

1997

The College Board Advanced
Placement Examination

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II Total

time—2 hours

Question 1 (Suggested time—40 minutes. This question
counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

Read the following poem carefully. Then write a well-organized essay in which you explain how formal elements
such as structure, syntax, diction, and imagery reveal the speaker's response to the death of a toad.

The Death of a Toad

A toad the power mower caught, Chewed and clipped
of a leg, with a hobbling hop has got
To the garden verge, and sanctuaried him
Under the cineraria¹ leaves, in the shade
Line Of the ashen heartshaped leaves, in a dim,
↳

Low, and a final glade. The rare original heartsblood
goes, Spends on the earthen hide, in the folds and wizenings,
flows
In the gutters of the banked and staring eyes. He lies (*JO*)
As still as if he would return to stone, And soundlessly
attending, dies Toward some deep monotone,

Toward misted and ebullient seas And cooling shores,
toward lost Amphibia's emperies². (*15*) Day dwindles,
drowning, and at length is gone
In the wide and antique eyes, which still appear
To watch, across the castrate lawn, The
haggard daylight steer.

—Richard Wilbur

The Death of a Toad," from *Ceremony and Other Poems* by
Richard Wilbur. Copyright © 1950, 1978 by Richard Wilbur.
Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company.

Ornamental plants with silvery foliage; from "cinerarium," a place for keeping the ashes of a
cremated body

Empires