



**AP<sup>®</sup> English Literature and Composition  
2006 Free-Response Questions  
Form B**

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**ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION**

**SECTION II**

**Total time—2 hours**

**Question 1**

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

Read the following poem carefully. Then write an essay discussing how the poet uses literary techniques to reveal the speaker's attitudes toward nature and the artist's task.

To Paint a Water Lily

A green level of lily leaves  
Roofs the pond's chamber and paves

The flies' furious arena: study  
These, the two minds of this lady.

*Line*

5 First observe the air's dragonfly  
That eats meat, that bullets by

Or stands in space to take aim;  
Others as dangerous comb the hum

10 Under the trees. There are battle-shouts  
And death-cries everywhere hereabouts

But inaudible, so the eyes praise  
To see the colours of these flies

Rainbow their arcs, spark, or settle  
Cooling like beads of molten metal

15 Through the spectrum. Think what worse  
Is the pond-bed's matter of course;

Prehistoric bedragonned times  
Crawl that darkness with Latin names,

20 Have evolved no improvements there,  
Jaws for heads, the set stare,

Ignorant of age as of hour—  
Now paint the long-necked lily-flower

Which, deep in both worlds, can be still  
As a painting, trembling hardly at all

25 Though the dragonfly alight,  
Whatever horror nudge her root.

—“To Paint a Water Lily” from *Collected Poems* by Ted Hughes (1930–1998),  
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**Question 2**

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

Read the passage below, which comes from a nineteenth-century novel. Then, in a well-developed essay, discuss how the narrator's style reveals his attitudes toward the people he describes.

Line  
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Gentlefolks in general have a very awkward rock ahead in life—the rock ahead of their own idleness. Their lives being, for the most part, passed in looking about them for something to do, it is curious to see—especially when their tastes are of what is called the intellectual sort—how often they drift blindfold into some nasty pursuit. Nine times out of ten they take to torturing something, or to spoiling something—and they firmly believe they are improving their minds, when the plain truth is, they are only making a mess in the house. I have seen them (ladies, I am sorry to say, as well as gentlemen) go out, day after day, for example, with empty pill-boxes, and catch newts, and beetles, and spiders, and frogs, and come home and stick pins through the miserable wretches, or cut them up, without a pang of remorse, into little pieces. You see my young master, or my young mistress, poring over one of the spider's insides with a magnifying-glass; . . . and when you wonder what this cruel nastiness means, you are told that it means a taste in my young master or my young mistress for natural history. Sometimes, again, you see them occupied for hours together in spoiling a pretty flower with pointed instruments, out of a stupid curiosity to know what the flower is made of. Is its colour any prettier, or its scent any sweeter, when you *do* know? But there! the

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50

poor souls must get through the time, you see—they must get through the time. You dabbled in nasty mud, and made pies, when you were a child; and you dabble in nasty science, and dissect spiders, and spoil flowers, when you grow up. In the one case and in the other, the secret of it is, that you have got nothing to think of in your poor empty head, and nothing to do with your poor idle hands. And so it ends in your spoiling canvas with paints, and making a smell in the house; or in keeping tadpoles in a glass box full of dirty water, and turning everybody's stomach in the house; or in chipping off bits of stone here, there, and everywhere, and dropping grit into all the victuals in the house; or in staining your fingers in the pursuit of photography, and doing justice without mercy on everybody's face in the house. It often falls heavy enough, no doubt, on people who are really obliged to get their living, to be forced to work for the clothes that cover them, the roof that shelters them, and the food that keeps them going. But compare the hardest day's work you ever did with the idleness that splits flowers and pokes its way into spiders' stomachs, and thank your stars that your head has got something it *must* think of, and your hands something that they *must* do.

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**Question 3**

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

In many works of literature, a physical journey—the literal movement from one place to another—plays a central role. Choose a novel, play, or epic poem in which a physical journey is an important element and discuss how the journey adds to the meaning of the work as a whole. You may write your essay on one of the following works or on another of comparable quality. Avoid mere plot summary.

*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*  
*The Aeneid*  
*All the Pretty Horses*  
*As I Lay Dying*  
*Candide*  
*The Canterbury Tales*  
*Cold Mountain*  
*The Divine Comedy*  
*Dutchman*  
*Going After Cacciato*  
*Gulliver's Travels*

*Heart of Darkness*  
*The Importance of Being Earnest*  
*Light in August*  
*Middle Passage*  
*Moby-Dick*  
*Mother Courage*  
*Obasan*  
*The Odyssey*  
*Peer Gynt*  
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*  
*Song of Solomon*

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**