



Taking the Test

A brief intro to the
AP English Lit & Comp Exam

Format of the AP Exam

Date	May 9, 2013
Total Time	3 hours (Starts at 8 a.m.)
Section 1	Multiple Choice (60 minutes) 
# of ?s	55
	Four or five prose and poetry passages
	10-15 questions per passage
Section 2	Essay (120 minutes) 
3 essays	1. Analysis of poetry
	a. 40 min on 1 or comparison of 2 poems
	2. Analysis of prose
	a. 40 min on a story, novel excerpt or essay
	3. Open essay
	a. 40 min on literary topic provided, supported by student's own reading

Who writes the test?

- * AP English Development Committee
 - * Eight English teachers, either high school or college
- * Assisted by Educational Testing Service (they write the SATs)
 - * Forevermore (at least this class) referred to as ETS
- * Committee writes the first drafts of the test questions
- * ETS fine tunes it

Scoring

After you take the test, you will receive your scores sometime around the first week of July. Your score will be a single number from 1 to 5. Here is what the numbers mean:

Score Meaning	Approx. % of all tests takers receiving this score at participating colleges*	Equivalent 1 st year college course grade	Will a student with this score receive credit?
5 – Extremely Well Qualified	8.1%	A	Usually
4 – Well Qualified	19.1%	A-, B+	Usually
3 – Qualified	30.2%	B-, C	Maybe
2 – Possibly Qualified	32.6%	C, D	Very Rarely
1 – No Recommendation	10%	D	No

*Source: The College Board, http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/repository/apo8_EnglishLit_GradeDistribution.pdf

Multiple-Choice Score

- * You receive a point for each question you answer correctly.
- * You receive no points for a question you leave blank or answer incorrectly.
- * If you are unsure, guess – you might get it right!
 - * Use process of elimination to narrow your choice down.
 - * We will talk about this more later!

Essay Score

- * Each essay is scored on a scale of 0 to 9
- * The scores of each essay are added together and the total – anywhere from 0 to 27 – is your essay score
- * Essays are scored individually by individual Readers
- * Each Reader scores essays for only one type of question.
- * The Reader of your open essay will be familiar with the work about which you write.
 - * IF your essay is about Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, your essay reader would have read that work.
 - * Of Course, you could choose something stunningly obscure and mess with their head, but it is not recommended.
 - * Make sure to choose something of literary merit – *Twilight* isn't going to cut it here!

A “9” looks like...

- * Answers all facets of the question completely
- * Makes good use of the passage to support its points
- * Is “well written”
 - * Sentences are complete
 - * Punctuated properly
 - * Clear in meaning
 - * Educated vocabulary
 - * Spelled correctly



Your Final Score

- * Final 1 to 5 score will be a combination of the section scores.
- * Remember:
 - * Multiple-choice section counts for 45% of the total
 - * Essays count for 55% of the total
- * Neither you, nor your college you apply to, will ever know your individual section scores.
- * A good bottom-line goal for a 3:
 - * Get at least 30 questions right on the multiple-choice section
 - * Earn at least 15 points on the essays (5 points each essay)

Your Final Score

* Set realistic goals for yourself

Essay Points	15	18	21	24	27
MC Points					
20	2	3	3	4	5
25	3	3	4	4	5
30	3	4	4	5	5
35	3	4	4	5	5
40	4	4	5	5	5
45	4	5	5	5	5
50	5	5	5	5	5
55	5	5	5	5	5

Earning a 5 is possible, even if you only scored within the 20 to 35 range on the multiple-choice section.


Multiple-Choice

- * Contains 4 to 5 passages with a total of 55 questions.
- * Try to divide your time to give yourself plenty time to read and answer the questions.
- * As you practice, take your time so you can become comfortable with how the test is run,
- * Then, limit your time to one hour as you continue to practice.
- * Use a chart like this to evaluate your performance when practicing:

The Time Factor			
Time Evenly Divided	Time I Spent	Time Shooting For	Number to Get Right
_____	_____	_____	_____

Study Notes

- * You'll see a total of 6 or 7 passages on the exam:
 - * 4 or 5 on the multiple-choice
 - * A passage for the first two essays
 - * One of the essays could ask you to compare and contrast two poems or short prose work
- * Chances are there will be at least one passage from each of the following periods:
 - * 1558-1659
 - * 1660-1798
 - * 1799-1917
 - * 1918-Present

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- * Comprehension of the passages, both in detail and in an overall sense, is critical.
 - * Typically, prose is easier than poetry
 - * Modern writing easier to comprehend than earlier periods
 - * You will do better on material you have previously studied, so stick to these rules:
 - * 1 – study to eliminate weaknesses
 - * Emphasize your strengths – write what you know!
 - * 2 – don't blow off the multiple-choice section
 - * Some students fixate on the essay and treat the multiple-choice as just extra – it isn't and is worth almost equal to the essay!
 - * 3 – prepare for the whole test
 - * The essays are all weighted equally – each only worth about 18% of your score!

Works Cited

McMullen, Douglas Jr. “A Brief Introduction to the AP English Literature and Composition Exam.” *Cracking the AP English Literature & Composition Exam*. New York: 2011.