between her and her uncle Creon, who is at fault for the destruction of the damage done to Antigone's and Ismene's relationship. Creon is also to blame causes the very tragedy that destroys the relationship between Antigone and her soon to be husband because of his disgustment with Antigones reasons for life.

Sophocles uses the relationship between Antigones father and his mother resulting in Antigone's birth along with her to create Antigone and her three siblings as an origin of all the pain and tragedies he wants Antigone to go through. Without her birth being a result of unusual actions, and bringing with it the tragedies it did, could you still place Antigone with the characteristics Sophocles intended. Antigones origin had to be apart of a tragedie so that Antigone herself could become one.

In conclusion the play Greek tragedy Antigone features the character Antigone along with her siblings whose origins are unusual. Antigones cause of birth shapes her to be strong in all aspects of her life but also affects the relationship between family members who were close and not so close to her and her relationship with her fiancé. This very origin is the meaning of greatly contributes to the tragedy the

Sophocles needed to complete and place meaning to his work Antigone. # (565 words)

G The origin of a character, just as often the origin of people that we experience in life, affects greatly the composition of one's character and personality. Often it even dictates the actions of individuals, driving the plot in works of literature. One such example of the affects that one's origin can place on the character of an individual and the relationships they have from others can be found in the quintessential gothic novel, Frankenstein. An integral character in the novel is Frankenstein's Monster, whose origin is perhaps the very spirit of 'unusual' incarnate.

Throughout the novel, Shelley tells a story of a beast created outside of the natural order and whose very existence is an affront to God. Perhaps a reader can see how this creation will experience adverse consequences of his origin just from that. The Monster's introduction into this world of men was entirely the responsibility of Victor Frankenstein. As it is with all people, the Monster had no affect on the situation, or the means, to which he was conceived. This greatly affects his actions and his story. He is no different from any man or woman in that he did not choose to be created, yet unlike most individuals his existence proved to be repulsive and shocking. This, understandably, created the perfect storm for his vile actions. Frankenstein's Monster's very existence in a way pre-determines his outcome. It cannot be proven that one's upbringing is universally responsible for their actions in life, however. The Monster is simply dealt a bad hand.

Any person that has been told that they just aren't someone's type, or that they weren't wealthy enough, or that their face just doesn't look right will know that one's origin can greatly affect their relationships (or lack thereof). Specifically to Frankenstein's Monster's life, this is never more evident than in his relationship with Frankenstein himself. When faced with his creation, Frankenstein reacts in disgust and fear, marginalizing his unnatural son and sentencing him to a life apart. The psychological impact of this abandonment explicitly affected the creation and greatly contributed to his decision to fly into a murderous and bloodthirsty massacre of everyone that Victor loves. Poor guy. The climax of the novel would not have been possible if

the Creation's creation had not caused such a spiteful relationship with Victor.

Perhaps the greatest lesson that one can find from origin stories such as this is that choices are made that affect one's life far greater than their origin ever could. Although, as previously stated, the Monster's origin had a great influence on his course of action; he still made the choice to become educated, to murder the Franksteins, and to cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war to end Victor's happiness in revenge. From every scholar in Harlem, to every future president in classrooms right now, to even the educator scoring this essay now there is a truth that links all of our stories to the Monster's: It is not the origin of the person that ultimately decides their fate or affects their happiness, rather it is what we do with the blessing and opportunity of life that matters. As with Frankenstein and his Monster, we are the sum of our choices in life. # (543 words)

H Aldous Huxley's futuristic novel "Brave New World" illustrates a dystopian society in which the people are born from scientific process, not birthed & brainwashed from infants to obey the laws & rules of one's own societal standing, and where people are not at liberty to speak or think freely, but are merely blind puppets of the government. This can be seen as unusual circumstances for the characters of the novel already. These circumstances greatly impact each character and their relationships with each other in order to convey Huxley's believes that humans must use the free will they've been given to think & act for themselves.

Lenina & Bernard are some of the first characters in the story, born like everyone else into a life of monotony & obedience. They are committed to their ignorance, focusing on pointless matters & filling their time with things that would matter to the most shallow & self centered beings. They are content in giving up their individuality to the tyrannical, oppressive government the "World State". Lenina is addicted to a drug called "soma" which sends the user into a lustful daze where she often takes part in rampant sexual acts under its influence. This over-sexualization, while remaining desensitized to the beauty & love that is involved, demonstrates Huxleys warning to reality to continue with one's values & moral virtues or society will devolve into a desensitized and emotionless society. In these characters' inability to form independent thoughts

details Huxley's caution for humanity to keep its individuality & never to give in to an oppressive government.

The character John represents everything this dystopian society is against. He was birthed from a mother, thinks for himself, practices religion & faith, and does not give into worldly desires. He escaped brainwashing as a child and is able to form complex thoughts having to do with morality, love, & emotion, things all but outlawed in this world of oppression. John lives on a reservation for a large portion of his life & once he meets Lenina and sees the atrocity of his reality is somewhat unable to cope with the lack of virtue. In the end he ends up killing himself after finally giving in and having an self-induced orgy with Lenina in front of a crowd of people. These events could reflect the author's heed that once the free will of humanity is relinquished, there may be no getting it back no matter how pure the soul. John killed himself because he himself had broken under the pressure of society, despite his strong resolve perhaps indicating that no one is immune to the ravages of societal expectation and normality.

Huxley also makes a comment on class structure in the novel. From birth, or creation, humans are put into classes specifically outlining the limits of what a person in this reality can do. No matter what class one is born into, Alphas, Betas, Epsilons, etc. that is what one is assigned for life. In the real world one is usually able to break out of their lot in life and find eventual success & happiness in something greater. However, in this story everyone is conditioned to be content with where they are, which is a contradiction of human nature demonstrating the rampant dehumanization the government in the novel contains.

The origins of the story's characters illustrate that humans must never let those things that make them human get taken away. The endless goal of the "World State" is stability & happiness of the populace, but they sacrificed all humanity in the process. # (594 words)

I "There's no place like home." Concurrently, there is no place like the point at which one originates. The point of origin from which an individual spawns is of utmost importance to the unfolding of said individual's future. For, prestige, wealth, and societal ranking all depend greatly upon where, and under what circumstances, a person is

born. Take the plight of Oscar Wilde's Jack (Ernest) Worthing as a prime example. Through his humorous construction of his nineteenth-century satire, The Importance of Being Earnest, Wilde utilizes Jack Worthing's mysterious origins in order to inexplicitly bash superficial Victorian society.

The exact characteristics of Worthing's origination are questionable. As an abandoned baby, Worthing was discovered and adopted by a wealthy Victorian aristocrat. As he grew, "Jack" was raised in the superficial, hypocritical folds of late-nineteenth-century Victorian society. Concurrently, Jack is corrupted by the societal filth in which he is nurtured. Superficial deceit, living a double-life, and assuming a false alias are only a few of the deplorable traits Jack develops while in England. This is exactly what Wilde wanted his satire to relay to his audience: Victorian superficiality is an infectious contagion that will afflict any who choose to come in contact with it. Worthing, though he initially came from meager beginnings, would grow to become a selfish, deceitful Victorian who cares for none other than himself.

Worthing's (and therefore all of nineteenth-century Victorian society's) selfishness is evident in how he treats those around him. Upon reaching the city, where he goes by the false alias "Ernest," Jack proposes to his coveted Gwendolyn. Interestingly, however, Jack simultaneously has an eighteen-year old ward named Cecily, at his home in the country. Cecily refers to Worthing as "Uncle Jack," not "Earnest." In short, Jack "Ernest" Worthing is living a double-life; he is "Jack" in the country, and "Ernest" in the city. Worthing does not care what he has to do—lie-cheat-steal—in order to acquire the coveted goals for which he lusts after. It does not matter to the Victorian whether he harms, degrades, or utterly devastates those who he comes in contact with; he wants what he wants, and he intends to seize what he desires, regardless of any possible ramifications that may adversely affect his neighbors. Wilde acknowledged this horrific, white-washed characteristic of Victorian society through the actions of Worthing. And so, Wilde reiterates the harmful, corruptive qualities of 1800s British society. From rags to riches, Worthing possessed the means to humanistically improve himself and the world around him. Rather, despite his own uncomely origins, Worthing chose to squander his potential in the pursuit of self-gratification, just like every other Victorian Englishman.

In the end, Worthing comes to terms with the circumstances of his origination. Found in a handbag, Worthing was most likely an illegitimate child whose upper-class parents sought to abandon in an attempt to cover-up their scandalous connection. Although Wilde does not explicitly say that this is the case, it is implied that Worthing's conception and birth were of scandalous promiscuity. Overall, Jack (Ernest) Worthing's entire existence, from birth to the culmination of Oscar Wilde's play, is a satirical accentuation and concurrent deriding of superficial, hypocritical Victorian society. # (524 words)

T In the work, Oedipus Rex, Oedipus is fated to a fate of killing his dad and marrying his mom. I honestly don't know. I'm so sorry to waste your time on this: I hope you have any amazing day! God bless you! # (41 words)

BB In our world today, the fear of people who do not look, act, or talk like us is crippling. We, as a whole, do not easily accept or assimilate those who have been otherized into our communities. Throughout various works of literature, though, it is evident that characters whose origins are unusual or mysterious are able to fully participate in the societies in which they appear. Toni Morrison's Beloved presents one such situation. When the spirit of Sethe's late baby materializes at her doorstep, the lives of Sethe, Denver, Paul D, and Beloved are changed forever. Because of Beloved's unusual origins, she has trouble formulating a meaningful self-identity, the family is polarized because of her unexpected arrival, and the novel as a whole is able to better communicate the message that humans have a distinct and deep ability to adapt to new environments.

Beloved has not always been an outsider, but nonetheless has difficulty coming to terms with her foreign origins. She had been a third party observer as a ghost entity in the upstairs portion of Sethe's house, but when she rises out of the river and comes to actually reside in the house, she does not know where she belongs. She is not able to work because of her low threshold for mental stimulation, and she relies heavily on Sethe to care for her and to be told who she is. There is a significant aspect of the story that Beloved is missing: the opinions of the other people in the house about her. Because she has not had the chance to truly connect with Denver, Paul D, and Baby

Sugs, she has no reference point for how she is thought of in their minds. It is almost impossible for her to truly live in tandem with her "family" because she does not even know her own values, mannerisms, and life outlooks.

Not only does Beloved lack a self-worth component of life because of her mysterious origin, but she also is a polarizing factor in the one familiar setting she has: her home. At first, her sister Denver is willing to do anything for her, and it seems as though the two have developed an allyship. However, as Beloved demands more and more attention from Sethe, Denver becomes enraged. Denver does not understand why a foreign person, seemingly without any ties to the family, could be cared about so much by Sethe. Sethe, however, knows the truth that Beloved is her own child, who she murdered years before to break the cycle of slavery. Sethe therefore feels a duty to protect Beloved because she caused her pain in the past. Paul D is somewhere in between the two opinions of Beloved, because he wants to support Sethe's dedication, but he also needs nurturing of his own. Neither Denver nor Paul D truly understand Beloved, since she came from an unknown place and just began living with them. In these ways, Beloved tears apart the family, and her presence negatively affects her relationship to the other characters.

Finally, by having a character like Beloved live closely with others who all have definitive origins, the novel's message of the human's ability to adapt to new environments is furthered. For example, Beloved herself learns quickly what is expected of her in the household – obedience, helping with jobs around the house, and loyalty. She has to learn how a whole new world operates around her, which is a challenge. Denver, likewise, is forced to mature faster than she wants because her mother no longer has unlimited time and dedication for her. She adapts to a more independent lifestyle and gets a job. Sethe adapts to having another child to take care of and attempts to atone for her past mistakes by treating Beloved well. Even Paul D, who leaves Sethe, shows an important aspect of this message of adaptation: sometimes, the only way to adapt is to leave the environment all together and just adopt a new one. None of these character developments would have occurred had Beloved not shown up.

While it would be much easier to ignore those who are different from us so as to surround ourselves with only people who are similar to us, there is more

personal growth with unfamiliar situations. Beloved shows that while this beautiful child-like, and enigmatic character is inserted into the lives of Sethe, Denver, and Paul D, the enigma becomes her own person and works out an identity, each person in the house forms his or her own opinions on the situation, and the greater message of adaptability is clearly evident. It is our own challenge to respect those with differing origins in order to grow and develop as human beings. # (789 words)

Open Topic Titles:

A	(no title chosen)	L	<i>Frankenstein</i>
B	<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	M	<i>1984</i>
C	<i>Outlander</i>	N	<i>Beloved</i>
D	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	O	<i>Blood Meridian</i>
E	<i>Moby Dick</i>	P	<i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i>
F	<i>Antigone</i>	Q	<i>Twelfth Night</i>
G	<i>Frankenstein</i>	R	<i>Light in August</i>
H	<i>Brave New World</i>	S	<i>Dracula</i>
I	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>	T	<i>Oedipus Rex</i>
K	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	BB	<i>Beloved</i>