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Pre-AP Strategies in English: Composition, January 2017

Strategies toward Writing Meaningful Essays

1. Writing about literature

(based on *The Scarlet Letter*)

Version #1

Hester Prynne is a bold, confident woman. She daringly decorates her scarlet "A," indicating to the community that she feels she has done nothing wrong. Furthermore, she does not hide, but goes out of her way to help those in the community who are worse off than she is. Her good deeds are a constant reminder to the community that she has no shame. Hester's boldness forces the community to recognize what a confident and competent person she is.

Version #2

Hester Prynne is a bold, confident woman. Instead of hiding the scarlet "A," Hester embroiders it in gold, making the letter showy and attractive. Hester does not hide, but she is often seen in the community, feeding the poor and mending their clothes. Hester's boldness forces the community to recognize what a confident and competent person she is.

Version #3

Hester Prynne is a bold, confident woman. Instead of hiding the scarlet "A," Hester embroiders it in gold, making the letter showy and attractive. The Puritans had intended for the "branding" to be morally self-destructive, but Hester, not feeling that she has done anything wrong, uses it to force the community to focus on her individuality. Her decoration of the "A" is a mockery of their punishment because Hester doesn't feel ashamed of what she has done. Also Hester is visible in the community, feeding the poor and mending their clothes. Realizing that there are others in more dire need than she, Hester takes it upon herself to make their lives a little easier. She does what she thinks is right, not what the community thinks she should do. Hester, feeling she has done no wrong, boldly keeps the incident in the community's mind until they see through the deed and into the confident and competent person that Hester is.

Asking Critical Questions (to encourage critical thinking / writing) —

- How?
- Why?
- So what?

Concrete detail= facts
evidence
examples
illustration
description
specific details
proof
reasons

Commentary = analysis
explication
explanation
discussion
interpretation
opinion
insight evaluation
personal response

2. Writing the Personal Essay

Topic Sentence / Thesis must contain a *specific* subject (topic) and a *meaningful* opinion (main point).

I drove to Tulsa in the rain.

Driving to Tulsa was horrible.

Driving in the pouring rain to Tulsa was a frightening experience.

Version #1

Driving in the pouring rain to Tulsa was a frightening experience. It was hard to see and I was really afraid. I thought I would run out of gas and that made me even more afraid. A police car was ahead on the turnpike and everyone had to drive slowly. This made me even more nervous. I was greatly relieved when I finally reached Tulsa.

Version #2

Driving in the pouring rain to Tulsa was a frightening experience. For example, no signs were visible from the turnpike, so I couldn't see if there were any gas stations nearby to fill my near-empty gas tank. In addition, it was the middle of the afternoon, and the rain was so thick that I couldn't read the exit signs until I started passing them. Furthermore, a police car suddenly appeared ahead and drove at thirty miles per hour for the next twenty minutes, and none of us was allowed to pass him. When I finally reached Tulsa that day, I was greatly relieved.

Version #3

Driving in the pouring rain to Tulsa was a frightening experience. For example, no signs were visible from the turnpike, so I couldn't see if there were any gas stations nearby to fill my near-empty tank. I panicked at the thought of being stranded alone on the freeway. I kept hoping to see a station materialize in a break in the rain and felt incapable of making a decision. In addition, it was the middle of the afternoon, and the rain was so thick that I couldn't read the exit signs until I started passing them. I realized I had driven on for hours, dreading the never-ending blurring lines on the horizon. I was afraid that the weather would never lift and let me get back on schedule. Furthermore, a police car suddenly appeared ahead and drove at thirty miles per hour for the next twenty minutes, and none of us was allowed to pass him. It was as though an invisible force field had been thrown up behind the patrol car. No one felt brave enough to dare going around him, and so we lingered behind for what seemed like hours. When I finally reached Tulsa, I felt a great sense of relief.

Writing the Synthesis Essay

2011 AP English Language Exam Synthesis Prompt:

Locavores are people who have decided to eat locally grown or produced products as much as possible. With an eye to nutrition as well as sustainability (resource use that preserves the environment), the locavore movement has become widespread over the past decade.

Imagine that a community is considering organizing a locavore movement. Carefully read the following seven sources, including the introductory information for each source. Then synthesize information from at least three of the sources and incorporate it into a coherent, well-developed essay that identifies the key issues associated with the locavore movement and examines their implications for the community.

Make sure that your argument is central; use the sources to illustrate and support your reasoning. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. You may cite the sources as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the descriptions in parentheses.

Source A (Maiser)
Source B (Smith and MacKinnon)
Source C (McWilliams)
Source D (chart)
Source E (Gogoi)
Source F (Roberts)
Source G (cartoon)

Student Essay #1

The locavore movement can be extremely difficult to implicate in some communities. The movement does not help the environment very much. Some communities are not close to local sources for all of their food needs, and it hurts the economy in developing countries.

Preservation of the environment is a huge issue in the modern world. If a community wanted to start a locavore movement, they would have to make sure they were getting their foods from local suppliers that were sensitive to the environment. Many people believe that if you cut down on transportation it helps the environment. Unfortunately, production of the foods emits more greenhouse gases than the transportation of the food (Loder). The community would have to closely look at the emissions of their suppliers which would extremely difficult and very time consuming.

What is the definition of local? For some communities "local" would have to be up to five-hundred miles away (Roberts). The community would have to make sure they could get all of their goods close to or even inside their community. If not the community would not be able to survive. Also, would the community be able to purchase foods from a large company, such as Wal-Mart? With Wal-Mart's Salute to America's Farmer program, the store sells produce from some farmers within that area (Roberts). Although the produce is grown locally, it is sold at a store that buys goods from all around the world. Is that local?

Buying local can hurt the economy of different farmers all around the world. In some developing countries, farmers work for a miniscule amount of pay to support the needs of the rest of the globe. If everyone started to buy locally, these people would have nothing and may not be able to survive for very much longer (McWilliams). Communities are always trying to find some way to give back and a way they could do this is by purchasing gods from around the world. In turn, the community would get delicious food and be helping to support a developing country.

Student Essay #2

The first issue, often the most loudly trumpeted by locavores, is harm to the environment. They argue that local farmers do less harm, but their points are all too often misguided. For example, a weblog recently stated that local food consumption prevents "bio-terrorism" and that "Food with less distance to travel from farm to plate has less susceptibility to harmful contamination"(Maiser). However, Frontline did a story a few years ago on the sanitation of local wholesalers, and the images were shocking. Rodent infestations, opened boxes and even sewage leads were all caught on tape within an average local New York wholesaler. This same weblog also argued that the air pollution from transporting food outweighs any benefits. However, such an argument is very subjective, even though the miles traveled is indeed much larger than local shipping, the ratio of gross weight to miles travelled is often equal to or even higher than local farmers, making locals just as bad if not worse in terms of carbon emissions (McWilliams). Even worse, transportation only accounts for about 11% of carbon emissions in food productions (McWilliams). If this is the case, then a recent chart showing that the greenhouse emissions for red meat productions are twice that of any other product must be accurate (Loder). And where do most food retailers get their supply of meat? Locally, of course.

The next issue with local food, usually a strong point for any locavore argument, is the economy. The same weblog once again argues this in favor of the local producer, stating that "a dollar spent locally generates twice as much income for the local economy." (Maiser) This is absolutely true; money spent locally does benefit the local economy. The national economy... not so much. Farming communities localized around the New York and Pennsylvania region and parts of the Midwest will benefit greatly, while more southern regions would suffer inexplicably. Some regions of the US can't even farm, relying almost entirely on imports. A balanced combination of national and local commerce keeps the US agricultural economy healthy and wholesome. It is also worth considering the effect on a global scale. As stated in "On My Mind: The Locavore Myth," the smallest shift to local product in the UK could starve some of the 1.5 million bean farmers in Kenya (McWilliams). Closing off international trade hurts both

countries involved and doing so even lead to the Great Depression—clearly international produce is a good thing.

The third and final issue, one locavores rarely seem to even address, is availability. Still, the previously mentioned weblog continues to champion it even in this regard. It states that local farmers have more chance to grow a variety than large businesses that have a quota to meet (Maiser). However, we must again consider how centralized farmland is. A family living in Mississippi won't have access to the same farmers market as one in Pennsylvania, so their choices will actually be severely limited. On top of this, different food grows in different regions, regardless of the availability of the farmland. There certainly aren't any coffee beans grown locally in New York. The author of The End of Food stated "In Washington State, for example, I'm less than 50 miles from industrial quantities of fresh produce, corn, wheat, beef, and milk. . . [but] people in other parts of the country. . . would have to look farther afield."(Roberts). Local is good when it's available, but it isn't always.

In the end, it can't be said that local food is worse than imported. After all, its fresher, more flavorful, and benefits needy small farmers. Regardless, arguing that only local should be consumed is simply ridiculous. In order to keep a healthy environment, a balanced economy, and a plentiful availability, local products cannot be superimposed or suppressed. If a harmony is kept between large and small, near and far, the way it was meant to be, then everything will be just fine.

<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/exam/exam_information/2001.html#name11>

Source A

Maiser, Jennifer. "10 Reasons to Eat Local Food." *Eat Local Challenge*. Eat Local Challenge, 8 Apr. 2006. Web. 16 Dec. 2009.

The following is an article from a group Weblog written by individuals who are interested in the benefits of eating food grown and produced locally.

Eating local means more for the local economy. According to a study by the New Economics Foundation in London, a dollar spent locally generates twice as much income for the local economy. When businesses are not owned locally, money leaves the community at every transaction.

Locally grown produce is fresher. While produce that is purchased in the supermarket or a big-box store has been in transit or cold-stored for days or weeks, produce that you purchase at your local farmer's market has often been picked within 24 hours of your purchase. This freshness not only affects the taste of your food, but the nutritional value which declines with time.

Local food just plain tastes better. Ever tried a tomato that was picked within 24 hours? 'Nuff said.

Locally grown fruits and vegetables have longer to ripen. Because the produce will be handled less, locally grown fruit does not have to be "rugged" or to stand up to the rigors of shipping. This means that you are going to be getting peaches so ripe that they fall apart as you eat them, figs that would have been smashed to bits if they were sold using traditional methods, and melons that were allowed to ripen until the last possible minute on the vine.

Eating local is better for air quality and pollution than eating organic. In a March 2005 study by the journal Food Policy, it was found that the miles that organic food often travels to our plate creates environmental damage that outweighs the benefit of buying organic.

Buying local food keeps us in touch with the seasons. By eating with the seasons, we are eating foods when they are at their peak taste, are the most abundant, and the least expensive.

Buying locally grown food is fodder for a wonderful story. Whether it's the farmer who brings local apples to market or the baker who makes local bread, knowing part of the story about your food is such a powerful part of enjoying a meal.

Eating local protects us from bio-terrorism. Food with less distance to travel from farm to plate has less susceptibility to harmful contamination.

Local food translates to more variety. When a farmer is producing food that will not travel a long distance, will have a shorter shelf life, and does not have a high-yield demand, the farmer is free to try small crops of various fruits and vegetables that would probably never make it to a large supermarket. Supermarkets are interested in selling "Name brand" fruit: Romaine Lettuce, Red Delicious Apples, Russet Potatoes. Local producers often play with their crops from year to year, trying out Little Gem Lettuce, Senshu Apples, and Chieftain Potatoes.

Supporting local providers supports responsible land development. When you buy local, you give those with local open space—farms and pastures—an economic reason to stay open and undeveloped.

Jennifer Maiser, www.eatlocalchallenge.com

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Source B

Smith, Alisa, and J. B. MacKinnon. *Plenty: One Man, One Woman, and a Raucous Year of Eating Locally.* New York: Harmony, 2007. Print.

The following passage is excerpted from a book written by the creators of the 100-Mile Diet, an experiment in eating only foods grown and produced within a 100-mile radius.

Food begins to lose nutrition as soon as it is harvested. Fruit and vegetables that travel shorter distances are therefore likely to be closer to a maximum of nutrition. "Nowadays, we know a lot more about the naturally occurring substances in produce," said [Cynthia] Sass. "It's not just vitamins and minerals, but all these phytochemicals and really powerful disease-fighting substances, and we do know that when a food never really reaches its peak ripeness, the levels of these substances never get as high." . . .

Yet when I called to confirm these facts with Marion Nestle, a professor and former chair of nutrition, food studies, and public health at New York University, she waved away the nutrition issue as a red herring. Yes, she said, our 100-mile diet—even in winter—was almost certainly more nutritious than what the average American was eating. That doesn't mean it is *necessary* to eat locally in order to be healthy. In fact, a person making smart choices from the global megamart can easily meet all the body's needs.

"There will be nutritional differences, but they'll be marginal," said Nestle. "I mean, that's not really the issue. It *feels* like it's the issue—obviously fresher foods that are grown on better soils are going to have more nutrients. But people are not nutrient-deprived. We're just not nutrient-deprived."

So would Marion Nestle, as a dietician, as one of America's most important critics of dietary policy, advocate for local eating?

"Absolutely."

Why? Because she loves the taste of fresh food, she said. She loves the mystery of years when the late corn is just utterly, incredibly good, and no one can say why: it just is. She likes having farmers around, and farms, and farmland.

(7)

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Source C

McWilliams, James E. "On My Mind: The Locavore Myth." *Forbes.com.* Forbes, 15 Jul. 2009. Web. 16 Dec. 2009.

The following is excerpted from an online opinion article in a business magazine.

Buy local, shrink the distance food travels, save the planet. The locavore movement has captured a lot of fans. To their credit, they are highlighting the problems with industrialized food. But a lot of them are making a big mistake. By focusing on transportation, they overlook other energy-hogging factors in food production.

Take lamb. A 2006 academic study (funded by the New Zealand government) discovered that it made more environmental sense for a Londoner to buy lamb shipped from New Zealand than to buy lamb raised in the U.K. This finding is counterintuitive—if you're only counting food miles. But New Zealand lamb is raised on pastures with a small carbon footprint, whereas most English lamb is produced under intensive factory-like conditions with a big carbon footprint. This disparity overwhelms domestic lamb's advantage in transportation energy.

New Zealand lamb is not exceptional. Take a close look at water usage, fertilizer types, processing methods and packaging techniques and you discover that factors other than shipping far outweigh the energy it takes to transport food. One analysis, by Rich Pirog of the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, showed that transportation accounts for only 11% of food's carbon footprint. A fourth of the energy required to produce food is expended in the consumer's kitchen. Still more energy is consumed per meal in a restaurant, since restaurants throw away most of their leftovers.

Locavores argue that buying local food supports an area's farmers and, in turn, strengthens the community. Fair enough. Left unacknowledged, however, is the fact that it also hurts farmers in other parts of the world. The U.K. buys most of its green beans from Kenya. While it's true that the beans almost always arrive in airplanes—the form of transportation that consumes the most energy—it's also true that a campaign to shame English consumers with small airplane stickers affixed to flown-in produce threatens the livelihood of 1.5 million sub-Saharan farmers.

Another chink in the locavores' armor involves the way food miles are calculated. To choose a locally grown apple over an apple trucked in from across the country might seem easy. But this decision ignores economies of scale. To take an extreme example, a shipper sending a truck with 2,000 apples over 2,000 miles would consume the same amount of fuel per apple as a local farmer who takes a pickup 50 miles to sell 50 apples at his stall at the green market. The critical measure here is not food miles but apples per gallon.

The one big problem with thinking beyond food miles is that it's hard to get the information you need. Ethically concerned consumers know very little about processing practices, water availability, packaging waste and fertilizer application. This is an opportunity for watchdog groups. They should make life-cycle carbon counts available to shoppers.

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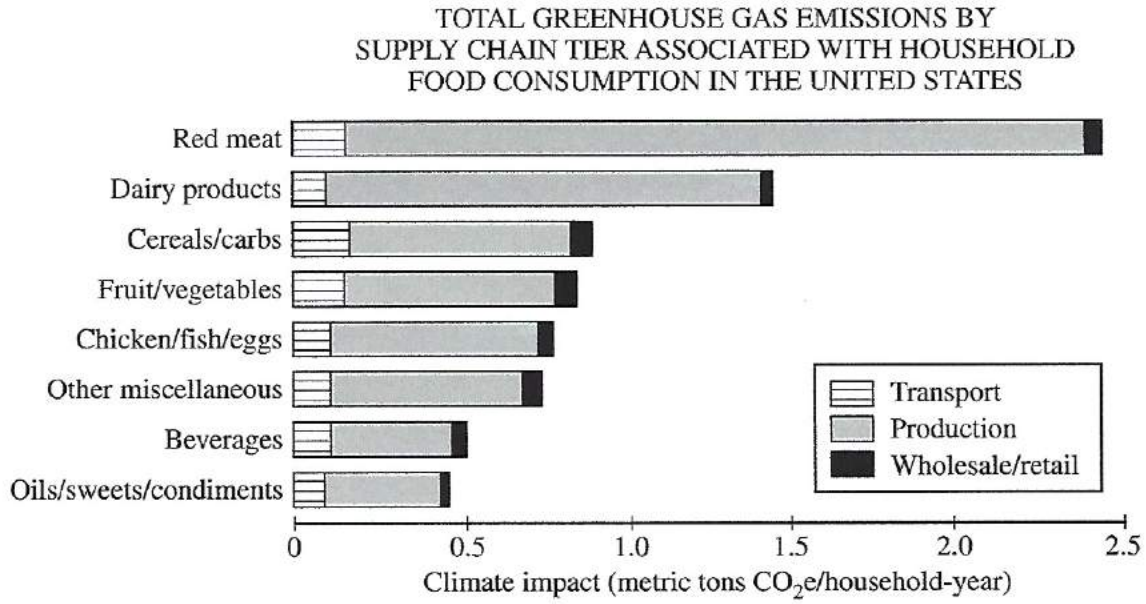
Source D

Loder, Natasha, Elizabeth Finkel, Craig Meisner, and Pamela Ronald. "The Problem of What to Eat." *Conservation Magazine*. The Society for Conservation Biology, July-Sept. 2008. Web. 16 Dec. 2009.

The following chart is excerpted from an online article in an environmental magazine.



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Source F

Roberts, Paul. *The End of Food.* New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2008. Print.

The following is excerpted from a book about the food industry.

[T]he move toward local food, for all its trendiness (the more adamant adherents, known as "localvores," strive to buy products that have traveled the least "food miles"), highlights one of the problematic pieces of the modern food economy: the increasing reliance on foods shipped halfway round the world. Because long-distance food shipments promote profligate fuel use and the exploitation of cheap labor (which compensates for the profligate fuel use), shifting back to a more locally sourced food economy is often touted as a fairly straightforward way to cut externalities, restore some measure of equity between producers and consumers, and put the food economy on a more sustainable footing. "Such a shift would bring back diversity to land that has been all but destroyed by chemical-intensive mono-cropping, provide much-needed jobs at a local level, and help to rebuild community," argues the UK-based International Society for Ecology and Culture, one of the leading lights in the localvore movement. "Moreover, it would allow farmers to make a decent living while giving consumers access to healthy, fresh food at affordable prices."

While localvorism sounds superb in theory, it is proving quite difficult in practice. To begin with, there are dozens of different definitions as to what local is, with some advocates arguing for political boundaries (as in Texas-grown, for example), others using quasi-geographic terms like food sheds, and still others laying out somewhat arbitrarily drawn food circles with radii of 100 or 150 or 500 miles. Further, whereas some areas might find it fairly easy to eat locally (in Washington State, for example, I'm less than fifty miles from industrial quantities of fresh produce, corn, wheat, beef, and milk), people in other parts of the country and the world would have to look farther afield. And what counts as local? Does food need to be purchased directly from the producer? Does it still count when it's distributed through a mass marketer, as with Wal-Mart's Salute to America's Farmer program, which is now periodically showcasing local growers?

The larger problem is that although decentralized food systems function well in decentralized societies—like the United States was a century ago, or like many developing nations still are—they're a poor fit in modern urbanized societies. The same economic forces that helped food production become centralized and regionalized did the same thing to our population: in the United States, 80 percent of us live in large, densely populated urban areas, usually on the coast, and typically hundreds of miles, often thousands of miles, from the major centers of food production.

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Source G

Hallatt, Alex. "Arctic Circle." Comic strip. King Features Syndicate, Inc. 1 Sept. 2008. Web. 12 July 2009.

The following is a cartoon from an environmentally themed comic strip.

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What a Passage Says-Does –How: Relating to Student Essays
Read carefully the prompt from a past English Literature exam:

The following passage comes from the opening of "The Pupil" (1891), a story by Henry James. Read the passage carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze the author's depiction of the three characters and the relationships among them. Pay particular attention to tone and point of view.

The poor young man hesitated and procrastinated: it cost him such an effort to broach the subject of terms, to speak of money to a person who spoke only of feelings and, as it were, of the aristocracy. Yet he was unwilling to take leave, treating his engagement as settled, without some more conventional glance in that direction than he could find an opening for in the manner of the large, affable lady who sat there drawing a pair of soiled *gants de Suède** through a fat, jeweled hand and, at once pressing and gliding, repeated over and over everything but the thing he would have liked to hear. He would have liked to hear the figure of his salary; but just as he was nervously about to sound that note the little boy came back—the little boy Mrs. Moreen had sent out of the room to fetch her fan. He came back without the fan, only with the casual observation that he couldn't find it. As he dropped this cynical confession he looked straight and hard at the candidate for the honour of taking his education in hand. This personage reflected, somewhat grimly, that the first thing he should have to teach his little charge would be to appear to address himself to his mother when he spoke to her—especially not to make her such an improper answer as that.

When Mrs. Moreen bethought herself of this pretext for getting rid of their companion, Pemberton, supposed it was precisely to approach the delicate subject of his remuneration. But it had been only to say something about her son which it was better that a boy of eleven shouldn't catch. They were extravagantly to his advantage, save when she lowered her voice to sigh, tapping her left side familiarly: "And all over-clouded by *this*, you know—all at the mercy of a weakness—!" Pemberton gathered that the weakness was in the region of the heart. He had known the poor child was not robust: this was the basis on which he had been invited to treat, through an English lady, an Oxford acquaintance, then at Nice, who happened to know both his needs and those of the amiable American family looking out for something really superior in the way of a resident tutor.

The young man's impression of his prospective pupil, who had first come into the room, as if to see for himself, as soon as Pemberton was admitted, as not quite the soft solicitation the visitor had taken for granted. Morgan Moreen was, somehow, sickly without being delicate, and that he looked intelligent (it is true Pemberton wouldn't have enjoyed his being stupid), only added to the suggestion that, as with his big mouth and big ears he really couldn't be called pretty, he might be unpleasant. Pemberton was modest—he was even timid; and the chance that his small scholar might prove cleverer than himself had quite figured, to his nervousness, among the dangers of an untried experiment. He reflected, however, that these were risks one had to run when one accepted a position, as it was called in a private family; when as yet one's University honours had, pecuniarily speaking, remained barren. At any rate, when Mrs. Moreen got up as if to intimate that, since it was understood he would enter upon his duties within the week she would let him off now, he succeeded, in spite of the presence of the child, in squeezing out a phrase about the rate of payment. It was not the fault of the conscious smile which seemed a reference to the lady's expensive identity, if the allusion did not sound rather vulgar. This was exactly because she became still more gracious to reply: "Oh, I can assure you that all that will be quite regular."

Pemberton only wondered, while he took up his hat, what "all that" was to amount to—people had such different ideas. Mrs. Moreen's words, however, seemed to commit the family to a pledge definite enough to elicit from the child a strange little comment, in the shape of the mocking, foreign ejaculation, "Oh, là-là!"

* suede gloves

Quick Write: Who are the three characters? How does the author present each of them to us? Who seems to be "in charge"? Who seems to be the most ill at ease?

Discuss with a partner: What evidence and analysis would you hope that a student might include in an essay to answer this prompt?

<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/repository/ap04_frq_english_lit_36149.pdf>

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Student Samples –

Sample AAA

This selection from "The Pupil" by Henry James tells of a meeting between Mrs. Moreen, a rich woman, and a man named Pemberton who is very smart, but poor. They are meeting to discuss what will happen in the future with Mrs. Moreen's son, Morgan Moreen, becoming Pemberton's pupil. He is not only to teach Morgan intellectual things, for "his small scholar might prove cleverer than himself," but "teach" to get him into better health and also teach him manners.

Pemberton's opinion of Morgan is not a very positive one. He sees him as a child that is spoiled, which is shown in several instances during this meeting. In one instance, the boy was asked to get his mother's fan and returned "with the casual observation that he couldn't find it." When the boy looks at Pemberton, it is in a way that is "straight and hard at the candidate for the honor of taking his education in hand." These and other things throughout the piece show the child's pride.

Mrs. Moreen is a factor in Morgan's proud personality, however, because she is constantly saying things in his presence that "were extravagantly to his advantage." Her flattery of him really feeds into his personality. The thing that upsets her about her son is that all of these things she boasts about in him are "over clouded by this, you know—all at the mercy of a weakness--!" This weakness is what Pemberton is to strengthen—his health. "The poor child was not robust," but yet he is "sickly without being delicate." He is not delicate because although he is not physically strong, he is clever.

One other relationship and situation that takes place in this piece is that between Mrs. Moreen and Pemberton. While she continues on and on with everything but what he'll be paid, he resolves not to leave until he finds out what he'll be paid, which is the thing he is most concerned with. This is because he has "pecuniarily speaking, remained barren." In the end, he finally does ask her, despite the fact that the boy is in the room, and her response is, "all that will be quite regular." This just shows the extremity of her wealth. Pemberton wonders how much "all that" is, because for each of them it could mean a different amount. Their very different financial situations would make them each think of a different amount.

The piece closes with another example of how spoiled Morgan Moreen truly is, because as Pember leaves, he shouts mockingly "Oh, lā- lā!" which shows his lack of respect for anyone.

Sample C

In Henry James' story, "The Pupil" James introduces three main characters, Mrs. Moreen, Morgan Moreen, and Pemberton. All three of these characters interact with each other and it is through this interaction that one can see the character of each. By closely examing "The Pupil" one can see that Henry James creates contrasting characters that work together to tell a story.

By first comparing Pemberton to Mrs. Moreen, Henry James is able to compare different classes of society. Mrs. Moreen, who is very rich, as evident through the description of her "fat, jeweled hand" regards money in a offhand, careless way. One gets a sense of this carelessness through Pemberton's opening thoughts regarding money. While he is focused on his salary, the reader gets the sense that money is of no concern for Mrs. Moreen since she never broaches the subject. Mrs. Moreen represents a class of high society, while Pemperton contrasts this by representing the lower society.

Throughout the story, Pemberton's main focus is about his salary. His worry about his salary represents his, and his societies, concern and appreciation for the value of money, contrast directly with that of Mrs. Moreen's disregard and unconcerned attitude for money. Thus through these characters and the relationship between them, one gets an idea of the social structure of the time period.

Henry James also contrasts Pemberton with Morgan Moreen. Pemberton, who is more timid and modest, shows respect and manners to those around him. This respect is manifested through his hesitation "broach the subject" of money. He respects Mrs. Moreen as a person he should be as courteous and well-behaved too as possible. This contrasts directly with Morgan Moreen who uses bad manners and little respect towards his mother. An example of this disrespect is when he looks at Pemberton when

"appear[ing] to address himself to his mother". This disrespect is another manifestation of the differences in social classes of the time.

Finally, the contrast betweens Pemberton's disposition and Morgan's disposition is a direct contrast with each other. AS the story states, "Pemberton was modest—he was even timid". This contrasts with Morgans disposition of possibly being "unpleasant." Also the statement "the chance that his small scholar might prove cleverer than himself. . . quite figured, to his nervousness, among the dangers of an untried experiement" The thought by Pemberton that his student might be more clever than himself represents the social thinking of the time, that the aristocracy was better than tat of the lower society.

Thus one can see that Henry James', "The Pupil" is a story regarding social customs of the time. By closely examing the contrast between Pemberton and both Mrs. Moreen and Morgan Moreen, one sees how the author is able to use these characters as representations for the aristocracy and lower classes of 1891. Therefore, "The Pupil" ceases to be a story about a teacher, and becomes a story about the social order of thi time.

Sample D

The passage from Henry James's "The Pupil" creates and profiles three unique characters in the insignificance of a tutor inquiring about what he will be payed. Pemberton, the tutor, is the observer of Mrs. Moreen and her son Morgan Moreen, two characters who are so dissimilar that it is surprising that they are related.

Though the passage is written in third person, the scenario is described from Pemberton's point of view. Pemberton comes across as shy and hesitant, afraid to ask the aristocratic Mrs. Moreen what his salary will be for tutoring her son. While it is a reasonable question to ask, he feels it may be rude of him. Pemberton is described as "modest—he was even timid" (54), and is worried that his pupil will be more intelligent than he. While cautiously debating with himself about approaching "The delicate subject of his remuneration" (29-30), he take the role of the observer, privately noticing his first impressions of Morgan and Mrs. Moreen. Pemberton seems to be out of his comfortable environment, and because of this grows more shy and uncertain about this tutoring job.

Mrs. Moreen is first described as unsuccessfully elegant. Pemberton watches her while she is "drawing a pair of soiled gants de Suede through a fat, jeweled hand. . ." (9-10). She wishes to create the illusion of luxury, and does so again by sending her son to "fetch her fan" (16) But this was not the only reason to send her son away. Mrs. Moreen also wished to "say some things about her son which it was better that a boy of eleven shouldn't catch" (30). Mrs. Moreen is a vague and rather artificial character in this passage, who as Pemberton notes, is merely an "expensive identity" (68).

Morgan Moreen is the real focus of this passage. He is observed as being "Sickly without being delicate" (48-49). Morgan is generally unattractive, and has a "weakness", which Pemberton "gathered that the weakness was in the region of the heart" (36-37). Despite all this, Morgan is an intelligent young boy, and much unlike his mother. He makes an effort to not be pompous, and is indifferent to his mother's attempts to make him so. He barely looks for his mother's fan, and mocks her description of how she will pay Pemberton by saying "Oh, lā- lā!" (78). Morgan, though born into elegance, is as much out of place in the house as Pemberton.

The three characters of James's "The Pupil" do not align well with one another. Moran & Mrs. Moreen hold very different values and have very different personalities, while Pemberton is an out-of-place guest who is too shy to ask how he will be paid.

Questions for Discussion:

- **Which student writer mostly concentrates on telling the reader what the author *says* (provides a paraphrase or summary of the passage)?**
- **Which student writer provides the reader with a clearer idea of what Henry James (the author) *does* and *how* he does this? Where do you see this in the essay?**
- **Which student sample gives a more thorough answer to the prompt?**

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Answering the Prompt

2012 Question 1 (Poetry)

In the following poem by Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), the speaker addresses the subject of desire. Read the poem carefully. Then write a well-developed essay in which you analyze how poetic devices help to convey the speaker's complex attitude toward desire.

Thou Blind Man's Mark

Thou blind man's mark,[1] thou fool's self-chosen snare,
Fond fancy's scum, and dregs of scattered thought;
Band of all evils, cradle of causeless care;
Thou web of will, whose end is never wrought;
Desire, desire! I have too dearly bought,
With price of mangled mind, thy worthless ware;
Too long, too long, asleep thou has me brought,
Who should my mind to higher things prepare.
But yet in vain thou hast my ruin sought;
In vain thou madest me to vain things aspire;
In vain thou kindlest all thy smoky fire;
For virtue hath this better lesson taught—
Within myself to seek my only hire,[2]
Desiring naught but how to kill desire.

1target

2rewad

Student Samples—

Sample AA

The speaker of "Thou Blind Man's Mark" has a complex attitude towards desire. The writer uses poetic devices in order to convey this attitude. Two of the most prominent devices used in this poem are tone and repetition. Tone is the use of certain words to create a certain mood or setting in the writing for the reader to pick up on. Repetition is the repeating of certain words or phrases to get the point across to the reader very clearly. Sir Philip Sidney does exceptionally well in using these devices within his poem quite effectively.

Sample DD

In his poem entitled "Thou Blind Man's Mark" Sir Philip Sidney characterizes desire as a force able to take control of a man's mind. Consequently, this man strives for shallow, material satisfaction as opposed to true self-fulfillment. The speaker's contempt for desire is clearly portrayed in his harsh description of it and the effect it has had on him, as well as his declaration that he will no long yield to it's power.

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Sample Z

In the "Thou Blind Man's Mark", the speaker establishes an overall negative but nonetheless intricate and complex, attitude toward desire. With the usage of various poetic devices, Sir Phillip Sidney describes all that he feels in opposition of desire. Specifically, through the usage of repetition, syntax, and figurative speech, the speaker creates a representation of desire that is anything but desirable as it is shown to be malicious and for the figuratively blind.

Repetition is present throughout the entire poem. There are two primary examples that showcase its impact as a poetic device, depicting desire as something worthy of disgust. The word, "thou" is repeated throughout the poem. It is used twice in the first line as well as once each in lines 9-11. By repeating it so often, the speaker forms an accusatory tone, as if he were making allegations in a courtroom or having an argument. He describes how "In vain thou madest me to vain things aspire", accusing "desire" of attempting to push him toward aspiring for vain and useless "things". Secondly, the speaker repeats the phrase "in vain" from lines 9-11. He details desire's unsuccesful attempts and how it sought for his desires, attempted to make him aspire for worthless things, and tried to kindle his fire (essentially keep the speaker desiring for desire). This shows desire to be relentless and cold, forever attempting to hurt the speaker.

The speaker's syntax also gives a negative image to represent desire. He begins the poem, as it is titled, with "Thou blind man's mark". In doing this, the speaker calls desire the target for a blind man. Literally, this could mean that desire is the physical object for which a blind man is aiming with a bow & arrow. As he is blind, however, this man will repeatedly aim but always miss. Figuratively, this means that only the blind attempt to achieve their desire. In this sense, being blind is equivalent to being ignorant and unaware of how desire is almost evil and how desire should never be one's "mark". The speaker further calls desire the "cradle of all careless thought", which essentially means it is a home for careless thought. The speaker therefore suggests that by seeking one's desires, one is seeking for careless thought and is pushing one's self in the wrong direction.

There are two main ways in which the speaker uses figurative speech to present desire. In line 4 it is described as "Thou web of will, whose end is never wrought", which makes it appear to have an endless web of will. Desire does nothing but trap people with it's "web". Second, from lines 5-6, the speaker says that desire sells worthless ware for the price of a mangled and confused mind as if it wants to confuse people and waste their time.

The speaker concludes the poem with the final three lines. He describes an overall negative attitude toward desire, showing it to have harmful intentions through the use of repetition, syntax, and figurative lesson. The complexity of his attitude is exemplified in his conclusion. Although having gotten over the desire which is detailed for the first 10 lines, he learns his lesson and finds a new desire, which is to kill desire itself. This is complex because he desires to rid himself of desire.

Sample DD

In his poem entitled "Thou Blind Man's Mark" Sir Philip Sidney characterizes desire as a force able to take control of a man's mind. Consequently, this man strives for shallow, material satisfaction as opposed to true self-fulfillment. The speaker's contempt for desire is clearly portrayed in his harsh description of it and the effect it has had on him, as well as his declaration that he will no long yield to it's power.

The poem begins with a series of accusatory phrases, each of which frame a negative aspect of desire, as viewed by the speaker. He calls desire a "blind man's mark," implying that no man able to see desire for what it really is would willingly be attracted to it. When he says "blind," the speaker does not literally mean a person whose eyes are damaged or defective; In context, a "blind man" is one who lacks a sense of direction or of vision for the future, thus making him susceptible to the manipulating forces of desire. Desire preys upon the "blind" and lures in the "fools" because they are easily beguiled into thinking that lusting after one's desires is all there is to life. The speaker claims desire can reduce men to just "dregs of scattered thought," which illuminates the speaker's perception of desire as a sort of monster, capable of ripping a man's mind to shreds, destroying his natural sense of intuition and reason, and replacing it with incohesive, raggedy desires. Man's ability to form his own thoughts has been replaced by his obsession with his desires, a crime for which the speaker considers desire to be the "band of all evils." This is quite a hefty condemnation, and it reflects the feelings of the speaker; he uses seven

phrases, in the first four lines alone, to declare his passionate feelings towards desire. This extensive list of insults, coupled with the fact that the speaker personifies desire and endows it with malevolent monster-like qualities, demonstrates that the speaker genuinely does feel that desire is a combination of all evils known to man. He says "I have too dearly bought, with price of mangled mind, thy worthless ware," revealing that his attitude stems from his personal experience with the power of desire to ruin a man's mind. The speaker especially laments that his mind was wasted on desire when it should have been preparing to "higher things" of more substance and value.

However, the speaker also offers a glimmer of hope and severs his mind's ties to desire. After describing the force of desire as an evil one, he proclaims he will no longer be victim to it: "But yet in vain thou hadst my ruin sought; [...] In vain thou kindlest all thy smoky fire." The speaker makes three consecutive claims that desire has attempted "in vain" to lead him down the wrong path; this repitition emphasizes the speaker's liberation at having cast off the shackles of desire. He has regained the power of his own mind, and in doing so, has regained a powerful sense of self. No longer controlled by his desires or even distracted by the spark or smoke desire may create to try to lure him back, he professes a new goal: "Within myself to seek my only hire, desiring naught but to kill desire." The conclusion of the poem provides a significant resolution; the speaker has learned to look inward and not outward to find true fulfillment, and the only desire he will follow is the desire to fight manipulating forces which attempt to rob him of his autonomy.

The speaker's portrayal of desire as a powerful enemy to the freedom of his own mind highlights the difficulty of maintaining control over one's own mind when faced with adversaries that are alluring or manipulative. Through his struggle with and subsequent defeat of the force of desire, the speaker inspires us to do the same with similar forces in our lives.