

AP English Literature and Composition
FINAL EXAM Part 1: comparison-contrast essay

Name: _____

Directions:

Critic Roland Barthes has said, "Literature is the question minus the answer." Choose two major works we have studied this semester (one from each unit), and considering Barthes' observation, write an essay in which you analyze a central thematic question explored in both works. Compare and contrast the authors' answers to the question as developed through a dominant literary element (i.e. character development, setting, conflict, genre).

9-8 (95/90)

Superior papers are **persuasive** in their analysis, **precise** in their references, cogent in their discussion of devices, and free of plot summary. These essays need not be without flaws, but they demonstrate the writer's ability to discuss a prompt with **insight** and understanding and to **control** a wide range of the elements of composition. At all times, they make a **convincing** case for their interpretation and stay focused on the question and the thesis. These papers reflect **stylistic flair** and in-depth and original analysis, with **apt and specific concrete supporting details**. This score is equivalent to a score of 5 on the national AP Examination.

7-6 (85/80)

These competent papers offer a **reasonable** analysis and **refer to the text for support**. They demonstrate the writer's ability to **effectively** express ideas clearly, and they provide a sustained interpretation; however, they reveal a more limited understanding than do the papers in the 9-8 range. Generally, 6 essays present a less sophisticated analysis and less consistent command of the elements of effective writing than essays scored 7. This score is equivalent to a score of 4 on the national AP Examination.

5 (70)

Offering a safe and **plausible** analysis, these essays tend to be superficial or **underdeveloped**. Discussion of meaning may be mechanical, or inadequately related to the chosen details, and the argument may be **minimally supported**. They may be formulaic and are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as the upper papers. On the other hand, the writing is **adequate** to convey the writer's ideas and stays focused on the prompt. This score is equivalent to a score of 3 on the national AP Examination.

4-3 (60/50)

These papers offer an **inadequate** analysis as discussion is likely to be **unpersuasive, partially developed, or misguided**. Ideas may be unfocused or repetitive, and the meaning they deduce may be inaccurate or insubstantial and not clearly related to the prompt. They may contain little, if any, relevant evidence, and practice **paraphrase and plot summary** at the expense of analysis. The writing may convey the writer's ideas, but it reveals weaker control over such elements as diction, organization, syntax, or grammar. The 3 essays may contain significant **misinterpretations** of the question or the literary work. This score is equivalent to a score of 2 on the national AP Examination.

2-1 (40/30)

These essays compound the weakness of essays in the 4-3 range and are frequently **unacceptably brief** and thus lack development. Although the writer may have made some effort to answer the question, the ideas presented have **little clarity or coherence**. They may **persistently misread**. They may be **poorly written on several counts**, including many **distracting errors in grammar and mechanics**. This score is equivalent to a score of 1 on the national AP Examination.