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Revisions to the AP English Literature and Composition Exam
Address the Prompt
Answer the Prompt
What is changed?

Note: schools may now offer the AP Lit Exam online, written, or a combination of online and written.

The timing of the test and the percentage weight of the two sections remain unchanged. Also, the types of Free Response questions remain the same.

Section 1: Multiple Choice

55 Questions | 1 Hour | 45% of Exam Score

- Includes 5 sets of questions with 8–13 questions per set.
- Each set is preceded by a passage of prose fiction, drama, or poetry of varying difficulty.
- The multiple-choice section will always include at least 2 prose fiction passages (this may include drama) and at least 2 poetry passages.

Section 2: Free Response

3 Questions | 2 Hours | 55% of Exam Score

- Students write essays that respond to 3 free-response prompts from the following categories:
 - A literary analysis of a given poem.
 - A literary analysis of a given passage of prose fiction (this may include drama)
 - An analysis that examines a specific concept, issue, or element in a work of literary merit selected by the student

Poetry, Prose, and Open Free Response Questions:

The following instructions will appear after the prompt in each of the FRQs.

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.

Old Sample Poetry Question (*old wording*)

Carefully read Olive Senior’s 2005 poem “Plants.” Then, in a well-organized essay, analyze how the poet portrays the complex relationships among the speaker, the implied audience, and plant life. You may wish to consider the author’s use of such literary techniques as syntax, diction, and figurative language.

New Sample Poetry Question (*New stable prompt wording*) In the following poem “Plants” by Olive Senior (published in 2005), the speaker portrays the relationships among plant life and the implied audience. Read the poem carefully. **Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Senior uses poetic elements and techniques to develop those complex relationships.**

The prompts will no longer include a list of techniques and will instead use stable language that will remain the same from year to year. The specific word “complex” will also be included in the prompt.

Old Sample Prose Question (*old wording*)

The following interchange, excerpted from an 1852 novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne, occurs when two characters who have been living on Blithedale Farm—a community designed to promote an ideal of equality achieved through communal rural living—are about to part ways. Read the passage carefully. In a well-written essay, analyze how Hawthorne portrays the narrator’s attitude towards Zenobia through the use of literary techniques.

New Sample Prose Question (*New stable prompt wording*) The following excerpt is from an 1852 novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne. In this passage, two characters who have been living on Blithedale Farm—a community designed to promote an ideal of equality achieved through communal rural living—are about to part ways. Read the passage carefully. **Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Hawthorne uses literary elements and techniques to portray the narrator’s complex attitude towards Zenobia.**

The Open Essay Questions will also be phrased differently. In the past, the prompt typically ended with “contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole.” **The new language will be “contribute to an interpretation of the work as a whole.” The reference “or another work of comparable literary merit” will no longer appear. The specific word “complex” will also be included in the prompt.**

The composition of the list provided after the prompt has also changed.

Of the 36 to 42 literary works on the list (per the exam form assembly specifications):

- Approx. 50% Gender mix (may include ambiguous or gender-neutral/gender x)
- Approx. 50% identified as non-white
- Approx. 25% Pre-20th / 50% 20th / 25% Contemporary
- Consider the inclusion of non-American/non-British texts in English.

Old Sample Open Question (*old wording*) Many works of literature feature characters who have been given a literal or figurative gift. The gift may be an object, or it may be a quality such as uncommon beauty, significant social position, great mental or imaginative faculties, or extraordinary physical powers. Yet this gift is often also a burden or a handicap. Select a character from a novel, epic, or play who has been given a gift that is both an advantage and a problem. Then write a well-developed essay analyzing the complex nature of the gift and how the gift contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole.

New Sample Open Question (*new stable prompt wording*) Many works of literature feature characters who have been given a literal or figurative gift. The gift may be an object, or it may be a quality such as uncommon beauty, significant social position, great mental or imaginative faculties, or extraordinary physical powers. Yet this gift is often also a burden or a handicap.

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which a character has been given a gift that is both an advantage and a problem. Then, in a well-written essay, **analyze how the gift and its complex nature contribute to an interpretation of the work as a whole**. Do not merely summarize the plot.

FRQ Essay Scoring and Rubrics:

The nine-point Holistic Scoring Guide that has been used for decades is retired.

Essays will now be scored using a **six-point Analytical Rubric**: one point for a defensible thesis; evidence, and commentary will be rated 1-4; and one point for sophistication. This change may require recalibration and adjustment to the new way of considering student responses. These will be examined and discussed during the APSI.

Exam Weights by Course and Exam Description (CED) Units

Short Fiction (Units 1, 4, and 7) **42-49% of Exam**

Poetry (Units 2, 5, and 8) **36-45% of Exam**

Longer Fiction and Drama (Units 3, 6, and 9) **15-18% of Exam**

Skill Categories	Exam Weighting (Multiple- Choice Section)
Explain the function of character.	16%–20%
Explain the function of setting.	3%–6%
Explain the function of plot and structure.	16%–20%
Explain the function of the narrator or speaker.	21%–26%
Explain the function of word choice, imagery, and symbols.	10%–13%
Explain the function of comparison.	10%–13%
Develop textually substantiated arguments about interpretations of a part or all of a text.	10%–13%

AP Literature CED Domain-Specific and Academic Terms

Students will NOT be expected to identify or label archetypes (59)

Students will NOT be expected to “label or identify specific rhyme schemes, metrical patterns, or forms of poetry” (68).

Students are not expected to “use a specific attribution style (like MLA) within the timed essays on the AP exam, but should follow such guidelines for any extended papers they develop in class through multiples revisions.” (100).

Adjectives	Epiphany	Literary Argument	Reliability
Adverbs	Evidence	Metaphor	Repetition
Allusion	Exposition	Mood	Resolution
Ambiguity	Extended metaphor	Motif	Setting
Analogy	Fiction	Narrative	Shift
Analysis	Figurative Language	Narrator	Simile
Antagonist	First-person narrator	Narrator bias	Soliloquy
Antecedent	Flashback	Narrator reliability	Stanza
Antithesis	Foil	Nuance	Stream of consciousness
Atmosphere	Foreshadowing	Paradox	Structure
Catharsis	Function	Parallel structure	Symbols
Character	Genre	Patterns and breaks in patterns	Synonyms
Chronology	Hyperbole	Personification	Syntax
Claim/Thesis	Imagery	Perspective	Tempo
Climax	Imply	Plot	Tense (grammatical)
Comparison	Inconsistencies	Poetry	Theme
Conceit	Infer	Poetry: Closed form	Third-person narrator
Conflict: External	In medias res	Poetry: Open form	Tone
Conflict: Internal	Interpretation	Point of view	Understatement
Diction (note the type)	Irony	Pronoun references	
Drama	Juxtaposition	Protagonist	
Dramatic monologue	Line of reasoning	Reasoning	
Dramatic situation or moment	Literal vs. Figurative Meaning	Referent	

Use of evidence, to: Amplify

Use of evidence, to: Associate

Use of evidence, to: Clarify

Use of evidence, to: Exemplify

Use of evidence, to: Qualify