

# BARRON'S

The Leader in Test Preparation



# AP\*

## ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

**MOST UP-TO-DATE REVIEW  
AND PRACTICE TESTS  
CURRENTLY AVAILABLE**

### 5TH EDITION

George Ehrenhaft, Ed.D.

- 6 practice tests, including a diagnostic test and one online
- Expert advice on understanding poetry and prose fiction
- Sample essays with critiques of their strengths and weaknesses
- Scoring rubrics for each practice test

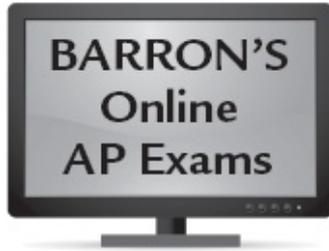
Everything you need  
to get a **5**



\*AP is a registered trademark of the College Board, which was not involved in the production of, and does not endorse, this product.



# Now Available!



Go to [barronsbooks.com/AP/englit/](http://barronsbooks.com/AP/englit/) to take a free sample AP English Literature and Composition test, complete with answer explanations and automated scoring.

\*This online test was created for devices that support Adobe Flash Player. To access the test on an Apple iPad or iPhone you will need to install a web browser that supports Flash (check the iTunes App Store for free options).

**BARRON'S**



**AP<sup>\*</sup>**

**ENGLISH LITERATURE  
AND COMPOSITION**

**5TH EDITION**

**George Ehrenhaft, Ed.D.**  
Former Chairman, English Department  
Mamaroneck High School  
Mamaroneck, New York



\*AP is a registered trademark of the College Board, which was not involved in the production of, and does not endorse, this product.

© Copyright 2014, 2012, 2010, 2008 by Barron's Educational Series, Inc.  
Previous edition © Copyright 2004 under the title *How to Prepare for the AP English Literature and Composition*. Prior editions © Copyright 2000, 1997, 1992, 1987, 1984, 1980, and 1974 under the title *How to Prepare for AP English* by Barron's Educational Series, Inc.

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means without the written permission of the copyright owner.

*All inquiries should be addressed to:*

Barron's Educational Series, Inc.

250 Wireless Boulevard

Hauppauge, New York 11788

[www.barroneduc.com](http://www.barroneduc.com)

eISBN: 978-1-4380-9258-4

First eBook publication: February, 2014

# Contents

---

## **Barron's Essential 5**

Introducing the AP English Literature and Composition Exam

Acknowledgments

## **PART 1: GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THE EXAM**

### **1 Overview**

Section I

Section II

### **2 Answering Multiple-Choice Questions**

Tactics for Answering Questions

Sample Questions on Poetry

Sample Questions on Prose Fiction

### **3 Mastering the Essays**

Questions from Previous Exams

Guidelines for Writing Essays

How Essays Are Scored

Student Essays

## **PART 2: DIAGNOSTIC TEST**

Introduction

Section I

Section II

Answer Key

Answer Explanations

Self-Scoring Guide for the Diagnostic Test

## **PART 3: POETRY**

### **4 What You Need to Know About Poetry**

Poetry Overview

How to Read a Poem

Practice in Reading Poems

What to Listen for in Poetry

The Use of Repetition  
The Language of Poetry  
Poetic Styles and Forms

## **PART 4: FICTION AND DRAMA**

### **5 Literature**

Fiction on the Exam  
Responding to Literature  
Analyses of Selected Novels  
Drama on the Exam  
Writing About Selected Plays

## **PART 5: PRACTICE TESTS**

Practice Test 1  
Practice Test 2  
Practice Test 3  
Practice Test 4

**Glossary of Literary and Rhetorical Terms**

This eBook contains hyperlinks that will help you navigate through content, bring you to helpful resources, and allow you to click back and forth between all practice questions and their answer explanations. Please be advised that certain pages, illustrations, tables, graphs, etc. may look different depending on what type of device you are using to view this eBook on. Please adjust your device accordingly.

## Barron's Essential 5

To reach your goal of 5 on the AP English Literature and Composition exam, here are five essentials you **MUST** do:

### 1

**Familiarize yourself with literary terms.** To answer multiple-choice and essay questions you must recognize and be conversant with literary concepts such as structure, style, themes, imagery, symbolism, irony, and use of figurative language in works of imaginative literature.

### 2

**Develop the habit of close reading.** Choose fiction of recognized literary merit, and pick a page or a short passage to dissect. Read it once for an overall impression. Then go back resolved to draw out meanings that lie beneath the surface. Observe textual details, sentence structures, style, diction, syntax, and figures of speech. Describe the author's tone. This type of close reading, consistently done, boosts performance in both the multiple-choice and essay sections of the exam.

### 3

**Devour poetry.** A steady diet of poems builds appreciation and understanding of poetry, *a major subject on the AP exam*. Read poems daily. For each one, answer the [ten essential questions](#) designed to make clear the poet's purpose and meaning. With practice, you'll soon see how structure, sound, meter, and other elements give poems the power to move, entertain, and enlighten.

### 4

**Read widely and well.** Exam questions about literature range from the meaning of an entire novel or play to the use of a single word or phrase. Every dimension of literature is fair game. Be prepared by immersing yourself in high-quality works from various periods. Read thoroughly. Take nothing for granted. Assume that every component in the work contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. Make an effort to contemplate and analyze:

- plot
- setting
- character
- narrative voice
- structure
- language
- ... and much more

# 5

**Write essays for practice.** Get used to writing essays in no more than 40 minutes. Build in time to read the question, pick a main idea, and decide how to support it. Before you start writing, list your ideas and arrange them in sensible order. While composing your essay, be sure to:

- introduce your topic
- develop coherent paragraphs
- vary sentence structures
- choose the best words to express ideas
- provide a brief conclusion

Set aside time for editing and proofreading. Above all, try to enjoy the process, and reward yourself for each successful essay you write.

# Introducing the AP English Literature and Composition Exam



The AP English Literature and Composition exam tests your ability to comprehend and interpret the form and substance of poems and passages of fiction. In addition, it asks you to write clear, concise, and persuasive analytical essays that demonstrate your understanding of literary techniques used by poets and authors of fiction.

The exam takes three hours and is divided into two sections. Section 1, which lasts an hour, consists of multiple-choice questions and counts for 45 percent of your total score. The second section, comprising 55 percent of your score, is two hours long and requires you to write three essays.

## Section I

Fifty-five multiple-choice questions based on your reading of two or three prose fiction passages and two or three poems. (One hour)

## Section II

Three essays: one on a given poem, one on a passage of prose fiction—each analyzing how form and content relate to the meaning—and a third essay on your choice of novel or play. (Two hours)

Your score on the exam is reported on a scale of 1–5. In general, the numbers are interpreted to mean

- 5 extremely well qualified
- 4 well qualified
- 3 qualified
- 2 possibly qualified
- 1 not recommended for AP credit

A high score on this exam demonstrates a proficiency in English at least on a par with college students who have done well in an introductory course in composition or literature. Recognizing this, many colleges and universities waive freshman English requirements for high-scoring students. Some give academic credit or permit you to take a more advanced course during freshman year. Because each college and university uses AP scores in its own way, be sure to check with the admissions office of the institution you hope to attend.

Part of this book will acquaint you with the multiple-choice questions on the exam and give you practical help in essay writing. Other parts will help you develop a flair for critically evaluating poems, novels, and plays.

If you are a teacher of an AP English class, use this book as a resource. It will lighten your load because it contains a great deal of what an AP Lit course typically contains, including selected reading passages, important literary terminology, analyses of prose and poetry, sample essays with evaluations, exam questions, and several practice AP tests with answers fully explained. The literature discussed in these pages may or may not already be part of your AP course. If it isn't, you might consider including it in the future. All titles come from existing AP curricula and have been used in AP classes across the country. Questions and exercises throughout the book are intended to stimulate thinking and inspire students to write the kinds of in-depth analyses required on AP exams.

If you are a student, use this book to prepare for the exam. Study each chapter. Take the practice tests and check your answers. Revel in the correct ones but let the wrong answers steer you to chapters in the book that you should probably review a bit more.

To all students preparing to take the AP English exam, best of luck. I'll be rooting for you in May on AP exam day.

George Ehrenhaft

# Acknowledgments

---

The author gratefully acknowledges the following copyright holders for permission to reprint material used.

## Diagnostic Test

Excerpt from Alice Adams, *To See You Again*, copyright © 1982 by Alice Adams. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, a division of Random House, Inc.

Poem: Carol Ann Duffy, “In Your Mind,” from *The Other Country*, Anvil Press, London, 1990.

Poem: Chris Forhan, “Gouge, Adze, Rasp, Hammer” in *The Actual Moon, The Actual Stars*, pp. 50–51. © 2003 by Chris Forhan. Reprinted by permission of University Press of New England.

Excerpt from William Faulkner, “Dry September,” from *Collected Stories of William Faulkner*, copyright 1930, 1958 by William Faulkner. Used by permission of Random House, Inc.

Poem: Hart Crane, “Forgetfulness,” from *Complete Poems of Hart Crane*, edited by Marc Simon. Copyright © 1933, 1958, 1966 by Liveright Publishing Corporation. Copyright © 1986 by Marc Simon. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation.

Poem: Billy Collins, “Forgetfulness,” from *Questions About Angels*, Copyright © 1999 by Billy Collins. Reprinted by permission of the University of Pittsburgh Press.

## Test 1

Excerpt from Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones*, New American Library, 1963, pp. 489–490.

Excerpt from “The Baker’s Bluejay Yarn,” from *The Family Mark Twain*, Harper and Bros. New York, 1935, pp. 1139–1140.

Excerpt from Edith Wharton, “New Year’s Day,” from *Edith Wharton: Novellas and Other Writings*, The Library of America, 1990, pp. 491–492.

## Test 2

Excerpt from George Bernard Shaw, *Man and Superman*, in *Major British Writers*, ed. G. B. Harrison, Harcourt Brace, 1959, pp. 717–718.

## Test 3

Poem: Stephen Dobyns, “Determination,” originally published in *The New Yorker*, April 12, 2012, p. 33. Permission to reprint pending from Condé Nast Corporation, 2013.

Poem: Irving Layton, "Berry Picking" excerpted from *A Wild Peculiar Joy: The Selected Poems* by Irving Layton, © 1982, 2004, the estate of Irving Layton. Used by permission of the publishers, McClelland & Stewart, Ltd.

**Test 4**

Poem: Stephen Dunn, "Sadness," from *Between Angels*. Copyright © 1989 by Stephen Dunn. Used by permission of W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Poem: Thomas Hardy, "Channel Firing," from *Collected Poems*, Macmillan Co., 1925.

Excerpt from Sarah Orne Jewett, "The White Heron," printed in *Fiction 100: An Anthology of Short Stories*, ed. James H. Pickering, 5th edition, Macmillan, 1988, pp. 791–798.

## **PART 1**

---

# **GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THE EXAM**

---

# CHAPTER 1

## Overview

---

- Length of the exam
- Types of questions
- Format of questions

The analysis of poetry and prose fiction lies at the heart of the exam. The best preparation consists of becoming familiar with the format of the exam and having plenty of experience in critical reading and analysis of prose and poetry from roughly the sixteenth century to the present. Ideally, most of the works should have been written originally in English, but high-quality literature in translation, such as Greek drama and Russian novels, serve the purpose equally well.

On the exam you'll be asked to analyze a number of poems and prose passages by taking into account, among other things, their structure, style, and dominant themes. You may also be asked to recognize and discuss such elements as figurative language, imagery, point of view, and tone.

You should also be conversant with several works by established novelists such as Jane Austen, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Updike, Toni Morrison, and Cormac McCarthy and plays by such dramatists as Shakespeare, Henrik Ibsen, Eugene O'Neill, David Mamet, and August Wilson. On the exam you'll be asked to choose a work of high quality—the kind you've probably studied in AP English—and write an analysis, taking into account such matters as meaning, form, structure, or the extent to which the work reflects the values of the time in which it was written.

**TIP**



To earn a top score on the exam, get into the habit of searching for the ways authors use language and literary form to convey meaning.

## SECTION I

Section I of the exam lasts one hour and usually consists of 55 multiple-choice questions. It contains two, or sometimes three, passages of prose fiction excerpted from novels and short stories, but on occasion from a play or other genre. Along with the prose passages, you'll be given two or more short poems to read and analyze.

More than half the questions relate to the prose passages, the rest to the poems.

## Prose Passages

Unlike the SAT or ACT, this exam almost never asks basic comprehension questions about the passages. Because AP students are assumed to have little trouble comprehending what they read, questions focus not on what the passage says but on linguistic and rhetorical choices made by the author. Emphasis is on literary technique, including, among other things, structure of the passage, effects of diction and syntax, point of view, and the relationship between parts of the passage. Instead of asking about the meaning of a particular sentence, questions may ask you to determine how the structure of that sentence relates to the theme or overall effect of the passage. Rather than identify the meaning of an allusion, you may be asked to determine its intent in terms of the whole passage. Or you might be asked to decide why the author used a particular word, phrase, image, or figure of speech.

In short, your skill in literary analysis is being put to the test. According to surveys of past AP exams, the most common questions, and therefore those you are most likely to encounter, pertain to:

- tone
- shifts in the writing style within the passage
- the effects of certain words and phrases, especially figures of speech
- the relationship of one sentence or idea to another
- the relationship of one sentence to the meaning of the passage as a whole
- the rhetorical stance of the narrator

The exam includes many other types of questions, too, all meant to exercise your analytical skills and your perceptions as a reader. In addition, almost every exam contains at least one question on standard English grammar.

For a comprehensive review of what you are expected to know about prose fiction, please see Part 4.

## Poetry

Two, or sometimes three, poems appear on every exam, each one accompanied by roughly ten questions that focus on anything from the aesthetic intent of the poet to the implications of a single word. Whatever the poet has done to create the poem is grist for the test maker's mill. You could be asked to recognize structural components, types of language, tone, diction, themes, rhetorical devices, rhythms, meter, rhymes, and more.

**TIP**



Rest assured that you won't be asked about archaic words or obscure allusions; should the poem contain any, they'll probably be explained in a footnote.

A survey of several recent tests shows that the most common poetry questions asked students to identify the meaning of a word or phrase in context. Other frequently asked questions relate to the implication or meaning of figures of speech, to the tone, and to the effect of poetic techniques on the unity or meaning of the entire poem. If the poem contains a shift in the speaker’s point of view or rhetorical stance, you can depend on a question about that. Technical questions on meter and rhythm show up occasionally but rarely more than once per exam.

See Part 3 for what you need to know about poetry for the AP exam.

Once Section I is finished, you may not return to it. Test booklets are sealed and collected, and after a five- to ten-minute break, Section II begins.

## **SECTION II**

Section II consists of three essay questions to be completed in two hours. How you use your time is up to you, but forty minutes is recommended for each essay.

### **Poetry**

One essay is on poetry. After reading a given poem (or sometimes a pair of poems to compare and contrast), you must write an essay that explains the techniques the poet used to convey meaning. Sometimes the question will suggest that you consider specific poetic devices, such as the use of figurative language, irony, or rhythm. Sometimes the question may be more open-ended, allowing you to identify and explain any literary devices that you find important to the purpose and meaning of the poem.

### **Prose Passages**

A second essay question asks you to analyze an excerpt from a novel or story—or possibly a series of letters, a speech in a play, or some other literary passage. The question, or “prompt,” will specify the purpose of your analysis, but you are free to discuss any literary elements you choose.

### **Essay**

The last question asks you to write an essay on a novel or play of your choice—never on a short story, a work of nonfiction, a film, or other genre. Typically, the prompt makes a general observation about life or literature. Your job is to discuss the observation as it applies to a work of literature. The names of several appropriate titles are given, but you can choose any other book or play of “comparable literary merit,” a phrase whose meaning is far from clear-cut but suggests titles that have endured and deserve to be read again and again. It’s likely that a novel or play you studied in AP English class would serve well as a subject for this essay.

Each essay will be scored holistically. In other words, an AP reader will review the essay rather quickly for an overall impression of its content and form. Readers are

trained to look for clearly organized, well-developed, and forceful responses that reveal a depth of understanding and insight. Because AP students hope to earn college credit for their efforts, readers also look for prose that is worthy of mature writers. Readers will be most impressed by clarity, coherence, good reasoning, and a writing style that demonstrates—by its diction, voice, syntax, rhythm, and tone—your command of a variety of effective writing techniques. For details on how AP essays are scored, [click here](#). Also, be sure to read the comments about the sample [student essays](#).

**TIP**



Avoid writing an essay on a best seller or popular fiction not read in school. And don't write about a film. You may, of course, choose a novel or play that's been made into a movie, but be sure to write about the original text, not about the filmed adaptation.

### **STRUCTURE OF THE EXAM**

(Total time: 3 hours)

Section I (One hour)	55 multiple-choice questions based on 2 or 3 poems and 2 or 3 passages of fiction 45 percent of total score
Section II (Two hours)	3 essays Essay 1: An analysis of a poem Essay 2: An analysis of a prose passage from a work of fiction, a letter, or a speech in a play Essay 3: An analytical essay on a novel or play of your choice 55 percent of total score

## **USING THIS BOOK TO PREPARE**

Most readers of this book are either currently enrolled in an AP English course or about to begin one. If that describes you, this book can accompany you as a friendly and informed companion between now and May, when AP exams are given. Use it as a supplement to class work. Refer to it often as a way to reinforce what you have learned in school. Let it tutor you on matters that you've found elusive or hard to master. You might ask an AP teacher who knows your strengths and weaknesses to recommend certain parts of the book to study. Take all the practice tests, of course. They're meant to give you that extra edge that turns a good AP score into a better one.

If you're not taking an AP English course, but intend to take the exam, it's essential to work through the pages of this book from beginning to end. Each part has a distinct role in your preparation:

**PART 1**—Introduces the exam and acquaints you with the types of short-answer and essay questions on the test.

**PART 2**—Diagnoses the present state of your readiness to take the exam.

**PART 3**—Expands your ability to read, understand, and analyze poetry.

**PART 4**—Enhances your skills in reading and writing about fiction and drama.

**PART 5**—Enables you to evaluate your growth and progress, using model AP exams taken under simulated testing conditions.

Try to build *at least* half an hour of AP prep time into your daily routine. Take the diagnostic test in Part 2 and the model tests in Part 5. Set aside three full hours for each one. By taking all the exams, you'll learn to pace yourself and get to know what to expect on test day. Moreover, you can practice the test-taking tactics described in the pages of this book. It takes stamina to answer several dozen questions about poems and prose passages and then write three essays. So, accustom yourself to extended periods of concentrated work. In a sense, you're like an athlete training for a big competition. The better your condition, the better you're apt to perform.



Practice taking sample tests under timed conditions

If AP test day is just around the corner, you obviously won't have the time to study this book from cover to cover. But you can do something. If nothing else, become familiar with the format of the exam. Take as many practice exams as possible. Knowing what to expect on test day reduces anxiety and enhances performance. For instance, you can count on finding an unvarying set of test directions in your exam booklet. Read the directions carefully while taking the practice exams, and follow them to the letter. Once you've taken a couple of exams, the directions are likely to become second nature.

Because each section of the AP is timed literally to the second, pacing is critical. By taking practice exams, you can adjust the rate at which you answer the questions and write the essays. With experience you can learn to set a comfortable pace, neither too fast nor too slow. Then, on test day you'll have one less thing to worry about.

## CHAPTER 2

# Answering Multiple-Choice Questions

---

- How to answer questions
- When to guess
- Techniques for reading the passages
- Things to know about poetry questions
- Things to know about fiction questions

**K**nowing the answers to the multiple-choice questions shows that you've got what it takes to read perceptively and to extract meaning from poems and passages of prose fiction. The selections you'll find on the exam are taken from contemporary literature, as well as from the literature of previous eras. In most cases, the poets and authors are not identified, but the date, which is always given, may drop a hint about the work's historical context. Your knowledge of history isn't being tested, but if a sonnet is dated, say, 1625, you might justifiably surmise that it is a Shakespearean sonnet with a prescribed structure and pattern of rhymes. Likewise, an allusion to a war in a piece written in 1920, while not necessarily a reference to World War I, would at least enable you to ignore every war fought since then.

Although the multiple-choice questions are not intended to baffle you, **not everyone who takes the test is expected to answer every question correctly**. Each exam is designed for a range of test-takers. Ninety out of a hundred students may get some questions right, while other questions will probably stump more than half the students taking the exam. This is as it ought to be. If every student earned a perfect score, the AP test would be a test in name only.

Even before you walk into the testing room, you can count on these facts:

1. The test contains poetry and prose passages.
2. Every question has five choices, A–E.
3. The questions are *not* arranged in order of difficulty.
4. The questions generally follow the progress of the poems and passages.
5. You can scribble all over the test booklet, make notes in it, underline, etc.
6. The test directions will be the same as they were on all the practice tests you took, namely,

This section consists of selections from literary works and questions on their content, form, and style. After reading each passage or poem, choose the best answer to each question and then fill in the corresponding oval on the answer sheet.