Chapter 6

ABOUT THE FREE RESPONSE ESSAY ON POETRY

You may feel that poetry is too difficult to understand and that you will never be able to write a good essay about it. One way to reduce your anxiety is to recognize that your response to a poem is no more a matter of right or wrong, correct or incorrect, than your reaction to a popular song. A systematic approach to analyzing and writing about poetry will help you to do well on your essays. Chapter 6 offers you a plan of attack.

A poet, more than any other writer, considers each word very carefully. To elicit the desired response from you, the reader, each word must be exactly right. The resulting poem condenses a complex experience into a short, simple work of literature. When reading a poem, you must be equally careful to identify the tools the poet uses and analyze the ways in which they are used to achieve the total effect.

READING THE MATERIAL

As obvious as it sounds, before you begin writing the poetry essay you need to read the question and the poetry. Writing about a poem requires that you understand it. You will have to read the selection(s) more than once. The strategy suggested below is similar to, but not exactly the same as, the strategy for reading the prose that we described in Chapter 5.

• First, read the question and the poetry.
• Second, identify what the question is asking you to do. A question may require you to interpret the poetry, synthesize information, compare elements of the poem or of poems, and/or evaluate an aspect of the poem. Are you being asked to compare? Compare what? Are you being asked to explain? Explain what? Underline the important points or key words in the question.
• Restate the question to yourself—paraphrase it—so you know what you are being asked to write about.
Now that you know what you are to write about, read the poetry.

- Read the poem four times.
- The first two times you read the poem, read it sentence by sentence, not line by line. In other words, let the punctuation guide you, not the structure.
- The first time you read the poem, skim it. You are looking for the “layout” of the poem.
- The second time you read the poem, take more time and care. Now deal with obscure language and confusing sentences.
- Be aware of language and diction, poetic devices, style, the writer’s intentions and purpose, the selection’s impact, and special techniques.
- For the third reading, read the poem aloud in your mind to hear the poem’s “music.” Evaluate the contribution of the rhythm, rhyme, and sound.
- During your last read, paraphrase the poem. Your paraphrase should reflect what the poem states directly and what it implies.
- As you read, highlight or underline the sentences that strike you as important and that you might want to quote in your essay. Jot down notes. However, do not spend a great deal of time doing this.

**WRITING THE ESSAY ABOUT A POETRY SELECTION**

**Study Strategy**

If you developed an Idea Bank of words and phrases to describe literary works, draw on it to help you develop your thesis. See Chapter 8, p. 216.

In essence, your essay about poetry will evaluate the effectiveness with which the poet uses the elements of poetry. You will show your understanding of the poem by explaining, interpreting, and even judging it. Consider the organizational pattern suggested here to clarify the parts of your literary essay.

**INTRODUCTION**

Your introduction should include the title of the poem and the name of the poet as well as the form and genre of the poem. Your introduction should present any background information necessary for understanding your thesis. Most importantly, the introduction should state clearly the main point you will make. You may wish to list the ideas that you will use to support your thesis. Placing your thesis statement toward the end of your introductory paragraph allows you the possibility of a more interesting opening.
ABOUT THE FREE RESPONSE ESSAY ON POETRY

**BODY OF YOUR ESSAY**

**Writing Strategy**

Be sure to include your personal response to the work, supported with evidence from the poem. That shows the reader that you have read the poem thoughtfully.

**CONCLUSION**

The body of your essay will explore each of the subtopics of the main point, using one or more paragraphs per subtopic. Use information, including quotations or line citations, from the poetry to support your subtopics. Order your paragraphs and your supporting facts logically. Organizing by order of importance works well for literary essays. Be sure to present material to support your thesis and subtopics effectively and adequately.

Your conclusion should restate the main point you made in the introduction and summarize your argument. The ending paragraph should explain how your essay supports your thesis. The conclusion should also pull the essay together with a closing remark so the reader is not left wondering why you wrote the essay.

Following this structure will make writing the poetry essay easier by giving you a direction. However, you may be thinking, "Where do I get those subtopics, and how can I understand a poem well enough to have an opinion?" Remember that poems are written concisely and for emotional impact. The chart *Analyzing Poetry* on p. 174 suggests a strategy to help you understand poetry, analyze literary elements, and develop your essay points. Use the questions from the chart to practice writing answers to the questions about poetry you will find in Chapter 6. Try it for the essays you have to write in school about poetry, and see how much easier it is to organize and develop your ideas.

**PRACTICING**

The question and selection on p. 180 is very similar to those that you will find on the actual AP examination. Apply the suggestions and strategies as you read and write about the poem "My Heart's in the Highlands" by Robert Burns. Then check your essay by reading the suggested points of discussion that follow. Evaluate yourself by using the *Self-Evaluation Rubric* and scoring tool on pp. 191-193.
ANALYZING POETRY

Author
1. Who is the author?
2. What do you know about the writer and/or the time period in which the poem was written?

Title
1. What does the title tell you?
2. What does the title suggest about the poem?

Genre
1. Is the poem a lyric, such as an ode, elegy, or sonnet?
   - Does it use musical language to express the emotions of the speaker?
   - Who is the speaker?
   - What audience is being addressed?
   - What is the occasion or situation?
2. Is it a narrative poem—that is, does it tell a story?
   - What plot, characters, settings, and point of view does the story have?
3. Is it a dramatic poem?
   - Is it a monologue or dialogue, or does it use some other dramatic technique?
   - What point of view, characters, setting, and situation does the dramatic work present?

Form
1. Does the poem have a traditional form or pattern? If so, what is it?
2. What is the stanza form?
3. How many lines does each stanza have? Do all the stanzas have the same number of lines?
4. What are the rhyme scheme and the metrical pattern?
5. If the stanzas are written in a standard form, what is it?
6. Does the poem have a special shape or structure that enhances its meaning?

Subject
1. What is the subject of the poem?
2. What is this poem about?

Theme or Thesis
1. What is the theme or central idea of the poem?
2. How is the message conveyed?

Sensory Images
1. What details appeal to your sense of sight?
2. What details appeal to your sense of hearing?
3. What details appeal to your sense of smell?
4. What details appeal to your sense of taste?
5. What details appeal to your sense of touch?
6. What is the purpose of these sensory images?
ANALYZING POETRY (CONTINUED)

Figurative Language
1. Are there any metaphors?
2. Are there similes?
3. Are there personifications?
4. Are there other less common figures of speech? What are they?
5. What purpose do the figures of speech serve?
6. Is there symbolism?
7. What do the symbols stand for?
8. What is the purpose of the symbolism?
9. Are there allusions?
10. Is the poem allegorical?

Sound Devices
1. Does the writer make use of alliteration?
2. Does the writer include assonance or consonance?
3. Does the poet use onomatopoeia?
4. Does the poet use any type of rhyme, such as end rhyme, interior rhyme, masculine
   rhyme, or feminine rhyme? What is it?
5. Are there any repetitions in words, lines, or stanzas?
6. Does the poem contain euphony, cacophony, parallel structure, or repetition?
7. What is the meter? What type and number of metrical feet are in a line?
8. How does the poem use rhythm?
9. What purpose do these sound effects serve?

Opposition
1. Are there any contrasts between people or personalities?
2. Are any places contrasted?
3. Are other elements contrasted?
4. What is the effect of the contrast?

Style
1. What is the mood or emotional structure?
2. Does the emotional structure remain constant or does it change?
3. What is the tone?
4. Does the tone stay the same or change?
5. Does the poet use any special techniques, such as unusual punctuation, capitalization,
   or spacing?
6. How does the poet use words? Does the poet use words in unusual ways?
7. How do connotations of words create figurative or extended meaning?

NOTE: Use these questions as you practice planning and writing the essay questions on
poetry in this chapter. Take the answers to these questions into account as you develop your
theses. Pay particular attention to how the various literary techniques contribute to the impact
of the poem. Include your own reactions and feelings in your essays, but support them with
specifics from the poem. By using these questions throughout this chapter, you will become so
familiar with them that you will automatically turn to them to analyze any poetry you read.
SAMPLE ESSAY ON POETRY

SUGGESTED TIME—40 MINUTES

Directions: Robert Burns wrote the following poem. He is considered by some to be Scotland's greatest poet. He came from a poor background, although he had books available to him. Many of his poems were meant to be sung even though he was tone-deaf. Read the poem carefully. Then write an essay discussing how Burns elicits an emotional response from the reader or listener. Consider such elements as speaker, form, imagery, and musicality.

My Heart’s in the Highlands

My heart’s in the Highlands, my heart is not here,
My heart’s in the Highlands a-chasing the deer,
A-chasing the wild deer and following the roe—
My heart’s in the Highlands, wherever I go!

Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,
The birthplace of valor, the country of worth!
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands forever I love.

Farewell to the mountains high cover’d with snow,
Farewell to the straths* and green valleys below,
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods,
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods!

My heart’s in the Highlands, my heart is not here,
My heart’s in the Highlands a-chasing the deer,
A-chasing the wild deer and following the roe—
My heart’s in the Highlands, wherever I go!

—Robert Burns

*T Wide river valleys

TIP: Before you turn the page and read our suggestions for an essay on this poem, score your essay using the Self-Evaluation Rubric on p. 191.
ABOUT THE FREE RESPONSE ESSAY ON POETRY

SUGGESTIONS FOR SAMPLE ESSAY ON POETRY

Test-Taking Strategy
Before you begin to write, be sure you know what the essay question is asking you to write about.

AUTHOR

The following are points you might have chosen to include in your essay on the poem “My Heart’s in the Highlands.” Consider them as you perform your self-evaluation. You will notice that we discuss elements of poetry that are not called for in the essay question. However, by identifying the author, naming the type of poem, and writing the title, you have a place to begin and you give yourself an opportunity to include information to increase your score.

Robert Burns, perhaps the greatest poet Scotland ever produced, is known for writing songs about love, friendship, and his country. He often used Scottish dialect in his writing, and his most well-known song is “Auld Lang Syne.”

Of course, you cannot find this information in the poem. However, you may know much of this from your study of literature. Most probably you have heard someone sing “Auld Lang Syne” on New Year’s Eve. Just remembering that Burns wrote songs should help you in analyzing the poem.

TITLE

The title of the poem tells you quite a bit. The poet identifies a place that is important to him, and the word heart indicates a strong emotional attachment to the Highlands.

GENRE, SPEAKER, AND AUDIENCE

The poem is a lyric, in fact, a song, and the musical language expresses the emotions of the speaker. In this poem, you can assume that the speaker and the poet are the same. The speaker has left the Highlands and is living elsewhere. The audience includes all people who hear the song.

FORM

Writing Strategy
Don’t forget to use transitions between ideas and paragraphs.

Burns wrote four-line stanzas, called quatrains, with a very simple aabbccdd rhyme scheme. The metrical pattern includes an opening iambus followed by two dactyl feet and ends with an accented syllable. Since the dactyl feet prevail, the poem is written in dactylic tetrameter. Poets often vary the meter and feet slightly to avoid a work that sounds like a metronome.

It is all well and good to identify rhyme and meter, but you need to relate it to the question. These elements add to the musicality of the poem and increase the emotional tone. If you consistently related the poetic elements to the question, you wrote to the point.
CHAPTER 6

THEME OR THESIS

Test-Taking Strategy
Even if you are not asked directly about the poem’s meaning, include it in your essay and relate it to the question.

SENSORY IMAGES

This poem has strong visual elements. Burns writes of wild deer, green valleys, and “wild-hanging woods.” In addition, there is an aural image in the line “Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods.”

These images convey the poet’s love for the region, a love that the audience recognizes. Thus, the sensory images elicit an emotional response.

SOUND DEVICES

Test-Taking Strategy
Don’t just identify and give examples of the literary devices you find in a poem. Explain how each adds to the poem’s impact.

Burns uses repetition to great effect. Not only does he repeat the first stanza as the last, he also repeats words, phrases, and rhymes. By using repetition, the poet makes “My Heart’s in the Highlands” sound like a song. Burns also uses the devices to emphasize his ideas. The word Highlands is repeated eight times, and Farewell is repeated six times. The most repeated phrase, “My Heart’s in the Highlands,” contains the most important idea in the poem. Repetition creates an emotional response because the reader must acknowledge the importance of the poet’s attachment to place. Similarly, the poet uses parallelism, the repetition of the same grammatical form or structure, to convey his message and elicit an emotional response. Parallelism adds to the poem’s rhythm. All these repetitions add to the feeling of homesickness and nostalgia in the poem. Many readers will relate to these emotions.

While this poem seems simple, the use of sound devices is most effective. The song-like quality makes the main idea of love of place accessible.

OPPOSITION

Test-Taking Strategy
You can use the concept of opposition when writing about prose works, too.

The opposition in this poem is between the Highlands and “here.” While you do not know what kind of place “here” is, you imagine that it is quite the opposite of the Highlands.

Why is this relevant to the question? This establishes the sense of sadness and nostalgia, the sense of feeling out of place that most people have felt at some time. Thus, Burns creates impact.

“My Heart’s in the Highlands” shows love for a place, the Highlands of Scotland. Since love is certainly an emotion, this is a good point to mention. Also, remember that you should present a writer’s main point even if the question does not ask about it directly. You want to show that you understand the meaning of what you read.

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YOUR STYLE

To write effectively about poetry, you need to support your points with quotes from the poem. You can also cite lines. Add interest to the development of your thesis through word choice and varying sentence structure.

Some of the things we said about the concluding paragraph in an essay about prose also work for poetry. A simple summary may not be flashy, but if it clearly restates your thesis and the points that support it, it will help the reader see where you have been and why. A relevant quotation from the poem or from another related poem or from a critical work can be a clever way to end your essay, but don't misquote.

Study Strategy


Once you have evaluated your essay with the Self-Evaluation Rubric on p. 191 and reviewed our points, you may choose to revise your essay using the points suggested here. However, do not spend a great deal of time trying to make it perfect. Revise it simply to see how adding some of our points may make it stronger. Whether you revise or not, ask a classmate or your teacher to evaluate your essay using the Self-Evaluation Rubric on p. 191. How does your own evaluation compare with a more objective view? Keep the differences in mind as you write and score more free response essays on poetry.

Now that you have a sense of the logic involved in acing the poetry essay question of Section II, try Practice Essay 1 and Practice Essay 2. Study the points for evaluation and use the Self-Evaluation Rubric. If you are still unsure about writing essays on poetry, continue with Practice Essay 3 and Practice Essay 4.
PRACTICE ESSAY 1

ESSAY ON POETRY SELECTION

Suggested Time—40 Minutes

Directions: Alfred, Lord Tennyson wrote this poem after returning from one of his favorite places, Ireland. While he was there, he had been impressed with the sounds of bugles from boatmen. Imagery is often a key element in poetry. Read the following poem carefully. Write an essay discussing the images that Tennyson creates in this poem. Explain the literary methods he uses to paint these images. Consider such elements as figurative language, sensory images, sound devices, and opposition.

The Splendor Falls

When the splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!

Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

—Alfred, Lord Tennyson

TIP

Use the Self-Evaluation Rubric on p. 191 to help you assess your progress in writing the free response essays on poetry.
You might have chosen to include the following points in your essay on the passage from "The Splendor Falls." Consider them as you do your self-evaluation.

Background Information
- Author: Tennyson impressed by sounds of the boatmen in Ireland, a sound he uses in this poem
- Subject: portrait of an image that he has seen and heard

Theme
- No deep meaning to the poem; expression of love by Tennyson for a special place of beauty

Sensory Images
- Sound: appeals mostly to the sense of hearing; blowing of the bugles and horns, principal sensory vehicle
- Sight: secondary appeal to sight; image of the castle, cataract, rich sky

Sound Devices
- Alliteration: One example is "long, light . . . lakes,"
- Repetition: "dying, dying, dying"; an interesting twist because it suggests diminishing sound as an echo would fade away
- Internal rhyme: used to good advantage in several places, for example, "shakes . . . lakes"

Opposition
- Unusual opposition with the permanence of elements such as a castle contrasted with the dying echoes

Style
- Usage of words to convey the sound and feel of the subject of his poem; reader "moves in" and hears the boatmen's horns while taking in a view of the water
- Setting: developed almost like a landscape painting; castle, water, hills, and fields all for the reader to see
PRACTICE ESSAY 2

ESSAY ON POETRY SELECTION

Suggested Time—40 Minutes

Directions: William Shakespeare was such a master of the sonnet form that the terms “Shakespearian sonnet” and “English sonnet” are interchangeable. Read the following poem carefully. Write an essay discussing how the poet uses the sonnet form to convey his love. Consider such elements as speaker, imagery, and poetic devices.

Sonnet 18

Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer’s lease hath all too short a date:

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm’d;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature’s changing course untrimm’d;

But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander’st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

—William Shakespeare

TIP Use the Self-Evaluation Rubric on p. 191 to help you assess your progress in writing the free response essays on poetry.
SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICE ESSAY 2

Study Strategy

Revise your essay using points from this list that will strengthen it.

You might have chosen to include the following points in your essay on Sonnet 18. Consider them as you do your self-evaluation.

Background Information

- Author: William Shakespeare; Elizabethan period poet and playwright
- Genre: sonnet

Thesis

- The beloved is nature’s eternal summer; the lover’s beauty will never fade.
- The sonnet ensures immortality.

Form

- Speaker: the person who loves the person addressed
- Audience: the beloved, the person addressed
- 14 lines; 3 quatrains, ending couplet; traditional Shakespearean/English sonnet form
- Each quatrain introduces a new premise or aspect to the comparison between a summer’s day and the speaker’s beloved.
- The couplet departs from the comparison to comment on the beloved’s immortalization through the sonnet.
- All are characteristic features of English/Shakespearean sonnets.
- Rhyme scheme: abab cdcd efefgg
- Iambic pentameter

Sensory Images

- Sight: much of the poem, description of sun
- Hearing: “Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May”
- Purpose: to expand on the comparison of summer’s day and the beloved

Figurative Language

- Extended metaphor/conceit: loved one fares better than a summer’s day; more lovely, more temperate
- Petrarchan conceits, subject of poem compared to some startling object, often in Elizabethan love poems: summer’s day and beloved
- Personification: sun has “gold complexion,” death “brags”

Sound Devices

- Some slight alliteration—chance and changing
- Repetition and parallel structure in couplet: adds emphasis to idea of immortality through the sonnet
CHAPTER 6

PRACTICE ESSAY 3

ESSAY ON POETRY SELECTION

Suggested Time—40 Minutes

Directions: Read the following poem carefully. Write an essay that discusses the allusion to spring and Jesus Christ. Consider such literary elements as rhythm, imagery, form, theme, and tone.

Study Strategy

When you practice, limit yourself to 40 minutes—5 minutes to read and plan and 35 minutes to write—so you will become comfortable with writing on demand.

Spring

Nothing is so beautiful as spring—
   When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;
   Thrush’s eggs look little low heavens, and thrush
   Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
   The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;
   The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush
   The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush
   With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?

A strain of the earth’s sweet being in the beginning
In Eden garden.—Have, get, before it cloy,
   Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,
Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,
   Most, O maid’s child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

—Gerard Manley Hopkins

TIP

Use the Self-Evaluation Rubric on p. 191 to help you assess your progress in writing the free response essays on poetry.
ABOUT THE FREE RESPONSE ESSAY ON POETRY

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICE ESSAY 3

Study Strategy
Revise your essay using points from this list that will strengthen it.

You might have chosen to include the following points in your essay on the poem “Spring.” Consider them as you perform your self-evaluation.

Background Information
- Author: Roman Catholic priest; English; religious background relates to theme; lived during the mid-nineteenth century
- Form: sonnet; rhyme scheme: abbaabba cdcdcd

Theme
- Octave: develops the beauty of spring
- Sestet: introduces the author’s religious thoughts
- Themes: developed from the combination of the octave and sestet:
  - Nature is innocent and reminds us of our innocence as children.
  - People must be shown religion, that is, Jesus Christ, as a way to keep from sinning.

Sensory Images
- Octave: descriptions of the sights and sounds of spring
- Examples: thrush’s eggs, song of the thrush, racing lambs, pear tree
- Impact: demonstrate beauty of spring

Figurative Language
- Hopkins uses the term “maid’s child” as an allusion to Christ.
- Spring: symbol of beginning of world, Eden

Sound Devices
- Author noted for his rhythms
- Rising accent beginning in the second line
- Developed the “sprung rhythm” that he uses in this work
- Rhythm: culminates in emphasis on imperative verbs: “have,” “get,” and “cloy;” directed action commonplace in religious thought at the time

Style
- Octave: an emotional appeal to natural beauty
- Sestet: statement of religious belief of the poet
PRACTICE ESSAY 4

ESSAY ON POETRY SELECTION

Suggested Time—40 Minutes

Directions: Often writers will address similar subjects, themes, or allusions. In many cases, they view them in the same way, but in others they may approach them quite differently. In the following two poems, William Blake and William Wordsworth have "London" as their title. In a well-organized essay, contrast and compare these two poems. Consider such literary elements as theme, speaker, diction, imagery, form, and tone.

London

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infant's cry of fear,
In every voice; in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the Chimney-sweeper's cry
Every black'ning Church appalls,
And the hapless Soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlot's curse
Blasts the new born Infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.

—William Blake
London, 1802

Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,

Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men:
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:

Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

—William Wordsworth

TIP: Use the Self-Evaluation Rubric on p. 191 to help you assess your progress in writing the free response essays on poetry.
SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICE ESSAY 4

Study Strategy

Revise your essay using points from the list that will strengthen it.

You might have chosen to include the following points in your essay comparing the two poems about London. Consider them as you perform your self-evaluation.

Background Information

- Authors: Blake and Wordsworth; both lived in London; Blake was born before Wordsworth.
- Title: both “London;” titles define both the setting and subject

Genre

- Blake
  - Lyric; strongly emotional; horrified and appalled
  - Author is speaker.
  - Point of view: first person
  - Dramatic poem: speaker is walking through London making observations of its degradation; poem travels somewhere
- Wordsworth
  - Sonnet
  - Speaker: people of England
  - Point of view: first person plural, note the words “We are selfish men”
  - Intellectual approach, much less emotion
  - Dramatic poem: calls upon Milton to resurrect spiritual well-being in England to restore England; appeal to Milton to return to London, bring his life-giving force, return England to spiritual health

Form

- Blake
  - Four stanzas of four lines: first stanza visualizes degradation; second hears degradation; third a combination; fourth the climax, life itself is poisoned
  - Rhyme scheme: abab repeated each stanza
  - Metric pattern: iambic tetrameter
  - Form encourages an emotional accessibility
ABOUT THE FREE RESPONSE ESSAY ON POETRY

- Wordsworth
  - Sonnet; not classically Shakespearean in format
  - Rhyme scheme, abbaabba; for octave; abbcac for sestet
  - Metric pattern: iambic pentameter
  - Form more formal; complements intellectual tone

**Theme or Thesis**
- Both authors are addressing the spiritual and physical deterioration of London.
- Blake: city corrupted
- Wordsworth: city a marsh full of stagnant water

**Sensory Images**
- Blake
  - Broad appeals to the reader's senses. Sight: "And mark in every face I meet, / Marks of weakness . . . woe", "blood." Sound: cries of men, infants, and chimney sweeps, hears a harlot and manacles
  - The sensory images show the deterioration of the city and the despair of the people.
- Wordsworth
  - Limited appeal to the reader's senses; appeal to intellect

**Figurative Language**
- Blake
  - Uses less than Wordsworth
  - Symbolism: "Man," "Infant," "chimney sweep," "Harlot"
- Wordsworth
  - Personification: England is personified as an individual to be helped by Milton.
  - Metaphor: England compared to "stagnant water." Milton compared to a star, the sea, and other elements in the sestet.
  - Simile: soul like star, voice sounds like sea, pure as the naked heavens
  - Adds majesty to Milton
CHAPTER 6

Sound Devices

• Blake
  • Repetition in the first stanza with "charter'd" and "mark." Gives a sense of urgency. Elsewhere, the word cry serves to emphasize the state of mind of the people.

• Wordsworth
  • Assonance: line 3 is an a sound
  • Minor alliteration: "soul like a Star"

Style

• Blake
  • Simpler, more dramatic; appeals to the emotions

• Wordsworth
  • Appeals more to the intellect. Wordsworth uses people's feelings for Milton to inject some amount of emotional response. Blake plays on words; "chartered," "mark;" takes the reader to London
  • Leaves the reader on the outside describing the deterioration, almost as a third party
## Self-Evaluation Rubric for the Advanced Placement Essays

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<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Impression</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates excellent control of the literature and outstanding writing competence; thorough and effective; inclusive</td>
<td>Demonstrates good control of the literature and good writing competence; less thorough and incisive than the highest papers</td>
<td>Reveals simplistic thinking and/or immature writing; adequate skills</td>
<td>Incomplete thinking; fails to respond adequately to part or parts of the question; may paraphrase rather than analyze</td>
<td>Unacceptably brief; fails to respond to the question; little clarity</td>
<td>Lacking skill and competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding of the Text</strong></td>
<td>Excellent understanding of the text; exhibits perception and clarity; original or unique approach; includes specific references</td>
<td>Good understanding of the text; exhibits perception and clarity; includes specific references</td>
<td>Superficial understanding of the text; elements of literature vague, mechanical, overgeneralized</td>
<td>Misreadings and lack of persuasive evidence from the text; meager and unconvincing treatment of literary elements</td>
<td>Serious misreadings and little supporting evidence from the text; erroneous treatment of literary elements</td>
<td>A response with no more than a reference to the literature; blank response, or one completely off the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization and Development</strong></td>
<td>Meticulously organized and thoroughly developed; coherent and unified</td>
<td>Well-organized and developed; coherent and unified</td>
<td>Reasonably organized and developed; mostly coherent and unified</td>
<td>Somewhat organized and developed; some incoherence and lack of unity</td>
<td>Little or no organization and development; incoherent and void of unity</td>
<td>No apparent organization or development; incoherent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Sentences</strong></td>
<td>Effectively varied and engaging; virtually error free</td>
<td>Varied and interesting; a few errors</td>
<td>Adequately varied; some errors</td>
<td>Somewhat varied and marginally interesting; one or more major errors</td>
<td>Little or no variation; dull and uninteresting; some major errors</td>
<td>Numerous major errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word Choice</strong></td>
<td>Interesting and effective; virtually error free</td>
<td>Generally interesting and effective; a few errors</td>
<td>Occasionally interesting and effective; several errors</td>
<td>Somewhat dull and ordinary; some errors in diction</td>
<td>Mostly dull and conventional; numerous errors</td>
<td>Numerous major errors; extremely immature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar and Usage</strong></td>
<td>Virtually error free</td>
<td>Occasional minor errors</td>
<td>Several minor errors</td>
<td>Some major errors</td>
<td>Severe major errors</td>
<td>Extremely flawed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rate yourself in each of the categories. Choose the description that most accurately reflects your performance, and enter the numbers on the lines below. Be as honest as possible so you will know what areas need work. Then calculate the average of the six numbers to determine your final score. It is difficult to score yourself objectively, so you may wish to ask a respected friend or teacher to assess your writing for a more accurate reflection of its strengths and weaknesses. On the AP test itself, a reader will rate your essay on a scale of 1 to 9, with 9 being the highest.

Rate each category from 9 (high) to 0 (low)

**QUESTION 1**

<table>
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<tr>
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**QUESTION 2**

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