

## 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>Esteville<sup>1</sup> 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 Cancer<sup>2</sup> 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 Philomela<sup>3</sup> 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,<sup>4</sup> devoid of gauge,<sup>5</sup> Regardless of his driver’s rod.</p> <p>Pomaceous<sup>6</sup> 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>
--	--

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.

<sup>1</sup> a town in North Carolina

<sup>2</sup> zodiac constellation associated with midsummer

<sup>3</sup> a character in Greek mythology who was transformed  
into a nightingale

<sup>4</sup> drinks

<sup>5</sup> measure

<sup>6</sup> 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	
<b>Row A</b> <b>Thesis</b> <b>(0-1 points)</b>	<b>0 points</b> For any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no defensible thesis.</li> <li>The intended thesis only restates the prompt.</li> <li>The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim.</li> <li>There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt.</li> </ul>	<b>1 point</b> Responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the poem.
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>		
<b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only restate the prompt.</li> <li>Make a generalized comment about the poem that doesn't respond to the prompt.</li> <li>Describe the poem or features of the poem rather than making a claim that requires a defense.</li> </ul>		<b>Responses that earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a defensible interpretation of the complex portrayal of the setting.</li> </ul>
<b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b> <b>Restate the prompt</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"The poet describes through various literary elements the complexity of summer in the country."</li> <li>"In the poem 'On Summer,' the poet develops a complex portrayal of a summer setting."</li> </ul> <b>Do not relate to the prompt</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"We all have a favorite season, a time of year in which we are happiest and look forward to the most."</li> </ul> <b>Describe the poem or features of the poem</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"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."</li> </ul>		<b>Examples that earn this point:</b> <b>Provide a defensible interpretation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"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."</li> <li>"In this poem, the poet uses description to point out that the heat of summer is helpful for some, but difficult for others."</li> <li>"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."</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The thesis may be more than one sentence, provided the sentences are in close proximity.</li> <li>The thesis may be anywhere within the response.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>		

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

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<b>Row C</b> <b>Sophistication</b> <b>(0-1 points)</b>	<b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.	<b>1 point</b> Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or develops a complex literary argument.
	<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>	
	<b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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>”).</li> <li>• 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>”).</li> <li>• Make a single statement about how an interpretation of the poem comments on something thematic without consistently maintaining that thematic interpretation.</li> <li>• Oversimplify complexities in the poem.</li> <li>• Use complicated or complex sentences or language that is ineffective because it does not enhance the student’s argument.</li> </ul>	<b>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate a sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument by doing any of the following:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identifying and exploring complexities or tensions within the poem.</li> <li>2. Illuminating the student’s interpretation by situating it within a broader context.</li> <li>3. Accounting for alternative interpretations of the poem.</li> <li>4. Employing a style that is consistently vivid and persuasive.</li> </ol>
<b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>		

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 states 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.