

E4P2 AP Literature and Composition (AP Senior English): Summer Assignment (+100 points)

In the AP Literature and Composition class, you will read literature from the sixteenth century to the twenty-first century and will write analytical essays in response to those books. The following writing assignment is typical of the type of analytical essay required for the AP test.

1. **Read two novels from the suggested list of books** recommended by the College Board for the free-response question on the AP Literature and Composition exam. (Carmichael's Bookstore will stock a wide selection of these books.) **(Reference the list on the back of this assignment.)**
2. Write a comparison and contrast essay of the two novels' settings. First, give the reader a sense of the books by briefly clarifying their plots. Then, **by addressing one or two of the points in the "Checklist for Writing About Setting,"** analyze the relevance of setting in the two books by comparing and contrasting those aspects of setting that seem most pertinent to theme or character development. Keep in mind that one of the vital aspects of this type of essay is knowing how to narrow your focus to a clear, precise thesis. **Ultimately, clarify how the setting of each book contributes to the meaning of the book (theme) or character development.**
2. Here's an example of a thesis for this assignment, addressing #5 on the checklist:
"While the settings of Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* and Feodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* present negative economic conditions, the protagonists vary in their attitudes toward those conditions."
This thesis addresses only #5 on the checklist, but that #5 category suggests a few more questions that might help you develop the essay. To organize your ideas, here's a typical outline for this paper:
Paragraph 1: introduction with thesis at the end of the paragraph. Paragraphs 2 through 5 or 6: development of thesis with cited support from the texts. Final paragraph: conclusion.
3. Use MLA format for your essay. As support for your assertions about setting, reference passages from the books, using in-text citations for documentation. Your analysis should be three double-spaced pages in a 10-point font with an additional Works Cited page. **Due date: first day of class.**

Checklist for Writing About Setting

1. How fully are objects described? How vital are they to the action? How important are they to the development of the plot or idea? How are they connected to the mental states of the characters?
2. What connections, if any, are apparent between locations and characters? Do the locations bring characters together, separate them, facilitate their privacy, make intimacy and conversation difficult?
3. How well done are the visual descriptions? Does the author provide such vivid and carefully arranged details about surroundings that you might even be able to draw a map or plan? Or is the scenery vague and difficult to imagine?
4. How important to plot and character are shapes, colors, times of day, clouds, storms, light and sun, seasons of the year, and conditions of vegetation?
5. Are the characters poor, moderately well-off, or rich? How does their economic lot determine what happens to them? How does their economic condition affect their actions and attitudes?
6. What cultural, religious, and political conditions are displayed and acted upon in the story? How do the characters accept and adjust to these conditions? How do the conditions affect the characters' judgments and actions?
7. What is the state of houses, furniture, and objects (e.g., new and polished, old and worn)? What connections can you find between this condition and the outlook and behavior of the characters or the themes of the book?
8. How important are sounds or silences? To what degree is music or other sound important in the development of character or theme?
9. Do characters respect or mistreat the environment? If there is an environmental connection, how central is it to the meaning of the book or character development?
10. What conclusions do you think the author expects you to draw as a result of the neighborhood, culture, and larger world of the story?

Roberts, Edgar V. *Writing About Literature*. 9th ed. Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ, 1999.

(Reference the attached rubric for this assignment.)

Adam Bede
Anna Karenina
Antony and Cleopatra
The Awakening
As I Lay Dying
As You Like It
The Bear
Black Boy
Bless Me, Ultima
The Bonesetter's Daughter
Candide
Ceremony
The Cherry Orchard
Cry, the Beloved Country
David Copperfield
The Dollmaker
Don Quixote
East of Eden
A Farewell to Arms
For Whom the Bell Tolls
Heart of Darkness
House Made of Dawn
Invisible Man
Jane Eyre
Joseph Andrews
Jude the Obscure
King Lear
Madame Bovary
Mansfield Park
The Merchant of Venice
Obasan
O Pioneers!
Out of Africa
A Passage to India
A Raisin in the Sun
The Sun Also Rises
Things Fall Apart
A Thousand Acres
Tom Jones
The Vicar of Wakefield
The Way We Live Now
The Winter's Tale

Rubric for Senior Summer Writing (Adapted from the College Board AP Literature and Composition Scoring Rubric)

8-9 This well-written compare/contrast essay focuses on an aspect of the setting of two books from the assigned reading list. The writer convincingly relates that discussion to the meaning of the book (theme) or character development. The essay is specific in references to the text, cogent in explication, and free of plot summary not directly relevant to the thesis. This essay has few or no errors in mechanics, usage, grammar or spelling. The writer exhibits an ability to discuss the literary works with insight and understanding, as well as the ability to control an appropriate range of the elements of effective composition (clear thesis, topic sentences for developing paragraphs, focused paragraph development, proper MLA documentation and insightful conclusion).

6-7 This compare/contrast essay also relates an aspect of setting of two books from the assigned reading list. In addition, it explains the significance of that contrast to theme or character development. The analysis, however, is less thorough, less perceptive, or less specific than that of a higher-level paper. Though not as convincing in its discussion, this essay is generally well-written with few errors in mechanics, grammar, and documentation. The essay demonstrates the writer's ability to explain how setting relates to theme or character development, but it is less sophisticated in analysis and less consistent in the command of the elements of college-level expository prose than are essays scored 9-8

5 This essay tends to be superficial. The writer may choose an appropriate aspect of setting to analyze, but the explanation of how the comparison/contrast relates to the meaning of the work as a whole or character development is vague or oversimplified. The discussion may be pedestrian and mechanical. Typically, this essay is not as sophisticated or complex as higher level writings. The writer usually demonstrates inconsistent control over the elements of effective composition and documentation and ideas are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as upper-half papers. The writing, however, is adequate to convey the writer's ideas.

3-4 This lower-half paper may not compare or contrast an aspect of setting; or, it may have failed to explain the significance of setting to theme or character development. The analysis may be unconvincing, perfunctory, underdeveloped, or misguided. The discussion may be inaccurate or not clearly related to the prompt. The writing may convey the writer's ideas, but it reveals weak control over such elements as diction, organization, syntax, grammar or documentation. This essay may contain important misinterpretations of the novel or play, inadequate supporting evidence, and/or paraphrase and plot summary rather than analysis.

1-2 This essay compounds the weakness of essays in the 3-4 range. It seriously misreads or fails to comprehend the novel or the play (or the question itself), choose an inappropriate aspect of setting, or seriously misinterpret the relation of setting to theme or character development. In addition, the essay is poorly written on several counts, including many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics, weak documentation, or it is unacceptably brief. Although the writer may have made some effort to respond to the prompt, the argument presented has little clarity or coherence. Essays that are especially disorganized or illogically argued and/or mechanically unsound are scored 1.

0 This is a response with no more than a reference to the task.

Any writers who do not adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy of DuPont Manual High School will receive a 0 for the assignment. Writings must be submitted by the due date.