

2020

AP[®]

 CollegeBoard

AP[®] English Literature and Composition

Scoring Commentaries - Packet 3

Prose Fiction Analysis Question - Porter

AP English Literature and Composition
Prose Fiction Analysis Free-Response Question 2020 Scoring Commentaries

Index of Scores for Samples

Sample Reference	Row A	Row B	Row C
A	1	4	1
B	1	4	0
C	1	3	1
D	1	3	0
E	1	2	0
F	0	2	0
G	0	1	0

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Sample A

Score: 6/6 points (A1 – B4 – C1)

Row A: 1/1

This response earns the point in Row A because it contains a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of Miranda’s complex reaction as she observes the two women: “What Miranda observes conflicts with how she has been taught to view adults, Miranda holds her grandmothers to her own set of standards and finds them wanting” (paragraph 1).

Row B: 4/4

This response earns four points in Row B because it provides specific textual evidence that supports the thesis and line of reasoning. While the response is organized by a sequential examination of the passage, the evidence provided clearly relates to the argument that Miranda’s view of the women is diminished. The response examines the repetition of the phrase “at your time of life” (paragraph 2) and argues, “Not only does this statement show that Grandmother was trying to push her authority onto her little sister, it demonstrates that Grandmother isn’t willing to listen to her own advice” (paragraph 2). The response goes on to present Miranda’s inner monologue as further evidence of the disappointment Miranda feels: “The author utilizes Miranda’s inner thoughts to reveal her view on the situation, ‘[she] saw two old women... who spoke to children as if they always knew everything, and children knew nothing... and they were always right and children never were...’” (paragraph 3). The commentary that follows this evidence strengthens the support by connecting it clearly to the line of reasoning: “Not only does this comparison help readers understand that Miranda is using her limited life experience to help her understand why this situation perturbs her so, but it also brings down her grandmothers from their lofty matronly pedestal and onto the same level of immaturity as Miranda herself” (paragraph 3). After presenting the scene in which Great-Aunt Eliza uses snuff, the response observes, “Instead of blindly believing that Great- Aunt-Eliza is allowed to do snuff because she is an adult, Miranda holds Great- Aunt-Eliza to the standard that she has made for ladylike behavior and finds Great- Aunt-Eliza wanting. This is a shift, as before Miranda has just been taking in information by observing impartially, now she is observing and judging by adapting the information” (paragraph 5). Each piece of evidence offered is clearly connected back to the thesis and thoroughly explained. The response examines the effect of specific words and phrases, tone, symbolism, inner monologue, and characterization. Lastly, the response is clearly and effectively organized.

Row C: 1/1

This response earns the point in Row C because it identifies and explores the complexities and tensions within the passage: “Miranda is quite disheartened to learn that adults can behave just like children do. Where before she was able to innocently assume that adults always know and do better than children, for the simple reason that they’re older than her, now Miranda has learned that that’s simply not true at all. Her worldview has shifted, and it’s only exacerbated

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by the last scene in the passage” (paragraph 4). The response also employs a style that is consistently persuasive.

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Sample B

Score: 5/6 points (A1 – B4 – C0)

Row A: 1/1

This response earns the point in Row A because it presents a thesis with a defensible interpretation: “Through the use of dialogue, which develops Grandmother and Great Aunt Eliza’s character, and juxtaposition, Miranda’s attitude towards the adults in her life shifts from respect and admiration to disappointment and surprise” (paragraph 1).

Row B: 4/4

The response earns all four points in Row B because it uniformly offers evidence to support its claim and provides commentary to explain thoroughly the relationship between the evidence and the claim. The evidence here focuses primarily on the conversations between the two sisters, their views of their own importance, and Great-Aunt Eliza’s use of snuff. The response suggests the sisters’ argument over Grandmother’s use of the phrase “at your time of life” and Aunt Eliza’s response about her comparative youth is ironic: “They are arguing over who is more athletic at their stage of life. Their argument highlights their childish nature” (paragraph 2). The response provides further evidence from the text by using the times when the sisters “spoke ... as if they knew best about everything and children know nothing” (paragraph 3). This textual reference is used to support the claim that the sisters’ “bickering contradicts the sisters’ confidence in their superiority” and demonstrates the “unsophisticated actions of the women” (paragraph 3). The response’s discussion of dialogue, juxtaposition, and irony contributes to the student’s interpretation that “Miranda’s pre-conceived notion of Grandmother and Great Aunt Eliza further diminishes when she compares them to ‘two little girls at school’” (paragraph 3).

Row C: 0/1

This response does not earn the point in Row C because, although its claim is thoroughly supported, the argument is not complex. It makes a single statement about the interpretation of the passage: “However, upon analyzing a confrontation between the two women, Miranda quickly realizes that they are no more mature than she is” (paragraph 4).

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Sample C

Score: 5/6 points (A1 – B3 – C1)

Row A: 1/1

This response earns the point in Row A because it responds to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation of the passage: “Miranda became disheartened as she realized that the women she viewed so highly did not provide the examples of kindness and maturity that she had once believed, instilling fear for her own future self” (paragraph 1).

Row B: 3/4

The response earns three points in Row B because it offers specific evidence and establishes a clear line of reasoning; however, it fails to support a key claim and focuses on one literary device, tone, as opposed to several. The response considers the importance of the sisters “reprimanding each other for not using ‘appropriate behavior at your time of life’” (paragraph 2) and recognizes that while both sisters use the same words, “their tones were polar opposites” (paragraph 2). The line of reasoning that Miranda became disheartened by her realization is shown through the response’s exploration of the significance of Miranda’s reaction to the sisters. The response notes, “Miranda must have feared that the instruction and guidance given to her by her grandmothers was wrong, and that she would grow to be an unfavorable and undesirable woman, resulting in the sadness and fear that the reader witnessed through Miranda’s eyes watering and heart sinking” (paragraph 3). The focus on what Miranda “must have” felt, though, is not thoroughly supported by the evidence.

Row C: 1/1

The response earns one point in this row because it builds a complex understanding of Miranda's response that considers both her realization of their "childish behavior" and her concern over her own eventual maturity. It considers how the actions Miranda has witnessed diminish the power that the women have: “Not only does this childish behavior worry Miranda, causing her to fear that she will grow to behave as immaturely as her grandmothers, it also loosens the power her grandmothers hold over her” (paragraph 4).

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Sample D

Score: 4/6 points (A1 – B3 – C0)

Row A: 1/1

The response earns the point in Row A because it offers a defensible interpretation of the passage: “The author creates a juxtaposition between the two women to highlight their opinions through the use of imagery and diction to describe Miranda’s reaction as she looked at them with fascination [sic] and wonder as to how two people of the same family could be so different” (paragraph 1).

Row B: 3/4

The response earns three points in Row B because it offers specific examples of the differences between the two older women. The commentary explains how some of this evidence supports the argument presented. While the response identifies imagery as a literary device found in the passage, the analysis of the imagery is not developed. The response does, however, explain the significance of specific words, as well as the speech patterns of the two women. The response considers the argument the two women have over Sophia Jane’s desire to climb the ladder, which the writer describes as “going against the norm of the people of her age” (paragraph 2). The differences between the two sisters is more fully explored in the third paragraph’s examination of the way the sisters speak: “She’s [Grandmother] also seen to be well refined in her speech. Aunt Eliza on the other hand uses diction such as ‘I s’pose’ and ‘d’ye s’pose’ in her speech without fully pronouncing her words which is usually a sign of a lower class woman when she’s supposedly from a dignified family” (paragraph 3). The commentary suggests that Miranda “is almost stunned to see the behavior of her elders as they resembled the behavior of her and her sister which she did not seemingly expect” (paragraph 3).

Row C: 0/1

This response does not earn the point in Row C because its line of reasoning does not delve into the complexity of Miranda’s response to the two women. Oversimplification can be found in the concluding paragraph, which states: “Although people can be of the same origin, their life experiences shouldn’t necessarily be the same. As a result, the outcome of their personalities can differ vastly” (paragraph 4).

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Sample E

Score: 3/6 points (A1 – B2 – C0)

Row A: 1/1

This response earns the point in Row A because it responds to the prompt with a defensible interpretation of Miranda’s complex reaction to observing the two older women: “Miranda develops a basic understanding of the biases of her society that permit individuals no more mature or understanding than any other to take power over others on account of age” (paragraph 4).

Row B: 2/4

This response earns two points in Row B because while it does offer specific evidence from the text, the evidence is not clearly related to the thesis. No clear line of reasoning is established in the response. The writer suggests that Miranda is “ignorant” because “Miranda states that ‘everything in the world was strange to her’” (paragraph 2). Miranda’s lack of experience is contrasted with “necessity of the overwhelming power of her grandmothers over herself” (paragraph 2) and that her realization about the behavior of the older women “acts as a catalyst for her internal consideration of the baseless of their power over her” (paragraph 2). The response goes on to characterize Miranda’s grandmother as “hypocritical,” but the point is not related to the claim. The observation that “[Great-Aunt Eliza] later reveals uncertainty in authority when she cajoles Miranda to stay and bribes her with a gumdrop soon after” (paragraph 3) is inaccurate and weakens the argument.

Row 3: 0/1

This response does not earn the point in Row C because although it attempts to contextualize its interpretation, the attempt is diminished by generalizations and oversimplification. The introduction presents a promising declaration, “The universality of the right to be treated and perceived as equal in society is one of the most vital presuppositions in our modern society and is a pillar of humanity” (paragraph 1), but the argument is not maintained or thoroughly explored.

Sample F

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Score: 2/6 points (A0 – B2 – C0)

Row A: 0/1

This response does not earn the point in Row A because it does not respond to the prompt with a defensible thesis. Instead, the introduction paraphrases the prompt.

Row B: 2/4

This response earns two points in Row B because it does provide some specific evidence and attempts to explain the significance of the evidence. However, no line of reasoning is established. Tone and imagery are mentioned as literary devices to be discussed in the introduction, but no evidence or explanation of their use in the passage is found in the response. In the second paragraph, the writer examines the conversation between the two older women and recognizes “a subtle yet clear insult to the great aunt” (paragraph 2) and the “heated banter” between the two women. The commentary in the paragraph posits, “A retort to the comment that speaks volumes, it is a brilliant return by the author, in this we see the great aunt proving that she has little time for the grandmothers comments or concerns, she will do what she pleases and not worry about what it means to the old hag yapping at her” (paragraph 2). This commentary, however, does not connect back to a discussion of Miranda’s complex reaction to observing the two older women. The third paragraph of the response does shift to focus on Miranda, and while textual evidence is incorporated here, it does not connect to a line of reasoning or support a thesis. The evidence’s significance is oversimplified: “It is clear that her great aunt cares little for our narrator, even when she is family” (paragraph 3). Tone is again mentioned in the conclusion, but the description of the tone as “wondrous” is followed by the observation, “A volatile stench permeates the entire work, one which ranges from passive aggression to passive disinterest” (paragraph 4).

Row C: 0/1

This response does not earn the point in Row C because it oversimplifies the complexity of the passage and does not develop a complex literary argument: “[The passage] is an excellent example of how an author can construct a vivid snapshot of a family and their relationships” (paragraph 4).

Sample G

Score: 1/6 points (A0 – B1 – C0)

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Row A: 0/1

This response does not earn the point in Row A because it does not offer a defensible thesis; instead, a restatement of the prompt is presented: “In the short passage published in 1960 the author effectively uses literary elements and techniques to convey Miranda’s complex reaction as she observes her great aunt and grandmother” (paragraph 1).

Row B: 1/4

This response earns one point in Row B because it presents evidence that is largely general. While some textual evidence is presented, the commentary offered merely restates or paraphrases the quotation: “‘Miranda felt sad and strange and a little frightened. She began edging away.’ From this we can tell that Miranda does not feel comfortable” (paragraph 2). The introduction notes, “The author subtly inserts arguments, differences, and complications with the two women” (paragraph 1), but little explanation of these elements is found beyond the statement, “‘Miranda knew that she had always been the pretty one, and she was pretty still, but Great-Aunt Eliza was not pretty now and never had been.’ This shows that she new of this difference before hand” (paragraph 2). No line of reasoning is established in the response.

Row C: 0/1

The response does not earn the point in Row C because it does not demonstrate sophistication of thought or develop a complex literary argument.