

1996 ENGLISH LITERATURE

Question 3 (Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

The British novelist Fay Weldon offers this observation about happy endings:

The writers, I do believe, who get the best and most lasting response from readers are the writers who offer a happy ending through moral development. By a happy ending, I do not mean mere fortunate events—a marriage or a last-minute rescue from death—but some kind of spiritual reassessment or moral reconciliation, even with the self, even at death."

Choose a novel or play that has the kind of ending Weldon describes. In a well-written essay, identify the "spiritual reassessment or moral reconciliation" evident in the ending and explain its significance in the work as a whole. You may select a work from the list below or another novel or play of literary merit.

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
All the Pretty Horses
Bless Me, Ultima
Candide
Ceremony
The Color Purple
Crime and Punishment
Cry, the Beloved Country
Emma
The Eumenides
Great Expectations
Heart of Darkness
Invisible Man
Jane Eyre
King Lear

Major Barbara
Moby-Dick
The Piano Lesson
A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man
The Portrait of a Lady
Praisesong for the Widow
A Raisin in the Sun
Song of Solomon
The Stone Angel
The Tempest
Their Eyes Were Watching God
Twelfth Night
The Warden
Wuthering Heights