

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2008 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 1

(Keats's "When I Have Fears" and Longfellow's "Mezzo Cammin")

The score reflects the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, its style, its mechanics. Students are rewarded for what they do well. The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by 1 point above the otherwise appropriate score. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a 3.

- 9–8** These essays offer a persuasive comparison/contrast of the two poems and present an insightful analysis of the relationship between them and the techniques each writer uses to explore his particular situation. Although these essays offer a range of interpretations and choose to emphasize different poetic techniques, they also provide convincing readings of **both** poems and demonstrate consistent and effective control over the elements of composition in language appropriate to the analysis of poetry. Their textual references are apt and specific. Although they may not be error-free, these essays are perceptive in their analysis and demonstrate writing that is clear **and** sophisticated, and in the case of an essay that earns 9 points, especially persuasive.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable comparison/contrast of the two poems and an effective analysis of the relationship between them and of the techniques each writer uses to explore his particular situation. Such essays demonstrate the ability to express ideas clearly with references to the text, although they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as those in the 9–8 range. They are less thorough or less precise in their discussion, and their analysis of the relationship between the two poems is less convincing. Essays scored 7–6 are generally well written, but those earning a 7 demonstrate more sophistication in both substance and style.
- 5** These essays may respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of the two poems and their relationship, but they may be superficial in their analysis. They often rely on paraphrase, but paraphrase that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit. Their comparison/contrast of the relationship between the two poems may be vague, formulaic, or minimally supported by references to the texts. There may be minor misinterpretations of one or both poems. These essays demonstrate control of language, but the writing may be marred by surface errors. They are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as those in the 7–6 range.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of the two poems. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant, or it may ignore one of the poems completely. Evidence from the poems may be slight or misconstrued, or the essays may rely on paraphrase only. The writing often demonstrates a lack of control over the conventions of composition: inadequate development of ideas, accumulation of errors, or a focus that is unclear, inconsistent, or repetitive. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreading and/or demonstrate inept writing.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of those in the 4–3 range. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the poems themselves. The essays may contain serious errors in grammar and mechanics, may offer a complete misreading, or may be unacceptably brief. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the poems.
- 0** These essays do no more than make a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.

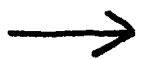
Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

1

1A
1 of 3

Both poems by Keats and Longfellow reflect on unfulfilled dreams and the imminence of death, yet their conclusions are somewhat different. Longfellow mourns his inaction and seems to view the past as comfortable compared to an uncertain future. On the other hand, Keats worries that he will not be able to accomplish all that he wants to, but as he recognizes the enormity and possibility of the world, he realizes that his mortal goals are meaningless. Longfellow's ultimate tone about death is fearful and grim, but Keats' is more appreciative of the wonder of life and therefore more hopeful.

The similarities between the poems lie ~~in~~ mainly in the openings which begrudge the fleeting nature of life. Keats' fear that he "may cease to be" parallels Longfellow's statement that "half of [his] life is gone." The men continue to express their fears about not having the time or being able to accomplish what they want to. Keats' repetition of the word "before" as an anaphora emphasizes his concern that he may die before he is able to ~~in~~ attain his literary goals or harness the opportunity of "the full ripen'd grain," a ~~simile~~ ^{simile} for the possibility that he sees in his work. Longfellow, too, acknowledges his failure to "fulfill the aspiration of [his youth]" and "build some tower of song with lofty parapet," which is similar to Keats' hope to leave behind his legacy of words. The beginnings of the poems both depict men who fear that time is running



1

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1A 2 of 3

out.

The middles, or second parts, of the poems illustrate the contrast between the two situations. In line 5, Keats starts to talk about the beauty and mystery of love with images of "shadows" and "huge cloudy ~~sky~~ symbols of a high romance". He seems to believe that love comes by fate, and he is sad to miss out on such "chance" when it comes time for him to die. He speaks of never having the opportunity to "look upon thee more" and indulge in innocent, "unreflecting love," showing that he has experienced love before but now his chances ^{for pure love} are ruined because he is so aware of death. Longfellow's poem takes a different tone as he says he has not experienced "pleasure" or "passions," but has experienced "sorrow" and too much "care" which has paralyzed him. Longfellow's fear of death seems to stop him ^{completely} from accomplishing his goals, while Keats has taken advantage of the time that he has had and is merely scared now that he does not have time to continue living.

The end of the poems show these different attitudes toward life and death by using similar situations. Keats walks to a shore and Longfellow to a hill to contemplate life, and both look out before them. While Keats sees the "wide world," which alliteration emphasizes the possibility of, Longfellow looks out and sees a city as a metaphor for the past. Keats realizes that his goals for literary fame and love before he dies are "nothingness" compared to the grand scope



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1

1A
3/3

of life. However Longfellow sees the "smoking wof, soft bells, and gleaming lights" of a bozy and idealized past with a clear and powerfull waterfall of death right overhead. Keats seems to recognize the opportunity left in his life when he looks out, though it may be daunting, but Longfellow's sees only a past haunted by death and no future to speak of.

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Question 1

1B
1 of 2

"When I Have Fears" by John Keats and "Mezzo Cammin" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, are poems which that reflect on the prospect of death. Several poetic devices are used to characterize and explore the situation of poem. Although the exists the similarity of ~~wasted time~~ little time to fulfill their desires, "When I Have Fears" shows that the man worked hard in his life but ~~wasn't~~ was not able to obtain his goal. The other exemplifies a wasted life.

John Keats explores the situation of his poem through use of metaphors. He says, "when I behold, upon the night's star'd face," (lines 5). This can be seen as a metaphor, characterizing the night as the closure of his life. Continuing, "... I may never live to trace their shadows, ^{with} ~~which~~ the magic hand of chance" (lines 7-8). This quote characterizes the speaker's loneliness and regret that his life is coming to a close. It is a metaphorical representation that he will never possess ~~the~~ the chance to explore true love. Finally, he says, "And when I feel, fair creature of an hour, that I shall never look upon thee more, never ^{have} shall relish in the faery power of unreflecting love..." (lines 9-12) here, the speaker explains that if he finds love, it will only be ~~at~~ for a short period, he will not be able to experience what love really is before his time on Earth runs out.

Similarly, Mezzo Cammin was characterized as a poetic



Question 1

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1B₂₀₁₂

work, reflecting on the failed accomplishment. However, this poem reflected more on the past and was less metaphorical. It did, however, contain much imagery. The poem reads, "Though, half-way up the hill," referring to the middle of life he was going through, "I see Past lying beneath me with its sounds and sights - a city in the twilight dim and vast, with smoking roofs, soft bells, and gleaming lights..." (lines 9-12). The imagery paints a picture to the reader of what kind of vibrant life the speaker was into. However, it also serves as an illustration that the speaker was not fulfilled despite the fast-paced exciting place in which he dwelled. He continued, "And hear above me on the autumnal blast, the cataract of Death far thundering from the heights." (lines 13-14). This quote is an assertion of the speaker's unfulfilled life. The "cataract of Death" is ⁱⁿ the speaker's view, so it is evident that death is upon him and he had not yet filled the void in his life.

Several poetic devices were used to characterize the similar, yet contrasting, poems presented.

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1 10

When reading "When I Have Fears" and "Mezzo Cammin" a can first and foremost see that both authors use a repetition in rhythm until the end of the poem where they then break off into a separate rhythm.

As John Keats explains his fear of dying and losing love he has the attitude of a worried man doesn't feel that he is going to live long. (line 7) One can see that there is no more hope left in the character in the poem because the author paints a picture of a man who is alone and almost seems ready to die.

However in Henry W. Longfellow's poem "Mezzo Cammin" he paints a picture of a man who isn't ready to die and in fact has an urge to go on in life. The tone of the character is one of pride, and yet the fear of unsuccess.

Both authors have expressed a fear in one way or another but the difference is that one give you a sense of hope (Henry W. Longfellow) and the other a sense of worry and failure (John Keats). Both authors do indeed capture their audience and leave them with a thought.

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AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

2008 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 1

Overview

Students were asked to read carefully two sonnets, Keats's "When I Have Fears" and Longfellow's "Mezzo Cammin," and then to write a well-organized essay in which they compared and contrasted how the two poets employed poetic techniques to explore their particular situations. In this essay, students were expected to analyze how poets use the resources of the English language to achieve their aims. The intent of this question was to assess students' abilities to read closely and to pay attention to details in the text, noting similarities and differences in the poets' representations of their situations. To respond to the question successfully, students needed to have a firm grasp of the devices and techniques employed by poets and then to arrive at an analytical and defensible reading of how these devices were used in the poems.

Sample: 1A

Score: 8

This is a very well-written essay that is clearly organized and nicely developed, with strong discussions of how repetition, imagery, and contrast function in both the Keats and the Longfellow poems. Strong, apt claims, such as: "The similarities between the poems lie mainly in the openings which begrudge the fleeting nature of life," show the student's ability to get to the heart of both poems. The student demonstrates good control of language and the elements of composition. Although some of the discussion of literary techniques is implicit rather than explicit, the essay is still quite impressive and provides a good example of a response that merited a score of 8.

Sample: 1B

Score: 5

This essay works closely with both poems by quoting specific lines of text; however, these citations are presented mechanically and often in the service of paraphrase, not analysis. The student does make some apt points about the use of metaphor and imagery but does so in a fairly rote manner. The essay concludes by saying, "Several poetic devices where [*sic*] used to characterize the similar, yet contrasting, poems presented," but it has dealt mostly with the poems one at a time, failing to compare them in the way the prompt asks. Like many essays that received a score of 5, this one demonstrates general facility with language, but its surface errors and occasional awkwardness distract from its message ("Similarly, Mezzo Cammin was characterize [*sic*] as a poetic work, reflecting on the failed accomplishment").

Sample: 1C

Score: 3

This essay begins with an isolated observation about the use of "repetition" [*sic*] and "rhythm" in the two poems—the only reference that is made to poetic devices. Though the essay has a clear structure, it is far too thin in its development. There is some attempt at analysis, in that the student does note the difference in the attitudes toward death expressed in both poems. The essay asserts that Longfellow's poem describes a person "who isn't ready to die," whereas Keats's poem "paints a picture" of a man who has "no more hope left." These plausible claims are unsupported, however, and the conclusion mostly repeats them. Though the essay contains distracting errors throughout, they are not as serious as those found in many essays that received a score of 2.