

THE COLLEGE BOARD
Advanced Placement Examination

1979

ENGLISH

SECTION II

Question 1
(Suggested time—40 minutes)

Choose a complex and important character in a novel or a play of recognized literary merit who might—on the basis of the character's actions alone—be considered evil or immoral. In a well-organized essay, explain both how and why the full presentation of the character in the work makes us react more sympathetically than we otherwise might. Avoid plot summary.

You may base your essay on one of the following or choose another appropriate work.

Great Expectations

Othello

Hedda Gabler

The Stranger

Jane Eyre

Crime and Punishment

Light in August

Antigone

Wuthering Heights

Richard III

Doctor Faustus

Major Barbara

Brighton Rock

Moby-Dick

Native Son

Billy Budd

Question 2 (Suggested time—40 minutes)

Carefully read the two poems below. Then write a well-organized essay in which you show how the attitudes towards the coming of spring implied in these two poems differ from each other. Support your statements with specific references to the texts.

Spring and All

- By the road to the contagious hospital
under the surge of the blue
mottled clouds driven from the
northeast—a cold wind. Beyond, the
(5) waste of broad, muddy fields
brown with dried weeds, standing and fallen
- patches of standing water
the scattering of tall trees
- All along the road the reddish
(10) purplish, forked, upstanding, twiggy
stuff of bushes and small trees
with dead, brown leaves under them
leafless vines—
- Lifeless in appearance, sluggish
(15) dazed spring approaches—
- They enter the new world naked,
cold, uncertain of all
save that they enter. All about them
the cold, familiar wind—
- (20) Now the grass, tomorrow
the stiff curl of wildcarrot leaf
One by one the objects are defined—
It quickens: clarity, outline of leaf
- But now the stark dignity of
(25) entrance—Still, the profound change
has come upon them: rooted they
grip down and begin to awaken

For Jane Meyers

- Sap rises from the sodden ditch
and glues two green ears to the dead
birch twig. Perilous beauty—
and already Jane is digging out
(5) her colored tennis shoes,
one mauve, one yellow, like large crocuses.
- And by the laundromat
the Bartletts in their tidy yard—
- as though it were not .
(10) wearying, wearying
- to hear in the bushes
the mild harping of the breeze,
the daffodils flocking and honking—
- Look how the bluet* falls apart, mud
(15) pockets the seed.
Months, years, then the dull blade of the wind.
It is spring I We are going to die I
- And now April raises up her plaque of flowers
and the heart
expands to admit its adversary.

*bluet: a wild flower with bluish blossoms

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From *The House on Marshland*, published by The Ecco
Press. The poem first appeared in *Lillabulero*

William Canoe Williams, *Collected Earlier Poems*. Copyright 1938
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Question 3

(Suggested time—40 minutes)

Read the following passage from a recent biography. Then write an essay discussing the ways in which the author's style (diction, syntax, tone, selection and presentation of detail, etc.) reveals his feelings about the family he describes.

I must now attempt to say something about the family. Here there is a good deal of uncertainty, of legend, and of scandal.

According to H. A. L. Fisher, the historian, there was at the Court of Versailles during the last years of the old régime a certain Chevalier Antoine de l' Etang; his person was pleasing, his manners courtly, his tastes extravagant and his horsemanship admirable. He was attached to the household of Marie Antoinette—too much attached it is said, and for this he was exiled to Pondicherry where, in 1788, he married a Mile. Blin de Grincourt.

M.de l'Etang entered and died in the service of the Nawab of Oudh; he left three daughters. Adeline, the one with whom we are concerned, married a James Pattle who was, we are told, a quite extravagantly wicked man. He was known as the greatest liar in India; he drank himself to death; he was packed off home in a cask of spirits, which cask, exploding, ejected his unbottled corpse before his widow's eyes, drove her out of her wits, set the ship on fire, and left it stranded in the Hooghly.

The story has been told many times. Some parts of, it may be true. it is certainly true that Mrs. Pattle came to London in 1840 with a bevy of daughters and that these ladies had a reputation for beauty. Four of them should be mentioned in these pages: Virginia, Sarah, Julia, and Maria.

Virginia Pattle, the most beautiful of the sisters, married Charles Somers-Cocks and became Countess Somers; she was a dashing, worldly woman, impulsive, rather eccentric, who lived in great style. Of her daughters, one became Duchess of Bedford; the other, Isabel, married Lord Henry Somerset. This alliance, though grand, was by no means happy. Lord Henry, a charming man it seems, delighted Victorian drawing rooms with his ballads. He was, I believe; the author of One More Passionate Kiss this embrace was reserved, however, not for his beautiful wife but for the second footman. Lady Henry endured his infidelities for a time but presently she could stand no more. She confided in her mother who, allowing her indignation to master her prudence, made a public scandal. The sequel is interesting in as much as it gives a notion of the ethos of the Victorian age and its system of morality.

Lord Henry fled to Italy and there lived happily ever after. His wife discovered that she had been guilty of an unformulated, but very heinous, crime: her name was connected with a scandal. Good society would have nothing more to do with her. She was obliged to retire from the world and decided to devote herself to the reclamation of inebriate women, a task which she undertook with so much good sense and good humor that she won the affection and admiration, not only of men of charity and good will, but even of the women she assisted.

END OF EXAMINATION