

## 2010 AP® ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

### Question 2

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

In the following passage from Maria Edgeworth's 1801 novel, *Belinda*, the narrator provides a description of Clarence Hervey, one of the suitors of the novel's protagonist, Belinda Portman. Mrs. Stanhope, Belinda's aunt, hopes to improve her niece's social prospects and therefore has arranged to have Belinda stay with the fashionable Lady Delacour.

Read the passage carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze Clarence Hervey's complex character as Edgeworth develops it through such literary techniques as tone, point of view, and language.

Clarence Hervey might have been more than a pleasant young man, if he had not been smitten with the desire of being thought superior in every thing, and of being the most admired person in all companies. He had been early flattered with the idea that he was a man of genius; and he imagined that, as such, he was entitled to be imprudent, wild, and eccentric. He affected singularity, in order to establish his claims to genius. He had considerable literary talents, by which he was distinguished at Oxford; but he was so dreadfully afraid of passing for a pedant, that when he came into the company of the idle and the ignorant, he pretended to disdain every species of knowledge. His chameleon character seemed to vary in different lights, and according to the different situations in which he happened to be placed. He could be all things to all men—and to all women. He was supposed to be a favourite with the fair sex; and of all his various excellencies and defects, there was none on which he valued himself so much as on his gallantry. He was not profligate; he had a strong sense of humour, and quick feelings of humanity; but he was so easily led, or rather so easily excited by his companions, and his companions were now of such a sort, that it was probable he would soon become vicious. As to his connexion with Lady Delacour, he would have started with horror at the idea of disturbing the peace of a family; but in her family, he said, there was no peace to disturb; he was vain of having it seen by the world that he was distinguished by a lady of her wit and fashion, and he did not think it incumbent on him to be more scrupulous or more

attentive to appearances than her ladyship. By Lord Delacour's jealousy he was sometimes provoked, sometimes amused, and sometimes flattered. He was constantly of all her ladyship's parties in public and private; consequently he saw Belinda almost every day, and every day he saw her with increasing admiration of her beauty, and with increasing dread of being taken in to marry a niece of 'the *catch-match-maker*,' the name by which Mrs Stanhope was known amongst the men of his acquaintance. Young ladies who have the misfortune to be *conducted* by these artful dames, are always supposed to be partners in all the speculations, though their names may not appear in the firm. If he had not been prejudiced by the character of her aunt, Mr Hervey would have thought Belinda an undesigning, unaffected girl; but now he suspected her of artifice in every word, look, and motion; and even when he felt himself most charmed by her powers of pleasing, he was most inclined to despise her, for what he thought such premature proficiency in scientific coquetry. He had not sufficient resolution to keep beyond the sphere of her attraction; but frequently, when he found himself within it, he cursed his folly, and drew back with sudden terror.

# AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

## 2010 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 2

(Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*)

The score reflects the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, style and mechanics. Students are rewarded for what they do well. The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by 1 point above the otherwise appropriate score. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a 3.

- 9–8** These essays offer a persuasive analysis of Clarence Hervey's complex character as Edgeworth develops it through literary techniques. They make a strong case for their interpretation of the passage. They explore some conflicting elements of Hervey's self-image and his connection to others, as well as his responses to *Belinda*. They consider techniques such as tone, point of view and language, and they engage the text through apt and specific references. Although these essays may not be error-free, their perceptive analysis is apparent in writing that is clear, precise and effectively organized. Generally, essays scored a 9 reveal more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do essays scored an 8.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of Hervey's complex character as Edgeworth develops it through literary techniques. They provide a sustained, competent reading of the passage, with attention to techniques such as tone, point of view and language. Although these essays may not be error-free and are less perceptive or less convincing than those in the 9–8 range, they present ideas with clarity and control and refer to the text for support. Generally, essays scored a 7 present better-developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than do essays scored a 6.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of the passage but tend to be superficial or thinly developed in their treatment of Hervey's complex character and/or of Edgeworth's use of literary techniques. Although containing some analysis of the passage, implicit or explicit, the discussion of how literary devices contribute to the development of character may be slight, and support from the passage may tend toward summary or paraphrase. These essays demonstrate adequate control of language but may be marred by surface errors. They are generally not as well conceived, organized or developed as 7–6 essays.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of the passage. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing or irrelevant; the responses may ignore the contradictions and complexities in Clarence Hervey's character or Edgeworth's use of literary techniques to develop the character. These essays may be characterized by an unfocused or repetitive presentation of ideas, an absence of textual support, or an accumulation of errors. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreading and demonstrate inept writing.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 4–3 range. They may persistently misread the passage or be unacceptably brief. They may contain pervasive errors that interfere with understanding. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the ideas are presented with little clarity, organization or support from the passage. Essays that are especially inept or incoherent are scored a 1.
- 0** These essays do no more than make a reference to the task.
- These essays are either left blank or are completely off topic.

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Humans are defined by their behavior. They act as they see others act, they judge when they see something they dislike, and they are inclined to treat people they like differently than people they do not. Clarence Harvey is, by all means, ~~and~~ snob, and ~~like~~ he seems constantly on the lookout for other snobs, not to encounter, but to avoid. ~~Their tone, point of view, and language~~, Maria Edgeworth creates and defines the character of Clarence ~~in the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~novel~~ <sup>suit of her title character,</sup> ~~Belinda,~~ <sup>Belinda,</sup> as the clichéd ~~protagonist~~ <sup>rich</sup> ~~rich~~ young man who's intellect and wealth ~~are~~ <sup>make</sup> rather pompous. Clarence is a man who seems to be made completely out of attitude. Using techniques such as ~~tone, point of view,~~ <sup>point of view,</sup> tone, and irony, Edgeworth develops the complex character of Clarence Harvey.

The passage is written from the third person point of view, but it focuses on Clarence. The narrator seems to in fact hold a certain level of resentment for Clarence, saying that he "might have been more than a pleasant young man had he not been smitten with the desire of being ~~superior~~ <sup>thought</sup> superior in everything". Whether or not Clarence really is ~~that~~ <sup>distined</sup> ~~intelligent~~ <sup>is</sup> because of his own personality or because the narrator ~~he~~ holds him in contempt is unknown. The reader is only given one opinion on Clarence, and it is largely unfavorable. This immediately sets up Clarence as someone who will be serving as an antagonist later on, perhaps ~~not~~ <sup>is the main</sup> ~~the main~~ obstacle that the heroine will have to face, but it ~~would~~ <sup>can</sup> certainly be assumed that Clarence will be causing problems. The only benefit, it seems, of having a biased narrator is that the narrator knows that



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Clarence will "become vicious" because he is "so easily led" and he seems to associate himself with less than favorable companions. He seems also to reject feelings of attraction that he has for Belinda, causing ~~another~~ him to seem heartless and suspicious, on top of greedy and turgid. Although Clarence does seem to have positive attributes, the descriptions of the negative aspects of his personality seem to overpower any lighthearted compliment that the narrator might give him.

The tone of the passage reflects not only the personality of the narrator, but the <sup>ies</sup> personality of the collective characters. The characters are all well-educated, wealthy, and fancy themselves ~~in~~ immensely. The narrator is no exception. The entire style of the passage is written in an artful, ~~intensely~~ <sup>overly</sup> descriptive fashion, conveying that these are the sort of people who can take time to pay attention to detail. In fact, there is almost no action taking place in the passage, ~~only~~ It is mostly descriptions of characters ~~is~~ and their minute interactions with each other. The negative aspect of being able to afford to pay attention to detail is that nothing ever seems to actually happen, it only takes a small movement to cause a frenzy. The tone of the passage reflects the narrator's judgmental nature, which can be used to explain why nobody seems to actually do anything during the passage; they're afraid to. Women who do act, like Mrs. Stanhope, the matchmaker, are pariahs, ~~are~~ the scorn of a testeful upper class society. The tone is rigid, ~~and~~ staying the same throughout the passage; any change might have caused a scene.

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Perhaps the most witty technique used in the passage is the use of irony. The narrator criticizes Clarence, yet from the <sup>way</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> style <sup>the passage is written</sup> of writing it can be assumed that the narrator is just as well educated, perhaps more so, than Clarence is. ~~It is Argued that~~ <sup>The</sup> narrator seems to be jealous of Clarence's standing of society, and of his acceptance of it; whereas the narrator seems to resent society, and its judgments and precautions. In this society, everyone passes judgement on everyone else, yet seems unaware of it. Clarence dislikes Mrs Stanhope because he feels that her and her matchmaking lot are constantly passing judgement and trying to force people together, yet he is unaware of <sup>his own</sup> ~~the unfair~~ how unjust his assumptions that Belinda carries "artifice in every word" are. The narrator describes Clarence <sup>as</sup> someone who thinks so highly of himself that he ~~does not~~ <sup>is not</sup> ~~connect~~ <sup>in</sup> touch with reality, but it is through recognizing the narrator's own judgemental nature that the reader can define Clarence's true character.

It is a disadvantage to the reader not to know the actions that led to the narrator crafting such an unfavorable description of Clarence. What becomes obvious is that in the society where Clarence resides, surface judgements do not usually connect with the truth. The narrator is far more biased than he should be, and Clarence ~~must~~ suffer being misrepresented.

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Question 02

pg 1

In the passage from Belinda, ~~the~~ the speaker develops the very complex and somewhat arrogant character of Clarence Harvey through the use of ~~the~~ point of view, tone, & language.

One of the primary devices that lets the reader get a good view of Harvey's character is ~~the~~ ~~point~~ through point of view. Because it is third person omniscient, the reader gets a very unbiased view of Mr. Harvey. Had it been through the eyes of one of his ~~acquaintances~~ acquaintances or even Harvey himself, the details presented to the audience would be biased & some would be completely non-existent. This unbiased view allows the reader to interpret for ~~themselves~~ himself just ~~how~~ what kind of character Harvey has. Is he really as pompous as he seems or is he someone who tries to be respectful and ~~is~~ courteous and just is not? This unbiased view leads into the tone of the piece which although at times seems critical or condescending, such as in line 2, "S," if he had not been smitten with the ~~idea~~ desire of being superior in everything," the overall tone is rather matter of fact. No excessively critical nor overly supportive, simply mild.

The true nature of Harvey, although given the chance to shine through tone and point of view, really comes out in the language of the piece. Harvey has "the desire of being thought superior in ~~everything~~ everything," he feels that "he ~~is~~ is entitled to be ~~an~~ imprudent, wild, & eccentric." He is described as having a "chameleon character," being able to adapt himself to any situation. He is also very worried about his image. When the idea of marrying the niece of "the catch-maker" is being tossed about he is filled with dread because he would have to associate himself with someone his friends, ~~but~~ and he, looked down



Question #2

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On. This fear of losing image is even stronger than his desire for women. Harvey finds Belinda very beautiful but because of her relations "he was most inclined to despise her." Even at times when he felt himself giving into her attraction he would realize what was happening "curse his folly, and drew back with sudden terror at the very idea of his image being ruined drawing him back.

The character of Clarence Harvey is found to be one of an arrogant, image-conscious, ladies man through the different literary techniques of point of view, tone & language. Through these three devices the reader can see that although Mrs. Stanhope sent her niece to Lady Delacour to win over Mr. Clarence Harvey, the chances of anything happening are slim to none.

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2

2C  
1 of 1

Edgeworth describes Clarence Hervey as being "smitten with... being the most admired person in all companies." He wants to be known by everyone. Hervey wants people to talk about him, whether he is there or not he wants to be on their tongue. He is a very ~~smart~~ scholarly individual, the only problem being that he knows it. Hervey is described as being "all things to all men- and women," which gives him God-like qualities. He is probably a pleasant gentleman, until his ego gets the best of him. The character is described as a "chameleon." This gives a connotation of being two-faced and untrustworthy, but people don't realize his trickery. Clarence ~~was~~ is crazy about a young lady named ~~Rebec~~ Belinda Portman. He grows deeper feelings for her as the days go by, but does not want to be married to her because of her dreadful aunt. ~~However,~~ Hervey cannot trust Belinda, because she is being "conducted" by her aunt. Hervey feels that every pleasing word and gesture from Belinda is a facade over the training she is under. He feels that even when he has been charmed by her it can't be sincere.

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