

Poetry II Unit 5: Race, Culture, and Identity

Performance Task

The AP Exam requires that students effectively analyze poetry on Free Response Question 1 by looking at literary devices and strategies used by an author to create larger thematic ideas about the world and humanity. This performance task asks you to carefully read a poem for these literary devices and strategies and analyze how these strategies work together to create larger meaning. You will demonstrate your understanding by writing a strong intro with a thesis and a body paragraph with evidence and commentary.

Task

Review the poem _____ and consider the following:

- Structure
- Comparisons
- Imagery
- Word Choice (literal and figurative)
- Personification
- Allusion

Read and annotate the poem “Telephone Conversation” by Wole Soyinka and write an introduction paragraph in which you 1) make a strong argument that culminates with a thesis statement that addresses all tasks of the question below and 2) craft one body paragraph in which you provide clear textual evidence and commentary as support.

- In the following poem “Telephone Conversation” by controversial Nigerian poet Wole Soyinka, the speaker engages in a phone conversation with a landlady in an attempt to rent an apartment. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Soyinka uses literary elements and techniques to portray the complex relationship between the caller and the landlady and what it reveals about bias or prejudice.



TIP: When annotating, don't use a highlighter! They aren't allowed on the AP exam, so practice annotating without them. When analyzing, it's not enough to merely identify devices - you must analyze them by connecting their use to the creation of larger meaning within the poem. Don't be afraid to identify and discuss larger themes at work in the poem - poems are complete works and can definitely have larger themes working in them! Be sure to address ALL tasks of the prompt.

Assessment Criteria

The criteria for assessment are provided below. After you finish writing, review your own work against the criteria below before submitting it for teacher feedback.

Score	Assessment Criteria
<p>Effective (A) 90 - 100%</p>	<p>Students includes a complex, insightful thesis statement at the END of the introduction paragraph that addresses all of the prompt's writing tasks, including 1) the complex relationship between the caller and the landlady and 2) what it reveals about bias or prejudice.</p> <p>The introduction paragraph should lead into the poem by introducing the author and title of the poem and provide brief background and summary of the poem before launching into the argument in the thesis.</p> <p>The body paragraph is developed with evidence from the poem that is clearly used to support the thesis. Original commentary ties the evidence to the thesis using a strong "thread of connectivity." There is no passive or personal language used; the tone of the paragraph is academic. Grammar and mechanical issues, if any, are minimal and do not interfere with meaning. The paragraphs "flow" and have a strong analytical voice - the personality of the reader is evident in the writing.</p>
<p>Approaching Effectiveness (B) 80 - 89%</p>	<p>Student includes a thesis at the END of the body paragraph that addresses all parts of the question, including 1) the complex relationship between the caller and the landlady and 2) what it reveals about bias or prejudice. The poem is used to clearly support the thesis. The introduction is less developed or flows less well than the A introduction.</p> <p>Commentary connects the evidence to the thesis . The tone of the paragraphs is mostly academic. Grammar and mechanical issues are minimal and do not interfere with meaning.</p>
<p>Adequate (C) 70 - 79%</p>	<p>Student includes a thesis somewhere in the two paragraphs that addresses all parts of the question, including 1) the complex relationship between the caller and the landlady and 2) what it reveals about bias or prejudice, but the thesis DOES NOT come at the end of the introduction paragraph. The poem is used to clearly support the thesis. The introduction is less developed or flows less well than the A or B introduction, or the student only writes a thesis statement.</p> <p>Commentary tries to connect the evidence to the thesis, but the connection between evidence and thesis may be unclear.</p>

	<p>Grammar and mechanical issues may be present, but do not <i>significantly</i> interfere with meaning. The tone is not as academic as that of the A and B paragraphs.</p>
<p>Approaching Adequacy (D) 60 - 69%</p>	<p>Student includes a thesis that attempts to address the question, but it may not address either including 1) the complex relationship between the caller and the landlady or 2) what it reveals about bias or prejudice. Evidence is used to support the thesis, but may be unclear or irrelevant. Some explanation of the evidence is attempted. Grammar and mechanical issues are present and possibly interfere with meaning.</p>
<p>Ineffective (F) 0-59%</p>	<p>Student does not develop a clear thesis statement, and while an attempt at using evidence may be made, the evidence is unclear, irrelevant, or personal in nature. No explanation or commentary is offered, or if it is, it may be irrelevant or merely summarization of the poem. The tone of the writing is not academic, and/or significant grammatical or mechanical issues interfere with clarity and meaning.</p>



NATIONAL MATH + SCIENCE INITIATIVE

NMSI ENGLISH

AP Literature

Poetry Analysis Question -
2015 Deconstruction Lesson

"XIV" by Derek Walcott

2015 Poetry Deconstruction

Traditionally, the poetry question on the Advanced Placement Literature and Composition Examination garners lower scores and causes more consternation than either of the other two open-response questions. Before students can write an analysis which will merit an upper score on the Advanced Placement Examination, they must first know several things:

- how to read a poem
- how to recognize points of discussion
- how to select details to explain the author's use of poetic devices
- how to link poetic devices to meaning

Because poems chosen for this timed exam are rich in figurative language, students can hone their skills of analytical reading by distinguishing the literal from the figurative, examining words in context, and observing form as well as syntactical structures and punctuation.

There are several mnemonic devices and acronyms to help with the procedure of explicating poetry. TP-CASTT, DIDLS, and SOAPS are a few of the most widely used ones. This lesson does not precisely *follow* any of the ones listed above, but instead, combines elements from each.

Activity One: Analyzing the Prompt

Reread the prompt carefully and complete the accompanying deconstruction.

In the following poem by Caribbean writer Derek Walcott, the speaker recalls a childhood experience of visiting an elderly woman storyteller. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-developed essay, discuss the speaker's recollection and analyze how Walcott uses poetic devices to convey the significance of the experience.

Every prompt contains three different components. Familiarize yourself with each category.

- **Background**—a brief description of the poet and/or the focus of the poem.
- **Abstract**—the abstract task asks that you interpret the poem through a specific lens. Abstract tasks require a reader to interpret meaning and intent.
- **Concrete**—the tangible task that you must complete to successfully respond to the prompt. Concrete tasks always speak to what you must write and analyze.

Background

1. What is Walcott's background?
2. How might his background influence the poem?

3. What is the focus of the poem?
4. What are some inferences you can make about the poem's focus before reading it?

Abstract

5. This prompt asks that you discuss the "speaker's recollection" as the abstract task.
 - a. What is a recollection?
 - b. Explain how the speaker's recollection about a childhood experience might be different from an event that happens in adulthood.

Concrete

6. Identify the concrete tasks.
 - a. What must you write?
 - b. What must you analyze?
7. In your essay, to what must the poetic devices be connected?
8. Since the speaker is recounting an event from childhood, what assumptions can you make about the event's significance?