

AP[®] ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION
2007 SCORING COMMENTARY (Form B)

Question 2

Sample: 2A

Score: 8

This is a tightly constructed response to the question. The student notes that Deane discusses two different pieces of writing and considers their impact on him as a young boy, but ultimately the essay does not comment on which he thought was better. The student points to some of the specific features of each piece of writing: in the first case, the exquisite blend of “wild weather, danger, adventure, and love” is Deane’s “main impression of the novel.” The student notes that Deane or the speaker imaginatively enters the novel, describing his own imaginary conversation with the beautiful heroine, reshaping the story and thus opening up its “endless possibilities.” The student then discusses the second piece of writing, remarking that while Deane invokes the English teacher’s comment about how good the model essay was, this commentary is not necessary, because Deane “shows . . . ‘just telling the truth’ is what he does.” The idea that Deane’s essay itself models what it presents as the hallmarks of good writing is an important insight, although it arrives at the end of the essay and is asserted but not defended. This controlled essay, though not without some flaws, is itself an example of good writing.

Sample: 2B

Score: 6

The essay begins with unpersuasive discussion of examples of both diction and sentence structure, but it develops into a competent analysis of Deane’s style and how he conveys the impact of early experiences of reading. In a reflexive comment, the student points out that “most experienced writers are taught to ‘show not tell.’” The student then analyzes what he or she shows us, observing that Deane arrives at a “simple truth”: that “‘ordinary life’” affords the greatest pleasure. The essay’s insights are not stellar, but they are presented with clarity and control.

Sample: 2C

Score: 3

This essay has a somewhat promising opening that paraphrases the question prompt and then indicates that in the passage Deane “discusses his early years, and how his imagination had carried him into the world of a story.” The rest of the response, however, is largely a retelling of the events in the passage, with fairly obvious conclusions about the impact of the two experiences Deane describes: “The passage discusses how the simple honest essay . . . is better than imagining. And the poet shows how this incident affects him, and allows him to come back to reality.” The student does attempt to integrate textual evidence but does so awkwardly: “‘I felt embarrassed’ is what the poet writes to show his emotions on [*sic*] the incident.” In sum, this response lacks the insightful analysis and controlled writing found in essays in the upper-half of the scoring range.