

Advanced Placement Examination  
ENGLISH COMPOSITION AND LITERATURE  
SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

The percentages given for the essay questions represent the score weightings for Section II of the examination.

Question 1  
(Suggested time— 35 minutes)  
(33 1/3 per cent)

Read the following poem carefully. Then write an essay in which you explain how the organization of the poem and the use of concrete details reveal both its literal and its metaphorical meanings. In your discussion, show how both of these meanings relate to the title.

Storm Warnings

- The glass has been falling all the afternoon,  
And knowing better than the instrument  
What winds are walking overhead, what zone  
Of gray unrest is moving across the land,  
(5) I leave the book upon a pillowed chair  
And walk from window to closed window, watching  
Boughs strain against the sky  
And think again, as often when the air  
Moves inward toward a silent core of waiting,  
(10) How with a single purpose time has traveled  
By secret currents of the undiscerned  
Into this polar realm. Weather abroad  
And weather in the heart alike come on  
Regardless of prediction.
- (15) Between foreseeing and averting change  
Lies all the mastery of elements  
Which clocks and weatherglasses cannot alter.  
Time in the hand is not control of time,  
Nor shattered fragments of an instrument  
(20) A proof against the wind; the wind will rise,  
We can only close the shutters.  
I draw the curtains as the sky goes black  
And set a match to candles sheathed in glass  
Against the keyhole draught, the insistent whine  
(25) Of weather through the unsealed aperture.  
This is our sole defense against the season;  
These are the things that we have, learned to do  
Who live in troubled regions.

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Question 2  
(Suggested time—40 minutes)

(33 1/3 per cent)

The following excerpt is taken from a letter by George Bernard Shaw on the death of his mother. Read the passage carefully. Then write an essay in which you describe the attitude of the writer toward his mother and her cremation. Using specific references to the text, show how Shaw's diction and use of detail serve to convey this attitude.

At the passage "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust" there was a little alteration of the words to suit the process. A door opened in the wall: and the violet coffin mysteriously passed out through it and vanished as it closed. People think that door is the door of the furnace: but it isn't. I went behind the scenes at the end of the service and saw the real thing. People are afraid to see it; but it is wonderful. I found there the violet coffin opposite another door, a real unmistakable furnace door this time: when it lifted there was a plain little chamber of cement and fire-brick. No heat, no noise. No roaring draught. No flame. No fuel. It looked cool, clean, sunny. You would have walked in or put your hand in without misgiving. Then the violet coffin moved again and went in, feet first. And behold! The feet burst miraculously into streaming ribbons of garnet coloured lovely flame, smokeless and eager, like pentecostal tongues, and as the whole coffin passed in, it sprang into flame all over; and my mother became that beautiful fire ... The door fell; well, they said that if we wanted to see it all through to the end, we should come back in an hour and a half. I remembered the wasted little figure with the wonderful face, and said, "Too long" to myself—but off we went. ... When we returned, the end was wildly funny; Mama would have enjoyed it enormously. We looked down through an opening in the floor. There we saw a roomy kitchen, with a big cement table and two cooks busy at it. They had little tongs in their hands, and they were deftly and busily picking nails and scraps of coffin handles out of Mama's dainty little heap of ashes and samples of bone. Mama herself being at the moment leaning over beside me, shaking with laughter. Then they swept her up into a sieve and shook her out; so that there was a heap of dust and a heap of bone scraps. And Mama said in my ear, "Which of the two heaps do you suppose is me?" ... and that merry episode was the end, except for making dust of the bone scraps and scattering them on a flower bed ... O grave, where is thy victory? ... And so goodnight, friends who understand about one's mother.

The Society of Authors on behalf of the  
Bernard Shaw Estate.

Question 3

(Suggested time—45 minutes)

(33 1/3 per cent)

The meaning of some literary works is often enhanced by sustained allusion to myths, the Bible, or other works of literature. Select a literary work that makes use of such a sustained reference. Then write a well-organized essay in which you explain the allusion that predominates in the work and analyze how it enhances the work's meaning.

You may select a work from the following list or choose another of comparable literary merit on which to base your essay. Be sure that the work you choose is appropriate for the question.

The Grapes of Wrath

The Centaur

Desire Under the Elms

The Fall, Camus

Billy Budd

Light in August

J. B.

The Rape of the Lock

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

Song of Solomon, Toni Morrison

Man and Superman

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead

The Waste Land

END OF EXAMINATION