

## Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2022 AP<sup>®</sup> English Literature and Composition Free-Response Questions

• Number of Students Scored	339,401		
• Number of Readers	1,431		
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At
	5	57,436	16.9
	4	92,549	27.3
	3	114,510	33.7
	2	47,956	14.1
	1	26,950	7.9
• Global Mean	3.31		

The following comments on the 2022 free-response questions for AP<sup>®</sup> English Literature and Composition were written by the Chief Reader, Steve Price, Mississippi College, assisted by Exam Leaders Eric Bishop and Kathy Keyes, and Question Leaders David Holper, Christine Carson, and Tamara Rodriguez-Kam. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

## Question 1

**Task:** Poetry Analysis

**Topic:** Richard Blanco, “Shaving”

**Max Score:** 6

**Mean Score:** 3.55

### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

For Question 1, the poetry analysis question, students were asked to read Richard Blanco’s poem “Shaving” and respond to the following prompt:

In Richard Blanco’s poem “Shaving,” published in 1998, the speaker writes about the act of shaving. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Blanco uses literary elements and techniques to develop the speaker’s complex associations with the ritual of shaving.

In a timed-writing situation and with an unfamiliar text, students were expected to complete three tasks successfully. They were expected to:

- read the poem carefully,
- analyze the speaker’s complex associations with the ritual of shaving, and
- write a well-written response based on that analysis.

**Reading** the poem involves more than simply understanding individual words and describing what happens. Students were expected to view the text specifically as a poem, recognizing literary elements and techniques used in the context of poetry, and then analyze how those techniques are used to shape the poem and its meaning. For example, in “Shaving,” students might have noticed the three-part structure of the poem; the repetition of “I” and “I am not shaving”; the use of similes; the role of dashes and the type of content they highlight; or the length of the sentences, with lines sometimes ending in commas (and sometimes not). They could also question the role of the father in the poem and note that the poem, despite its title, is about more than “Shaving.”

**Analyzing** the poem means taking the relevant elements that students identified in their reading and thinking about how the parts function collectively to create the meaning of the work as a whole. In this case, students needed to consider how the identified elements develop the speaker’s complex associations with the act of shaving. The word “complex” here reminds students to look for and explore the shifting, contradictory, or paradoxical aspects of the poem. Identifying important aspects of the poem and thinking through their relationship to the work as a whole leads students to a defensible interpretation.

**Writing** a well-written response means demonstrating a variety of skills. Students were asked to establish a thesis that shows understanding of the speaker’s complex associations with the act of shaving. They were asked to build this argument with specific, relevant evidence from the poem and through their own commentary that explains the connection between their argument and the evidence. The more successful responses built a line of reasoning that connects ideas and shows the relationships between them. A well-written response is more than grammatically correct writing, and it should be noted that students were not expected in the timed-writing situation to write a polished, revised essay.

**How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?**

Overall, responses were strong. This was an accessible poem, both in language and in topic. Students generally understood the poem and what it was literally describing. Most responses were full, complete essays. In particular:

- Most students were able to read and understand the narrative of the poem.
- Most students were able to identify at least one literary element in the poem, with metaphor, simile, imagery, and tone frequently discussed.
- Many students were able to analyze the function of at least one literary device and make a defensible claim about the speaker’s associations with the ritual of shaving.
- Many students noted the importance of the father (for instance, how the father’s death leads the speaker to an awareness of his own mortality), and some students identified nature as having an association with shaving for the speaker (for instance, the cyclical qualities in both).
- Some students explored the complexities of the poem, ranging from shifts in tone or two different meanings of shaving to the role of the multiple, varying first-person observations of the speaker.

**What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?**

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students summarized the narrative of the poem or identified individual literary elements but missed opportunities to analyze the relationship of these elements to the overall meaning of the poem.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “The fact that the narrator is unable to recognize his own face acts as an indication that the beard, reminiscent of the passing of time, indicates that such passing of time changes an individual drastically over a long period. The fact that shaving, can, in a ‘split second’ revert the narrator to where ‘roses drink and clouds form’ indicates the power of the act of shaving to seemingly stop the passage of time and allow the narrator to reflect on himself.”</li><li>• “Blanco makes use of natural symbols to explain that life is an endless cycle that is constantly occurring. On line 7 he describes how his beard silently grows as being similar to ‘the drink roses take from the vase’ which is a metaphor for the speaker growing from his father. Just like the rose gains its strength from the water, the speaker’s beard was passed on from his father’s. This can be generalized into the fact that the speaker believes he is very similar to his dad in some ways since he used him to grow and become strong as the rose uses the water.”</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students relied on a single interpretive conclusion (often simplified) and did not explore complexities in the poem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“In Richard Blanco’s ‘Shaving,’ the elaborate use of similes and the idea of shaving itself as a metaphor for fatherly traces in the narrator’s memories portrays that life is fragile and silently slips by, just like the miniscule unperceivable growth of whiskers on a beard, and that while such changes are often overlooked, one instance in life can allow one to perceive such changes, as those are essential to the identity of an individual.”</li> <li>“In the poem ‘Shaving,’ Blanco presents natural symbols and flashbacks in order to illustrate how the speaker is independent yet he sees his father in himself ultimately illustrating that people can never completely rid themselves of the impact that others have had on them.”</li> </ul>
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**Based on your experience at the AP<sup>®</sup> Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

1. **Notice–Focus–Interpret** can be a helpful model to show a *process* for analyzing, offering students concrete steps, regardless of their skill level. A quick overview: **Notice:** With or without a prompt in mind, what do students see in a text? Don’t judge; just list aspects of the text that seem important. **Focus:** We want to do something with everything we’ve noticed, so we dial in on a question or controlling element. For the AP Literature and Composition exam, the focus could be the main idea of the prompt—in the case of Question 1, if I’m thinking about “the speaker’s complex associations with the ritual of shaving,” then what’s most relevant in my list? **Interpret:** Using that focus and those relevant items, what is the evidence telling you? Remind students that analysis is always circular and ongoing—they can go back to more Noticing, for instance, any time.

Notice–Focus–Interpret could be used two different ways for this particular Question 1. First, to help students take more advantage of the complexities of the poem, offer them that focus: If I’m interested in complexities in Richard Blanco’s poem “Shaving,” then what’s most relevant or important in my Notice list? You can have a discussion at this point about the most accessible complexities of the poem (at which point the students can use that as a new focus for Interpretation). Second, to help students build a stronger line of reasoning into their responses (a key trait of the 3s and 4s in Row B), you might guide students through Interpretation, asking about relationships and connections between individual ideas. For instance, if we’ve learned these four things about the speaker’s associations with shaving, then how are these ideas related?

2. **Think–Pair–Share** is a common, low-stakes brainstorming activity that can be adapted and elevated for the AP Literature and Composition classroom, in this case also to help students identify complexities in a poem. Start with a simple guiding question, like “What’s the role of the father?” or “What’s the meaning of shaving?” in Blanco’s poem. Ask students to brainstorm individually for a minute or two (**Think**) before turning to a neighbor or talking in a small group (**Pair**). Encourage the students to focus on differences as they **Share** and to discuss why they see things differently, which

evidence contributes to their understanding, etc. Through the activity, students see that differences are inherent to interpretation, and they develop a more intentional way to identify textual complexity.

***What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?***

To better prepare students for the Poetry Analysis Free-Response Question, teachers may find the following resources helpful.

- Teachers may benefit from using the **Unit Guides** in the Course and Exam Description to pace and sequence their teaching of poetry analysis skills and to provide students with opportunities to practice these skills at increasing levels of difficulty and complexity.
- Students can develop their reading, analysis, and writing skills over the course of the year by practicing with the formative free-response questions in the **Progress Checks for Units 2, 5, and 8** on AP Classroom. Student performance on these formative assessments provides teachers with valuable data that can help inform their lesson planning throughout the year.
- The **AP Daily videos and AP Faculty Lecture videos for Units 2, 5, and 8** on AP Classroom can supplement teachers' poetry analysis instruction, as well as provide remediation for individual students who may struggle with a particular skill.
  - These videos also examine how individual literary elements contribute to the overall meaning of the poem, a skill highlighted in the "Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps" column of the table above.
- Students can practice with summative free-response questions that appeared on previous AP English Literature and Composition exams when a teacher assigns a Poetry Analysis Free-Response Question from the **Question Bank** on AP Classroom. Simply filter the Question Type for FRQ: Poetry. These questions can be assigned as homework or as in-class assessments.
- **Student Samples, Scoring Guidelines, and Scoring Commentaries** for the Poetry Analysis Free-Response Question can be found on AP Central. The Scoring Commentaries clarify how the student samples earned the various points described in the Scoring Guidelines. Reviewing the samples and commentaries with students can help teachers explain the difference between writing that relies on a single interpretive conclusion and writing that explores complexities within a poem, an important distinction highlighted in the "Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps" column in the table above.

## Question 2

**Task:** Prose Fiction Analysis

**Topic:** Linda Hogan, *People of the Whale*

**Max Score:** 6

**Mean Score:** 3.25

***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

For Question 2, the prose fiction analysis question, students were asked to read an excerpt from Linda Hogan’s novel *People of the Whale* and respond to the following prompt:

The following excerpt is from Linda Hogan’s novel *People of the Whale*, published in 2008. In this passage, the narrator describes two events that occur in a community: an infant’s birth shortly followed by an octopus’s walking out of the sea. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how the author uses literary elements and techniques to develop a complex characterization of the community.

In a timed-writing situation and with an unfamiliar text, students were expected to complete three tasks. They were expected to:

- read the excerpt carefully,
- analyze the complex characterization of the community, and
- write a well-written response based on that analysis.

**Reading** the prose passage means reading closely for both literary techniques and meaning, a challenge given the relative length of the prose passage. Students were expected to view the text specifically as a prose passage, recognizing conventions particular to the genre, and then analyze how those techniques are used to shape the passage and its meaning. For example, in this particular excerpt, students might have noticed the structure of the passage and how it progresses; the function of setting and how it subtly affects the actions of different people; the tone of the narrator; the use of literal descriptions and how they also have figurative meaning; or the varied and contradictory reactions to the octopus and whether the narrator seems to value one reaction over another. They could also question the role that age, gender, or culture plays in the passage.

**Analyzing** the prose passage means taking the relevant parts that students identified in their reading and thinking about how the parts function collectively to create meaning. In this case, students needed to consider how the parts develop a complex characterization of the community. As always, students were not expected to know the context of the prose passage, such as the author’s background or historical background. Instead, students could rely on evidence from the passage itself; in this passage, for instance, students may have gathered evidence of this complex characterization from the descriptions of the people and their actions (particularly Thomas’s mother), the narrator’s tone, and the role of contrasting information.

**Writing** a well-written response to a prose passage means that students demonstrate the ability to establish an overall thesis and build the argument through evidence and commentary, ideally constructing a line of reasoning that shows the complexity of their understanding. A challenge of any prose passage lies in the amount of evidence that students must account for and analyze. The more successful responses covered the passage more fully, with the exploration illuminating the complexity of the passage with its differences, contrasts, and contradictions. It should again be noted that students were not expected in the timed-writing

situation to write a polished, revised essay but rather to engage in a process of thinking as they explored the passage and drafted their responses.

**How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?**

Overall, students performed well on the expected tasks. Students seemed to find the passage accessible and again wrote full responses. In particular:

- Most students were able to read and understand the overall narrative arc of the passage.
- Most students identified multiple particular details from the passage, which was rich and offered students a wide range of descriptions.
- Many students identified a range of literary devices in addition to details and setting, like biblical allusions, perception, word choice, and imagery.
- Many students made at least an overall claim about the passage and the characterization of the community, noting, for instance, the impact of diverse reactions or differences in gender or age.
- Some students noted growth or changes that occurred over the course of the passage, like a spiritual transition or how the community’s offerings grew more obligatory.

**What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?**

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students listed details from the passage, or only summarized the plot without offering their own commentary to link the evidence to an argument.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The passage is structured in such a way that features multiple different community members’ perspectives and ideas on what to do about the octopus. Children were outlined as generally curious and ambitious to visit Seal Cave and interact with the octopus, much to the chagrin of their parents. These reactions directly contrast the reactions of greedy fishermen, whose only interest in seeing the octopus is to kill it for bait. By presenting these two points of view consecutively, Hogan shows how the community was not uniform in their greeting of the octopus.”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students oversimplified the complex characterization of the community or made overly general claims.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “In Linda Hogan’s <u>The People of the Whale</u>, she employs comparisons and juxtapositions to portray the different opinions existing in a community as well as the power dynamic of the town, portraying humanity’s awe and fear of the unknown.”</li> <li>• “However, the passage continues on to the community’s next steps in dealing with their new resident, with that being to leave it offerings as a sign of respect. ‘For the time it dwelt there,’</li> </ul>

	writes Hogan about the octopus’s stay in Seal Cave, ‘they brought offerings, even the first flowers of the morning’ (65–66). Even those in the community who were still apprehensive about the octopus’ presence ‘kept an eye on how it stood in the back of the cave’ (Hogan 75–76). While the community was at first shocked and unsure of what to do, they ultimately came together after agreeing upon the octopus’ sanctity.”
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**Based on your experience at the AP<sup>®</sup> Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

**Notice–Focus–Interpret** can provide students with a framework for how to approach analysis of a prose excerpt. Sometimes students can struggle to see how textual details “add up” and contribute toward an overall argument. The **Notice** part of N–F–I can help students identify related details and how they work together to create meaning. As a class, brainstorm important aspects of rich texts, writing everything on the board—the more information the better. Offer small groups a guiding question (a **Focus**) and ask them to select relevant evidence from the board *and* to draft commentary that explains the relationship of the evidence to the question. Students practice both filtering/narrowing evidence and constructing commentary.

**Gallery Walks.** Generally, a gallery walk is a series of posters/stations arranged around the classroom. Students travel from station to station, individually or in groups, responding or contributing in some way based on the assigned task. Information is progressively collected, which can be analyzed/discussed by groups or the entire class. Gallery walks are flexible and adaptive.

For this particular prompt, to help students develop commentary and connect evidence to a broader argument, the teacher could select a range of individual passages from a novel being studied, similar in length to a typical AP Literature and Composition prose excerpt. (Students could select passages, too.) Hang the passages on the classroom wall, against a larger sheet of poster paper. Students are given a guiding question (for instance, how the community is characterized in the passage) and asked to walk from poster to poster, reading and circling/annotating words and phrases they find important and relevant. They add their own commentary, too. As students move to other posters, they add both annotations and commentary and can agree/disagree with existing comments. At the end, each group has a multivoiced, layered text with a range of interpretations they can consider and report back on. The activity can also be set up electronically, using a platform like Google Docs.

**Think Aloud Modeling.** To help students synthesize ideas about a prose excerpt, teachers can model a think aloud process. Choose an excerpt (or even start with a smaller paragraph) and guiding question and “think aloud” in front of the class, narrating what you’re seeing and how you’re processing the information. Unprepared, initial readings work best, rather than prepared, polished presentations. Let students see your authentic early thinking, including if you’re uncertain about what a detail means or confused at that point about how to reconcile two contradictory ideas. You’re modeling both how to identify and think through complexity, which initially might be messy. Afterwards, invite students to add additional details from the excerpt into the discussion or help you to develop an initial idea further. The class can also talk about next steps, discussing how you might proceed from this initial thinking to shaping an essay response, with an emphasis on forming complex arguments.

**What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?**

To better prepare students for the Prose Fiction Analysis Free-Response Question, teachers may find the following resources helpful.

- Teachers may benefit from using the **Unit Guides** in the Course and Exam Description to pace and sequence their teaching of prose fiction analysis skills and to provide students with opportunities to practice these skills at increasing levels of difficulty and complexity.
  - To address the oversimplification of the community’s characterization as noted in the “Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps” column in the table above, teachers may wish to have their students examine the Essential Knowledge statements associated with Skill 1.D in the Unit Guides for Units 4 and 7.
- Students can develop their reading, analysis, and writing skills over the course of the year by practicing with the formative free-response questions in the **Progress Checks for Units 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9** on AP Classroom. Student performance on these formative assessments provides teachers with valuable data that can help inform their lesson planning throughout the year.
- The **AP Daily videos and AP Faculty Lecture videos for Units 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9** on AP Classroom can supplement teachers’ prose fiction analysis instruction, as well as provide remediation for individual students who may struggle with a particular skill.
  - To address the common misconceptions and knowledge gaps noted in the table above, teachers may wish to assign the following AP Daily videos to supplement or reinforce their instruction.
    - Unit 7: Skill 1.D Daily Video 2
    - Units 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9: Videos focused on Skills 7.C and 7.D
- Students can practice with summative free-response questions that appeared on previous AP English Literature and Composition exams when a teacher assigns a Prose Fiction Analysis Free-Response Question from the **Question Bank** on AP Classroom. Simply filter the Question Type for FRQ: Prose. These questions can be assigned as homework or as in-class assessments.
- **Student Samples, Scoring Guidelines, and Scoring Commentaries** for the Prose Analysis Free-Response Question can be found on AP Central. The Scoring Commentaries clarify how the student samples earned the various points described in the Scoring Guidelines. Reviewing the samples and commentaries with students can help teachers explain the difference between plot summary and analysis that links evidence to the student’s argument, an important distinction highlighted in the “Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps” column in the table above.

### Question 3

**Task:** Literary Argument

**Topic:** Hierarchical Structures

**Max Score:** 6

**Mean Score:** 3.24

#### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

For Question 3, the literary argument question, students were asked to respond to the following prompt:

Many works of literature feature characters who accept or reject a hierarchical structure. This hierarchy may be social, economic, political, or familial, or it may apply to some other kind of structure.

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which a character responds to a hierarchy in some significant way. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how that character's response to the hierarchy contributes to the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

In a timed-writing situation and without access to the text, students were expected to complete three tasks. They were expected to:

- select a work of fiction in which a character responds to a hierarchy in a significant way,
- analyze the character's response to the hierarchy and how that response contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole, and
- write a well-written response based on that analysis.

**Selecting** a work of fiction—a novel, play, or epic poem—that addresses the focus of the prompt, in this case a text with a significant hierarchy, is the first essential step for students. Students benefit from more complex texts: ones that contain multiple viewpoints, a variety of characters or narrative arcs, and language that lends itself to interpretation. Texts with less complexity make analysis more difficult. It should be noted that there is no formal list of acceptable texts; rather, students demonstrate the appropriateness of the text through their analysis and writing. The texts in the list offered with the prompt are meant as suggestions, representing diverse possibilities.

**Analyzing** the work of fiction here required two steps. First, students were asked to analyze the character's response to the hierarchy. To do so, students needed both to identify the character and to define the hierarchy itself. The prompt offered students suggestions on a variety of hierarchies—such as “social, economic, political, or familial”—but it also invited students to define the concept in different or unique ways, depending on the text they chose. Second, students were asked to apply that focused analysis to the work as a whole, exploring how the character's response to the hierarchy affects other people or events in the larger work. In doing so, students could demonstrate both close reading and their ability to negotiate longer texts. As always, students were cautioned not to summarize the text, a reminder that the evidence they draw from the text should be used in service of analysis.

**Writing** a well-written literary argument requires students to negotiate a range of information, including the focus of the prompt and evidence from a substantial text. Here, students were asked to articulate an overall thesis about how a character responds to a hierarchy as well as how that response contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. They also needed to develop the argument through evidence and

commentary, ideally constructing a line of reasoning that shows the complexity of their understanding. Students were not expected to use direct quotations in their response. Stronger responses used more specific, precise evidence, and used the evidence as support for defensible claims rather than merely as plot summary.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

Generally, students found the prompt accessible and used a variety of texts to explore a character’s response to a hierarchy. Students again tended to write full responses. In particular:

- Most students were able to identify a hierarchy, often discussing one that a character challenged or a power struggle that the character faced.
- Many students offered explanations of their chosen hierarchy, often times branching out beyond the suggestions in the prompt—for instance, religious hierarchies.
- Many students connected a character’s response to a hierarchy to the work as a whole, for instance connecting the hierarchy to a central conflict of the text.
- Some students used a broader, vaguer understanding of hierarchy that led to less-developed responses.
- Some students relied on summary of the text and plot and described a hierarchy rather than analyzing a character’s response to it.

***What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?***

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students summarized the plot generally rather than selecting specific evidence to support defensible claims.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Outside of the family hierarchy, Edna also challenges the social hierarchy. Edna recognizes and is largely uncomfortable with her role as an upper-class member of New Orleans society. Her wealthy status however has offered little reprieve to her despair and her inability to create change as a woman. She, as a result, rejects this status and attempts to downgrade. To show this progression, Chopin utilizes heavy house and bird imagery/metaphors. For example, when living in the large and luxurious estate in her husband’s name, Edna is often described as confined and unhappy. As she begins to seek independence and explore her own identity, Edna separates from her family and moves into a ‘Pigeon House’. Here, although the space is much smaller and enclosed, Edna is ironically much freer and happy.”</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Winston, the protagonist, bleakly reflects on how Big Brother weaponizes social and familial bonds to keep the people of Oceania under control. The populace is not only monitored by party officials and telescreens but also the very people that are closest to them. One specific familial tie that is often exploited to Winston’s horror, is the relationship between parent and child. Children are raised to be so loyal to Big Brother that it is common for children to enthusiastically report their parents for thought crimes. This realization is one of many that inspires Winston to fight against the political hierarchy imposed and enforced by the party.”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students offered broader claims about hierarchies in general rather than specific, defensible claims about how a character responds to a hierarchy in their particular text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Through the downfall of the title character in <i>King Lear</i>, Shakespeare conveys the destruction that can result when the sociopolitical structures humans’ identities depend on so intensely collapse.”</li> <li>• “Throughout the work of ‘<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>,’ Janie struggles against hierarchy through societal expectations, gender roles, and forming her own beliefs. As she matures, Janie’s journey to independence and a state of self governance reflects back as the overarching theme of the novel.”</li> </ul>

**Based on your experience at the AP<sup>®</sup> Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

**Quick Share.** The number of texts that can be assigned to and covered with an entire class in an academic year will always be limited, and that can limit students’ options for Question 3. To broaden options, invite students to choose texts on their own or in reading circles/affinity groups. While students can respond to choice reading in more formal, traditional ways, also consider lower-stakes, formative assessments like the **Quick Share**. After students read a text, ask them to report back verbally to the class briefly (under five minutes) with information relevant to Question 3. For instance, have them identify two different prompts from previous AP Literature exams that the text could be used for and briefly discuss specific evidence related to each. Students will begin to see how texts are adaptable and flexible enough to be used with different prompts.

**One-Minute Essay.** This formative assessment can help promote flexible thinking and the sharing of ideas across the class. With a text in mind that has been read by the entire class, introduce students to a Question 3 prompt from a previous year and ask students to write for a few minutes about how it applies to their current text. The next day, choose a new prompt and ask students for another one-minute essay. The next day, choose a new prompt and ask for another one-minute essay. There’s flexibility in how the assessment is shaped and

used: for instance, teachers can respond individually in writing to one-minute essays, or they can also verbally comment on trends across the class. The one-minute essays help students see how different texts lend themselves to a variety of prompts, and they also offer low-stakes practice in recalling plot, brainstorming evidence, and generating initial commentary.

**Crayons in Class.** Peer review and even working with one’s own draft can be an intimidating, stressful activity. Crayons offer a diversion and help students focus on weighty revision issues in a less threatening way. Ask students to read a Question 3 response—their own, a peer’s, or a sample from a previous AP Literature exam. Then, working with a guided critique, with the first crayon of their choice, ask students to highlight/color any *plot summary*. With a second crayon, ask them to highlight/color evidence from the text used to support a claim. Finally, discuss the differences between plot summary and evidence. Teachers can help students see how summary can be turned into evidence, sometimes as easily as adding a “For instance.” Teachers can also help students see opportunities to make general evidence more specific.

***What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?***

To better prepare students for the Literary Argument Free-Response Question, teachers may find the following resources helpful.

- Teachers may benefit from using the **Unit Guides** in the Course and Exam Description to pace and sequence their teaching of literary argument skills and to provide students with opportunities to practice these skills at increasing levels of difficulty and complexity.
- Students can develop their literary argumentation skills over the course of the year by practicing with the formative free-response questions in the **Progress Checks for Units 3, 6, and 9** on AP Classroom. Student performance on these formative assessments provides teachers with valuable data that can help inform their lesson planning throughout the year.
- The **AP Daily videos and AP Faculty Lecture videos for Units 3, 6, and 9** on AP Classroom can supplement teachers’ literary argumentation instruction, as well as provide remediation for individual students who may struggle with a particular skill.
  - To address the common misconceptions and knowledge gaps noted in the table above, teachers may wish to assign the following AP Daily videos to supplement or reinforce their instruction.
    - Unit 9: Skill 7.B Daily Video 1
    - Unit 9: Skill 7.D Daily Video 1
- Students can practice with summative free-response questions that appeared on previous AP English Literature and Composition exams when a teacher assigns a Literary Argument Free-Response Question from the **Question Bank** on AP Classroom. Simply filter the Question Type for FRQ: Open. These questions can be assigned as homework or as in-class assessments.
- **Student Samples, Scoring Guidelines, and Scoring Commentaries** for the Literary Argument Free-Response Question can be found on AP Central. The Scoring Commentaries clarify how the student samples earned the various points described in the Scoring Guidelines. Reviewing the samples and commentaries with students can help teachers explain the difference between recounting plot facts and using textual details as evidence, an important distinction highlighted in the “Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps” column in the table above. The samples can also provide examples of thesis statements that vary in their specificity which may help address the other item listed under “Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps.”