English Language, Literature, and Composition: Content and Analysis (0044/5044)

Test at a Glance

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<td>90 multiple-choice questions; 2 constructed-response questions</td>
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Content Categories

| I. Literature and Understanding Text | 45 | 37.5% |
| II. Language and Linguistics        | 18 | 15%   |
| III. Composition and Rhetoric       | 27 | 22.5% |
| IV. Analysis (Constructed Response) | 2  | 25%   |

About This Test

English Language, Literature, and Composition: Content and Analysis measures whether entry-level secondary English educators have the standards-relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities believed necessary for competent professional practice. The questions address the examinee’s knowledge of literature, the English language, and composition and rhetoric. This test may contain some questions that will not count toward your score.
Topics Covered

Representative descriptions of topics covered in each category are provided below.

I. LITERATURE AND UNDERSTANDING TEXT

- Identifying major works and authors of American, British, World (including non-Western), and young adult literature from various cultures, genres, and periods
- Paraphrasing, comparing, and interpreting (literally and inferentially) various types of print and nonprint texts, e.g., fiction, poetry, essays, drama, and graphic representations
- Identifying and interpreting figurative language and other literary elements, e.g., metaphor, simile, voice, point of view, tone, style, setting, diction, mood, allusions, irony, cliches, analogy, hyperbole, personification, alliteration, and foreshadowing
- Understanding how patterns, structures, and characteristics of literary forms and genres may influence the meaning and effect of a work
- Situating authors and texts within historical, cultural, and critical contexts to aid in interpretation
- Recognizing and applying various strategic approaches to teaching reading, e.g., applying cueing systems, activating prior knowledge, constructing meaning through context, and employing metacognitive strategies

II. LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

- Understanding the principles of first and second language acquisition and development, including social, cultural, and historical influences and the nature of dialects
- Understanding elements of the history, development, and structure of the English language, including linguistic change, etymology, and processes of word formation
- Understanding and applying the conventions of grammar, mechanics, and usage, e.g., syntax, sentence types, sentence structure, parts of speech, modifiers, phrases and clauses, capitalization, and punctuation
- Understanding the elements of semantics, e.g., ambiguity, euphemism, connotation, and jargon, and how these elements affect meaning

III. COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC

- Understanding and applying elements of teaching writing, including
  - Individual and collaborative approaches to teaching writing, e.g., stages of writing processes (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, evaluating) and how those processes work recursively
  - Tools and response strategies for assessing student writing, e.g., peer review, portfolios, holistic scoring, scoring rubrics, self-assessment, and conferencing
  - Common research and documentation techniques, e.g., gathering and evaluating data, using electronic and print media, and citing sources
- Understanding and evaluating rhetorical features in writing, including
  - Purposes for writing and the nature of the audience within varying contexts
  - Organization in writing, including creating and maintaining coherence
  - Strategies for organization, development, and presentation of print, electronic, and visual media
  - Discourse aims, e.g., creative, expository, persuasive
  - Methods of argument and types of appeals, e.g., analogy, extended metaphor, allusion, and appeals to logic or emotion
  - Style, tone, voice, and point of view as part of rhetorical strategy
  - Recognition of bias and fallacies, distinctions between fact and opinion, and identification of stereotypes, inferences, and assumptions

IV. ANALYSIS

- Interpreting Literature
  - Analyzing the central idea and key literary elements of a poetry or prose excerpt from American, British, or world literature of any period
- Evaluating Rhetorical Features
  - Analyzing the central idea and important rhetorical features used to construct an argument in an excerpt from a literary essay
Sample Test Questions

The sample questions that follow illustrate the kinds of questions in the test. They are not, however, representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. Answers with explanations follow the questions.

Directions: Each of the questions or statements below is followed by four suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

Questions 1–2 are based on the following poem.

When I was a child I knew red miners
dressed raggedly and wearing carbide lamps.
I saw them come down red hills to their camps
dyed with red dust from old Ishkooda mines.

Night after night I met them on the roads,
or on the streets in town I caught their glance;
the swing of dinner buckets in their hands,
and grumbling undermining all their words.

I also lived in low cotton country
where moonlight hovered over ripe haystacks,
or stumps of trees, and croppers’ rotting shacks,
with famine, terror, flood, and plague near by,
where sentiment and hatred still held sway
and only bitter land was washed away.

–Margaret Walker

From This is My Century: New and Collected Poems, by Margaret Walker Alexander. Copyright © 1942, 1969 by The University of Georgia Press.

1. In the octave, the poet recalls
   (A) the discontent of the miners
   (B) the happiness of the miners
   (C) the efficiency and competence of the miners
   (D) a conversation between a child and miners

2. The last three lines suggest that “cotton country” (line 9) is a place where
   (A) only the land washes away; the hatred, terror, flood, and plague remain
   (B) all the bitter aspects of life such as hatred, terror, flood, and plague were washed away with the land
   (C) all the troubles and discontentment such as hatred, terror, flood, and plague are gone once the land is washed away
   (D) in a land where there are many problems, it will require a flood to rid society of the evils of famine, terror, and plague

3. Grammar may be taught in two main ways—by experience with discourse that entails the varieties of word forms and sentence construction, or by analyzing dummy sentences and diagramming parts. Plentiful discursive experience is what really teaches grammar, for it exercises judgment and provides language intake, whereas formal grammar study has been proved irrelevant. Politics more than pedagogy retards the changing of the curriculum to fit this truth.

The author of the passage above argues that
   (A) using language in a wide variety of situations improves grammar
   (B) good judgment can be improved by studying the rules of formal grammar
   (C) analyzing and diagramming provide exercise in logical thinking
   (D) formal study of grammar improves writing ability

4. The book announced an insane world of dehumanization through terror in which the individual was systematically obliterated by an all-powerful elite. Its key phrases—Big Brother, doublethink, Newspeak, the Ministry of Peace (devoted to war), the Ministry of Truth (devoted to lies), the Ministry of Love (devoted to torture)—burned their way at once into the modern consciousness.

The passage above discusses
   (A) E.M. Forster’s A Passage to India
   (B) Thomas Pynchon’s V.
   (C) George Orwell’s 1984
   (D) Flannery O’Connor’s The Violent Bear It Away
Questions 5–6 refer to the following passages.

(A) If the rude throng pour with furious pace,
   And hap to break thee from a friend’s embrace,
   Stop short; nor struggle through the crowd in vain,
   But watch with careful eye the passing train.

(B) There lived a wife at Usher’s Well,
   And a wealthy wife was she;
   She had three stout and stalwart sons,
   And sent them o’er the sea.

(C) She thanked men,—good! but thanked
   Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
   My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
   With anybody’s gift. Who’d stoop to blame
   This sort of trifling?

(D) Upon the maple leaves
   The dew shines red,
   But on the lotus blossom
   It has the pale transparence of tears.

5. Which is an example of the ballad stanza?
   (A) If the rude throng pour with furious pace,
   (B) There lived a wife at Usher’s Well,
   (C) She thanked men,—good! but thanked
   (D) Upon the maple leaves

6. Which is from a dramatic monologue?

Questions 7–8 are based on the following excerpt from Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*.

This was all the account I got from Mrs. Fairfax of her employer and mine. There are people who seem to have no notion of sketching a character, or observing and describing salient points, either in persons or things: the good lady evidently belonged to this class; my queries puzzled, but did not draw her out. Mr. Rochester was Mr. Rochester in her eyes, a gentleman, a landed proprietor—nothing more: she inquired and searched no further, and evidently wondered at my wish to gain a more definite notion of his identity.

7. The passage suggests that the speaker would describe the “account” mentioned in the first sentence as
   (A) enlightening
   (B) mystifying
   (C) deficient
   (D) erroneous

8. Mrs. Fairfax differs from the speaker in that Mrs. Fairfax
   (A) has more interest in the complexities of people’s personalities
   (B) judges people by their social station in life
   (C) is more willing to take people at face value
   (D) has a more positive opinion of Mr. Rochester
9. Which of the following is the best description of traditional phonics instruction?

(A) Students study lists of high-frequency words in order to increase reading speed and comprehension.

(B) Students are taught individual letter sounds first, followed by letter combination sounds and the rules of putting these combinations together to make words.

(C) Students are immersed in written language and encouraged to decode entire words using context clues.

(D) Students analyze patterns of organization and syntax as a way of learning to recognize common structures.

10. Her astonishment, as she reflected on what had passed, was increased by every review of it. That she should receive an offer of marriage from Mr. Darcy! That he should have been in love with her for so many months! So much in love as to wish to marry her in spite of all the objections which had made him prevent his friend's marrying her sister, and which must appear at least with equal force in his own case—was almost incredible!

The excerpt above is from which of the following novels?

(A) Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*

(B) George Eliot’s *Middlemarch*

(C) Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening*

(D) Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*

Questions 11–13 are based on the following excerpt from Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.

The people all saw her come because it was sundown. The sun was gone, but he had left his footprints in the sky. It was the time for sitting on porches beside the road. It was the time to hear things and talk. These sitters had been tongueless, earless, eyeless conveniences all day long. Mules and other brutes had occupied their skins. But now, the sun and the bossman were gone, so the skins felt powerful and human. They became lords of sounds and lesser things. They passed nations through their mouths. They sat in judgment.

11. The description of the sun in the second sentence contains which of the following literary devices?

(A) Foreshadowing

(B) Irony

(C) Flashback

(D) Personification

12. Which of the following is the best way of describing the last three sentences of the passage (“They became . . . in judgment”)?

(A) They emphasize the weariness the sitters feel after a long day's work.

(B) They are used to paint a picture of the way in which the sitters wish they spent their evenings.

(C) They are a vivid way of describing the ease and authority the sitters feel during the evening.

(D) They highlight the contrast between the feelings of the sitters and the feelings of the bossman.

13. Zora Neale Hurston is associated with which of the following literary movements?

(A) New England Puritanism

(B) Transcendentalism

(C) Naturalism

(D) Harlem Renaissance
14. mettle... metal
    nun... none
    The pairs above are examples of
    (A) antonyms
    (B) synonyms
    (C) homophones
    (D) colloquialisms

15. Which of the following describes the meaning of sentence I?
    (A) All Americans are at a disadvantage in Paris.
    (B) Only those Americans who do not speak French are at a disadvantage in Paris.
    (C) Some French-speaking Americans are at a disadvantage in Paris.
    (D) Only French-speaking Americans are at a disadvantage in Paris.

16. Which of the following describes the meaning of sentence II?
    (A) All Americans are at a disadvantage in Paris.
    (B) Only those Americans who do not speak French are at a disadvantage in Paris.
    (C) Some French-speaking Americans are at a disadvantage in Paris.
    (D) Only French-speaking Americans are at a disadvantage in Paris.

17. The sentences can best serve as illustrations of which of the following?
    (A) The semantics of punctuation
    (B) The differences between transformational and structural grammar
    (C) The differences between value judgments and reports
    (D) The importance of word order in determining meaning in English

18. In a holistic evaluation of student essays, evaluations are made on the basis of the
    (A) number and variety of errors made by each student
    (B) average sentence length and the complexity demonstrated in each essay
    (C) ability of each student to communicate in a variety of discourse modes
    (D) overall quality of each student's essay in relation to the topic

19. Freewriting, brainstorming, clustering, and idea mapping are most important during which stage of the writing process?
    (A) Prewriting
    (B) Drafting
    (C) Revising
    (D) Proofreading

20. Science fiction: readers claim to either love it or loathe it; either they avoid it like poison or they devour favorite works and authors like chocolate addicts gulping down fudge truffles.
    The author of the passage compares certain readers with "chocolate addicts" primarily in order to
    (A) suggest that science fiction is not a serious literary genre
    (B) indicate the depth of certain readers' feelings about science fiction
    (C) explain why some readers consider science fiction to be dangerous
    (D) contrast the characteristics of science fiction with those of other literary genres
Questions 21–23 refer to the following paragraphs.

I. On a dark, secluded street stood three abandoned houses. The first had broken shutters and shattered windows. Next to it stood a dilapidated structure badly in need of paint. Adjacent, amid debris, stood a shack with graffiti scrawled across the door.

II. Weeks before they decided on their destination, the seniors had already begun a massive fundraising project to help finance their class trip. When they were offered the choice between Rome and London, an overwhelming majority chose Rome. Then preparations began in earnest. In the months that followed, the students’ enthusiasm escalated until the day the plane finally took off, carrying them toward an experience they would remember forever.

III. Selecting a new car requires each buyer to weigh a number of factors. First to be considered is the car’s appearance. Next, and even more critical, are the car’s performance and safety ratings. Most significant to any prospective buyer, however, is the car’s price.

21. Which of the following best describes the organization of paragraph I?
   (A) Chronological order
   (B) Spatial order
   (C) Cause and effect
   (D) Order of importance

22. Which of the following best describes the organization of paragraph II?
   (A) Chronological order
   (B) Spatial order
   (C) Cause and effect
   (D) Order of importance

23. Which of the following best describes the organization of paragraph III?
   (A) Chronological order
   (B) Spatial order
   (C) Cause and effect
   (D) Order of importance

24. From the very beginning, I wrote to explain my own life to myself, and I invited any readers who chose to make the journey with me to join me on the high wire. I would work without a net and without the noise of the crowd to disturb me. The view from on high is dizzying, instructive. I do not record the world exactly as it comes to me but transform it by making it pass through a prism of fabulous stories I have collected on the way. I gather stories the way a lepidopterist hoards his chloroformed specimens of rare moths, or Costa Rican beetles. Stories are like vessels I use to interpret the world to myself.

   –Pat Conroy

Which of the following best describes the organization of the passage?
   (A) The author provides several explanations for taking a certain course of action.
   (B) The author uses analogies to explain his experience of a particular action.
   (C) The author makes a comparison between his own experiences and those of others in his profession.
   (D) The author chronicles the various phases of his work in a particular discipline.
Answers

1. The correct answer is A. In Margaret Walker's poem, the octave recalls the poet's awareness of the discontent of the miners; she caught the "grumbling undermining all their words."

2. The correct answer is A. This is no sentimental picture of a rural idyll. The poet knows that life is hard for those who must wrest a living from the earth. Miners and farmers share this bitter truth and learn to live with it. They live in a world where "famine . . . and plague" are ever near.

3. Choice A is the best expression of the author's argument. The author maintains that "plentiful discursive experience" is the most effective teacher of grammar. In this context, "discursive" experience means experience with discourse—that is, speech or texts that communicate ideas for some purpose and not merely as an exercise. The author argues that students learn the rules of grammar as part of the process of learning to understand the meaning of diverse texts.

4. The correct answer is C. The passage describes the themes and key phrases of Orwell's 1984.

5. The correct answer is B. The ballad stanza is a quatrain of alternating tetrameter and trimeter lines rhyming abcb.

6. The correct answer is C. The lines are from Browning's dramatic monologue "My Last Duchess." One distinguishing characteristic of such a poem is that it consists of the words of a single character who reveals in his speech his own nature as well as the dramatic situation. Here, the Duke is displeased by his wife's failure to value his "gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name." He reads her graciousness in accepting gifts from others as a devaluing of his gift.

7. The correct answer is C. The speaker indicates that Mrs. Fairfax is one of those people who has "no notion of sketching a character, or observing and describing salient points, either in persons or things." Thus it can be inferred that Mrs. Fairfax's description of Mr. Rochester seemed deficient to the speaker. Option A does not key because Mrs. Fairfax's description left the speaker with a desire to "gain a more definite notion of his identity." Options B and D do not key because the passage does not indicate that Mrs. Fairfax gave puzzling or inaccurate information about Mr. Rochester.

8. The correct answer is C. Mrs. Fairfax sees that Mr. Rochester is "a gentleman, a landed proprietor" and she is content knowing only these external facts about Mr. Rochester. The speaker suggests that she, in contrast, would like to know more about Mr. Rochester's identity. Option A does not key because it is true of the speaker rather than of Mrs. Fairfax. Options B and D do not key because no indication is given of either character's judgment or opinion of Mr. Rochester.

9. The correct answer is B, which provides a typical definition of traditional phonics instruction. Choice C is a very general description of whole-language instruction, and A and D represent potential strategies for increasing reading comprehension.

10. The correct answer is A. The excerpt describes important plot events and refers to a major character in Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice.

11. The correct answer is D. Personification involves endowing abstractions, ideas, and inanimate objects with human characteristics or sensibilities. In the second sentence, the sun is described as having the human ability to leave footprints.

12. The correct answer is C. The sentences describe the way the sitters feel during the evening. After a long day of work and being "tongueless, earless, eyeless conveniences all day long," the sitters have reclaimed their autonomy. The words and phrases "lords," "nations," and "sat in judgment" are vivid ways of describing the sitters' sense of power during the evening.

13. The correct answer is D. Zora Neale Hurston is one of the authors associated with the Harlem Renaissance, an African American cultural movement that took place in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s.

14. The correct answer is C. The words in each pair sound alike despite their differences in spelling and meaning. They are homophones.

15. Choice B is the best answer. Because the adjective clause "who do not speak French" is not set off by commas in sentence I, it is restrictive and therefore essential to the meaning of the sentence. In this case, the subject of the sentence—"Americans who do not speak French"—would be simply "Americans" if the adjective clause were deleted. Since "Americans who do not speak French" is clearly a subset of all Americans, choice A cannot be correct. The statement includes nothing to support choice C and contradicts choice D.
16. Choice A is the best answer. In sentence II, the adjective clause “who do not speak French” is set off by commas, and it is therefore nonrestrictive. Grammatically, it provides additional information about the subject, “Americans,” but its omission would not essentially change the meaning of the sentence. The sentence makes the statement that, as a total group, Americans do not speak French and are at a disadvantage in Paris, untrue though that statement may be. Choices B, C, and D either state or imply that some Americans speak French; therefore, these statements cannot be correct.

17. The sentences illustrate how drastically meaning can be changed by the presence or absence of commas. In this case, the meaning of the sentences changes dramatically depending on whether the adjective clauses are nonrestrictive (not essential to the meaning of the sentence) or restrictive (essential to the meaning of the sentence). Since these semantic differences are indicated by commas, the correct choice is A.

18. The correct answer is D. Holistic evaluation is based on the premise that the overall impact of an essay depends on the integration of different elements of writing, such as organization, development, sentence structure, word choice, and mechanics. Holistic evaluators assign a single score to a student essay based on the total effect to which these elements contribute. Holistic evaluation does not rely on a count of errors, as described by choice A, nor does it focus exclusively on one or two specific writing skills, as do the methods of evaluation suggested by choices B and C.

19. The correct answer is A. The terms mentioned are processes and devices associated with generating new ideas and organizing them. These processes and devices would not be associated with proofreading (D). While they might be part of drafting (B) or revising (C), they are most important during the prewriting stage of the writing process.

20. The correct answer is B. The author makes a comparison between science fiction readers and people who love chocolate so much they could be called addicts in order to stress that those who like science fiction cannot get enough of it.

21. Choice B is the best answer. Paragraph I describes three houses standing in a row and relates them to one another according to where in that row each is situated. The words “next to” and “adjacent” are typical of the kinds of words used in descriptions of spatial relationships.

22. Choice A is the best answer. Paragraph II describes a series of events that take place over the course of several months. Words and phrases such as “Weeks before,” “When,” “Then,” and “In the months that followed” relate events sequentially.

23. Choice D is the best answer. The organization of paragraph III reflects an order of increasing importance. The features of the car are arranged from the one that should least affect the prospective buyer’s decision (appearance) to the one that should most influence the buyer’s decision (price). Words such as “more” and “Most” help establish the comparative importance of each feature.

24. The correct answer is B. In the excerpt, Conroy discusses his experience as a writer. He compares it both to being a trapeze artist in a high wire act and to being a lepidopterist collecting bugs. Thus he uses analogies to explain his experience. A is incorrect because the author provides only one explanation for why he writes: to explain his life to himself. C and D are incorrect because the author neither discusses other writers nor various phases of his life as a writer.
Sample Constructed-Response Questions

This section presents sample questions and constructed-response samples along with the standards used in scoring the essays. When you read these sample responses, keep in mind that they will be less polished than if they had been developed at home, edited, and carefully presented. Examinees do not know what questions will be asked and must decide, on the spot, how to respond. Readers take these circumstances into account when scoring the responses.

Readers will assign scores based on the following scoring guide:

**GENERAL SCORING GUIDE**

3  The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the content
   • Analyzes the specified literary elements in the selection accurately and with some depth
   • Shows a sound understanding of the selection
   • Supports points with appropriate examples from the selection and explains how the examples support those points
   • Is coherent and demonstrates control of language, including diction and syntax
   • Demonstrates facility with the conventions of standard written English

2  The response demonstrates a basic or general understanding of the content
   • Analyzes the specified literary elements in the selection with overall accuracy but may overlook or misinterpret some elements
   • Demonstrates understanding of the selection but may contain some misreadings
   • Supports points with appropriate examples from the selection but may fail to explain how the examples support those points
   • Is coherent and demonstrates control of language, including diction and syntax
   • Displays control of the conventions of standard written English but may have some flaws

1  The response demonstrates a weak understanding of the content and is flawed in one or more of the following ways:
   • Incorrectly identifies literary elements in the selection or provides a superficial analysis of those elements
   • Demonstrates an insufficient or inaccurate understanding of the selection
   • Fails to support points with appropriate examples from the selection
   • Lacks coherence or has serious problems with the control of language, including diction and syntax
   • Contains serious and persistent writing errors

0  The response demonstrates no understanding of the content and is seriously flawed in one or more of the following ways:
   • Doesn’t identify literary elements in the selection or doesn’t provide any analysis of those elements
   • Demonstrates a completely inaccurate understanding of the selection
   • Is incoherent, or contains writing errors so egregious that comprehension is impeded
   Also receiving a score of 0 would be any responses that are blank, completely off-topic, or not written in English.
Question 1

Analysis: Interpreting Literature

Read carefully the following poem by Elizabeth Bishop. Then, using specific examples from the text, discuss how Bishop’s use of irony and repetition develops the narrator’s views on “the art of losing.”

One Art

The art of losing isn’t hard to master; so many things seem filled with the intent to be lost that their loss is no disaster.

Lose something every day. Accept the fluster of lost door keys, the hour badly spent. The art of losing isn’t hard to master.

Then practice losing further, losing faster: places, and names, and where it was you meant to travel. None of these will bring disaster.

I lost my mother’s watch. And look! my last, or next-to-last, of three loved houses went. The art of losing isn’t hard to master.

I lost two cities, lovely ones. And, vaster, some realms I owned, two rivers, a continent. I miss them, but it wasn’t a disaster.

—Even losing you (the joking voice, a gesture I love) I shan’t have lied. It’s evident the art of losing’s not too hard to master though it may look like (Write it!) like disaster.


Sample Response That Received a Score of 3:

In her poem “One Art,” Elizabeth Bishop comments in an increasingly ironic way on losing things. She begins by inverting the usual definition of loss, that instead of its being terrible, she calls it an “art” and claims that it is not “hard to master.” This immediately makes one think: of course losing things isn’t hard to master, and, if that is so, why say it? What is Bishop getting at by stating the obvious in just this way? The answer to that question is, I think, the beginning of the increasingly strong irony in the poem. Bishop’s losses begin small—door keys or “the hour badly spent”—and escalate to lost homes, rivers and continents, culminating in the revelation that her most significant loss, a loved one, is being equated to all of those others, that this loss, too, monumental and deeply felt as it is, has been neither “too hard to master” nor “a disaster.” The form and structure of the poem provide a rich opportunity for the use of a repeated message captured in repeated rhyme with the effect that the poem begins by being playful and ends with the resonance of the speaker’s most significant loss. And at the end, the speaker must deal with losing the loved one which, like all of the other losses, had “the intent to be lost.” Perhaps this is Bishop’s most poignant message since the line suggests that nothing is permanent, no matter how important or loved. Something in the act of possession disallows permanence.

Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 3:

This is a successful response because it analyzes accurately and with some depth how Bishop uses irony and repetition to explore “the art of losing.” The response states that the speaker inverts the “usual definition of loss” by calling it an “art” and claiming that it is “not hard to master.” The response then questions why the speaker would state the “obvious” and indicates that this is where the “increasingly strong irony” comes in. In order to support the point about irony, the response indicates how the losses in the passage grow increasingly more significant until the thing that is lost is a loved one. Here the “playful” irony of the poem begins to falter as the poem “ends with the resonance of the speaker’s most significant loss.” Thus, the response accurately identifies the speaker’s sad feelings about loss. The response also received a score of 3 because it supports its points with appropriate examples from the poem. For example, when stating that “Bishop’s losses begin small,” but then “escalate,” the response offers the examples of “door keys or ‘the hour badly spent’” and “lost homes, rivers and continents.”
Sample Response That Received a Score of 2:

The narrator titled the poem “One Art,” which implies on some level that there is an art to whatever is being discussed. If something is an art, generally it requires practice and repetition to become good at it. The irony about the art of losing, however, is that it isn’t hard to get good at it. The examples given in the poem—losing keys, forgetting names of people and places, and where you are going, and losing a watch that belonged to her mother. She says, however, that she can accept losing these things—disaster hasn’t struck from losing names or objects, and nothing bad has happened from simply losing an hour looking for her keys or being lost. The poem takes a turn after she loses her mother’s watch—then she refers to losing a house, some cities, two rivers, and a continent. The irony, again, is that, just like losing her keys, this wasn’t a disaster either. The repetition of the lines, “the art of losing isn’t hard to master,” and another line about “no disaster” or “it wasn’t a disaster” or “none of these will bring disaster”—the repetition of these lines emphasizes that the author is not disturbed by her losses. At least, not the loss of “things.” But in the last stanza, the repetition and irony stops, except for “the art of losing isn’t hard to master”—but then she throws in a qualifier—“though it may look like disaster.” So losing something is easy—and it’s not a disaster—it just looks like one when the loss is the “you” she is referring to in the poem. The “you” could be a person, or the “joking voice” could be her wit and clever way of saying things and she is experiencing writer's block.

Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 2:

While recognizing that there is a shift in the last stanza and mentioning the “qualifier” “though,” this response basically offers a general understanding of Bishop’s use of irony and repetition to explore “the art of losing.” The response does identify the use of repetition and how the statement “The art of losing isn’t hard to master” is applied to increasingly more significant things. However, the response fails to point out the irony of the repetition and also contains a misinterpretation of the end of the poem: it incorrectly identifies the “joking voice” as the speaker’s “wit and clever way of saying things.” Additionally, the response claims that the speaker may be experiencing “writer’s block,” a reading that is not supported by the poem at all. The response fails to point out that the “you” in the last stanza is most likely another person that the speaker deeply regrets losing.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 1:

Bishop uses irony and repetition to develop a clear statement of losing. Her irony introduces itself in the opening line, “The art of losing isn’t hard to master”. Then, she continues by repeating this phrase in the second, fourth, and sixth stanzas, which creates an equal balance to the phrases of “no disaster”, which are repeated in the third, fifth, and sixth stanzas. The repetition creates an easy, welcoming flow and the irony is genius. Winning takes so much effort, but losing is viewed negatively and “isn’t hard to master”. The undesirable things in life, such as losing or bad luck, come easy to us; therein, lies the irony and the author’s message.

Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 1:

This response reveals a weak and flawed analysis of how Bishop uses irony and repetition to explore the “art of losing.” The response indicates that Bishop repeats the statement “The art of losing isn’t hard to master” but fails to connect that repetition to the ironic tone or the content of the poem. The response also makes general statements and fails to support them with details from the poem, such as “The repetition creates an easy, welcoming flow.” Overall the response offers an insufficient understanding of the speaker’s feelings about loss.
**Question 2**

**Analysis: Evaluating Rhetorical Features**

Read carefully the following excerpt from an essay by George Orwell. Then, in your own words, identify the main idea in the passage and explain how the method of development and the style (for example, word choice, figurative language, and tone) clarify and support the main idea. Be sure to refer to specific examples from the excerpt in your discussion.

In our time it is broadly true that political writing is bad writing. Where it is not true, it will generally be found that the writer is some kind of rebel, expressing his private opinions and not a “party line.” Orthodoxy, of whatever color, seems to demand a lifeless, imitative style. The political dialects to be found in pamphlets, leading articles, manifestos, White Papers, and the speeches of undersecretaries do, of course, vary from party to party, but they are all alike in that one almost never finds in them a fresh, vivid, home-made turn of speech. When one watches some tired hack on the platform mechanically repeating the familiar phrases—bestial atrocities, iron heel, bloodstained tyranny, free peoples of the world, stand shoulder to shoulder—one often has a curious feeling that one is not watching a live human being but some kind of dummy; a feeling which suddenly becomes stronger at moments when the light catches the speaker’s spectacles and turns them into blank discs which seem to have no eyes behind them.

**Sample Response That Received a Score of 3:**

Orwell is saying that political writing is derivative and soulless. He brings the reader to this idea chiefly through the words he uses, such as: lifeless, imitative, tired, mechanical, familiar, dummy, and blank. All these words conjure up images of anything but lively writing. Orwell also writes in an accusatory tone, beginning this passage by saying that political writing is bad writing. The tone helps to cement the idea that political writing is deficient because it is judgmental. He taps into the experience of the readers by mentioning phrases that are used by political pundits continuously. Orwell also reminds the reader that this experience is not unique to any particular political group because it exists in every party. He also mentions that only passionate rebels produce good political writing because they are speaking from private opinion, not regurgitating party rhetoric. Overall, Orwell uses these writing strategies to paint most political literature as having no life in it because it is usually the mechanical parroting of speech points torn directly from the hive mind of the party and their deeply entrenched canon.

**Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 3:**

The response received a score of 3 because it provides a thoughtful and thorough analysis of Orwell’s method of development. The response begins by correctly identifying the main idea. It then goes on to mention Orwell’s word choice and how these words do not evoke “lively writing” for the reader. It also indicates that Orwell’s tone is “accusatory” and that this tone helps “cement the idea that political writing is deficient.” Additionally the response indicates that Orwell uses examples that will be familiar to readers to help persuade them of his point of view. It ends by alluding to the image of the dummy—“mechanical parroting of speech points torn directly from the hive mind of the party.” Overall the response does a very good job of discussing Orwell’s word choice, tone, and use of figurative language to develop his main idea.

**Sample Response That Received a Score of 2:**

The main idea of the passage is that political writing of the time is “bad” writing. Orwell backs up this opening statement with specific examples of political writing such as pamphlets, leading articles and manifestos. Orwell points out that the politicians leading on writers contribute to this orthodox imitative style. Orwell points out the lack of “fresh, homespun” speeches contribute to this bad political writing. There are variances between parties, but one sees the same thing over and over. Orwell concludes that this reading of someone else’s work makes the politician seem less human and this contributes to the dehumanizing world.

**Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 2:**

The response received a score of 2 because it identifies the main idea—“that political writing of the time is ‘bad’ writing”—but overlooks some elements since it does not explore with any depth how Orwell uses tone, word choice, and figurative language to present that idea. The response
does provide examples from the selection but does not adequately connect them to Orwell’s method of development. Rather the examples serve to convey a summary rather than an analysis of the selection. For example, the response does not connect Orwell’s choice of words to his negative, critical tone.

**Sample Response That Received a Score of 1:**

The main idea of this passage is that the political writing is boring and does not stem from the person but from the “party.” His tone is not bossy and his word choice conveys his idea in a positive way. For example in line 3 he uses “some kind of rebel.” That choice of words doesn’t turn anyone off from reading this essay. Another example is found in line 9 when he says “some kind of dummy.”

**Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 1:**

This response lacks any analysis of Orwell’s method of presenting his main idea in the selection. Although the response does offer a fairly accurate restatement of the main idea of the selection, it does not go on to explore how this idea is developed. The response offers examples but does not connect them to any of Orwell’s points. There is no attempt made to explain how Orwell uses word choice, tone, and figurative language to develop his idea that most political writing is bad.