

Advanced Placement Examination
ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes)

Read the following poem carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the language of the poem reflects the changing perceptions and emotions of the speaker as he considers the metamorphosis of the dead groundhog. Develop your essay with specific references to the text of the poem.

The Groundhog

- In June, amid the golden fields,
I saw a groundhog lying dead.
Dead lay he; my senses shook,
And mind outshot our naked frailty.
- (5) There lowly in the vigorous summer
His form began its senseless change,
And made my senses waver dim
Seeing nature ferocious in him.
Inspecting close his maggots' might
- (10) And seething cauldron of his being,
Half with loathing, half with a strange love,
I poked him with an angry stick.
The fever rose, became a flame
And Vigour circumscribed the skies,
- (15) Immense energy in the sun,
And through my frame a sunless trembling.
My stick had done nor good nor harm.
Then stood I silent in the day
Watching the object, as before;
- (20) And kept my reverence for knowledge
Trying for control, to be still,
To quell the passion of the blood:
Until I had bent down on my knees
Praying for joy in the sight of decay.
- (25) And so I left; and I returned
In Autumn strict of eye, to see
The sap gone out of the groundhog,
But the bony sodden hulk remained.
But the year had lost its meaning,
- (30) And in intellectual chains
I lost both love and loathing,
Mured up in the wall of wisdom.
Another summer took the fields again
Massive and burning, full of life,
- (35) But when I chanced upon the spot
There was only a little hair left,
And bones bleaching in the sunlight
Beautiful as architecture;
I watched them like a geometer,
- (40) And cut a walking stick from a birch.
It has been three years, now.
There is no sign of the groundhog.
I stood there in the whirling summer,
My hand capped a withered heart,
- (45) And thought of China and of Greece,
Of Alexander in his tent;
Of Montaigne in his tower,
Of Saint Theresa in her wild lament.

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Question 2

(Suggested time—40 minutes)

Read carefully the following statement of veto. In a well-organized essay, analyze the strategies or devices (organization, diction, tone, use of detail) that make Governor Stevenson's argument effective for his audience. Substantiate your observations with specific examples from the text.

To the Honorable, the Members of the Senate of the Sixty-
sixth General Assembly:

I herewith return, without my approval, Senate Bill No. 93 entitled "An Act to Provide Protection to Insectivorous Birds by Restraining Cats." This is the so-called "Cat Bill." I veto and withhold my approval from this bill for the following reasons:

It would impose fines on owners or keepers who permitted their cats to run at large off their premises. It would permit any person to capture, or call upon the police to pick up and imprison, cats at large. It would permit the use of traps. The bill would have statewide application—on farms, in villages, and in metropolitan centers.

This legislation has been introduced in the past several sessions of the Legislature, and it has, over the years, been the source of much comment—not all of which has been in a serious vein. It may be that the General Assembly has now seen fit to refer it to one who can view it with a fresh outlook. Whatever the reasons for passage at this session, I cannot believe there is a widespread public demand for this law or that it could, as a practical matter, be enforced.

Furthermore, I cannot agree that it should be the declared public policy of Illinois that a cat visiting a neighbor's yard or crossing the highway is a public nuisance. It is in the nature of cats to do a certain amount of unescorted roaming. Many live with their owners in apartments or other restricted premises, and I doubt if we want to make their every brief foray an opportunity for a small game hunt by zealous citizens—with traps or otherwise. I am afraid this bill could only create discord, recrimination and enmity. Also consider the owner's dilemma: To escort a cat abroad on a leash is against the nature of the cat, and to permit it to venture forth for exercise unattended into a night of new dangers is against the nature of the owner. Moreover, cats perform useful service, particularly in rural areas, in combatting rodents—work they necessarily perform alone and without regard for property lines.

We are all interested in protecting certain varieties of birds. That cats destroy some birds, I well know, but I believe this legislation would further but little the worthy cause to which its proponents give such unselfish effort. The problem of the cat versus bird is as old as time. If we attempt to resolve it by legislation who knows but what we may be called upon to take sides as well in the age-old problems of dog versus cat, bird versus bird, or even bird versus worm. In my opinion, the State of Illinois and its local governing bodies already have enough to do without trying to control feline delinquency.

For these reasons, and not because I love birds the less or cats the more, I veto and withhold my approval from Senate Bill No. 93.

Respectfully,

Adlai E. Stevenson, Governor

Question 3

(Suggested time—40 minutes)

In great literature, no scene of violence exists for its own sake.

Choose a work of literary merit that confronts the reader or audience with a scene or scenes of violence. In a well-organized essay, explain how the scene or scenes contribute to the meaning of the complete work. Avoid plot summary.

The following titles are listed as suggestions. You may base your essay on one of them or choose another work of equivalent literary merit on which to write.

Light in August

Billy Budd

A Tale of Two Cities

The Zoo Story

King Lear

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Native Son

Wuthering Heights

An American Tragedy

Medea

The Great Gatsby

Crime and Punishment

Lord Jim

The Stranger

Catch-22

Wise Blood

Invisible Man

Tess of the D'Urbervilles

Julius Caesar

A Separate Peace

END OF EXAMINATION