

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—1 hour and 45 minutes

Question I

(Suggested time—35 minutes. This question counts
one-third of the total essay section score.)

In the selection below, George Eliot presents a conception of leisure that has lost its place in the society of her own time. Write an essay in which you describe her views on “old Leisure” and on leisure in the society of her own time and discuss the stylistic devices she uses to convey those views.

- Leisure is gone—gone where the spinning-wheels are gone, and the pack-horses, and the slow waggons, and the pedlars, who brought bargains to the door on sunny afternoons. Ingenious philosophers tell you, perhaps,
- (5) that the great work of the steam-engine is to create leisure for mankind. Do not believe them: it only creates a vacuum for eager thought to rush in. Even idleness is eager now—eager for amusement: prone to excursion-trains, art-museums, periodical literature, and exciting
- (10) novels: prone even to scientific theorising, and cursory peeps through microscopes. Old Leisure was quite a different personage: he only read one newspaper, innocent of leaders, and was free from that periodicity of sensations which we call post-time. He was a contemplative,
- (15) rather stout gentleman, of excellent digestion,—of quiet perceptions, undiseased by hypothesis: happy in his inability to know the causes of things, preferring the things themselves. He lived chiefly in the country, among pleasant seats and homesteads, and was fond of saunter-
- (20) ing by the fruit-tree wall, and scenting the apricots when they were warmed by the morning sunshine, or of sheltering himself under the orchard boughs at noon, when the summer pears were falling. He knew nothing of weekday services, and thought none the worse of the
- (25) Sunday sermon if it allowed him to sleep from the text to the blessing—liking the afternoon service best, because the prayers were the shortest, and not ashamed to say so; for he had an easy, jolly conscience, broad-backed like himself, and able to carry a great deal of
- (30) beer or port-wine, —not being made squeamish by doubts and qualms and lofty aspirations. Life was not a task to him, but a sinecure: he fingered the guineas in his pocket, and ate his dinners, and slept the sleep of the irresponsible; for had he not kept up his charter by
- (35) going to church on the Sunday afternoons?
- Fine old Leisure! Do not be severe upon him, and judge him by our modern standard: he never went to Exeter Hall, or heard a popular preacher, or read *Tracts for the Times* or *Sartor Resartus*.*

- George Eliot, *Adam Bede* - 1859

*Religious, political, and philosophical works published between 1833 and 1841

Go on to Question 2

Question 2

(Suggested time— 35 minutes. This question counts one-third of the total essay section score.)

Some novels and plays seem to advocate changes in social or political attitudes or in traditions. Choose such a novel or play and note briefly the particular attitudes or traditions that the author apparently wishes to modify. Then analyze the techniques the author uses to influence the reader's or audience's views. Avoid plot summary.

You may choose one of the works listed below or another of comparable quality that is appropriate for the question. Do not write about a film or a television program.

The Jungle

The Grapes of Wrath

An Enemy of the People

Invisible Man

A Doll's House

Nineteen Eighty-Four

Main Street

Hard Times

Watch on the Rhine

Catch-22

Native Son

Sister Carrie

Cry, the Beloved Country

Mrs. Warren's Profession

The Awakening

Mother Courage and Her Children

Gulliver's Travels

Candide

The Crucible

Tartuffe

A Raisin in the Sun

Redburn

Jude the Obscure

Moll Flanders

Lysistrata

Uncle Tom's Cabin

Go on to Question 3

Question 3

(Suggested time—35 minutes. This question counts

one-third of the total essay section score.)

Read the poem below carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze the presentation of the sow. Consider particularly how the language of the poem reflects both the neighbor's and the narrator's perceptions of the sow and how that language determines the reader's perceptions. Be certain to discuss how the portrayal of the sow is enhanced by such features as diction, devices of sound, images, and allusions.

Sow

God knows how our neighbor managed to breed
His great sow:
Whatever his shrewd secret, he kept it hid

In the same way
(5) He kept the sow—impounded from public stare,
Prize ribbon and pig show.

But one dusk our questions commended us to a tour
Through his lantern-lit
Maze of barns to the lintel of the sunk sty door

(10) To gape at it:
This was no rose-and-larkspurred china suckling
With a penny slot

For thrifty children, nor dolt pig ripe for heckling,
About to be

(15) Glorified for prime flesh and golden crackling

In a parsley halo;
Nor even one of the common barnyard sows,
Mire-smirched, blowzy,

Maunching thistle and knotweed on her snout-
cruise—

(20) Bloat tun of milk
On the move, hedged by a litter of feat-foot ninnies

Shrilling her hulk
To halt for a swig at the pink teats. No. This vast
Brobdingnag bulk

(25) Of a sow lounged belly-bedded on that black
compost,
Fat-rutted eyes
Dream-filmed. What a vision of ancient hoghood
must

Thus wholly engross
The great grandam!—our marvel blazoned a knight,
(30) Helmed, in cuirass,

Unhorsed and shredded in the grove of combat
By a grisly-bristled
Boar, fabulous enough to straddle that sow's heat.

But our farmer whistled,
(35) Then, with a jocular fist thwacked the barrel nape,
And the green-copse-castled

Pig hove, letting legend like dried mud drop,
Slowly, grunt
On grunt, up in the flickering light to shape

(40) A monument
Prodigious in gluttonies as that hog whose want
Made lean Lent

Of kitchen slops and, stomaching no constraint,
Proceeded to swill
The seven troughed seas and every earthquaking
continent.

Copyright © 1957 by Sylvia
Plath. Reprinted from *The
Colossus and Other Poems*,
by Sylvia Plath, by
permission of Alfred A.
Knopf, Inc.

END OF EXAMINATION