

# CHAPTER

# 4

## Section I of the Exam: The Multiple-Choice Questions

### IN THIS CHAPTER

**Summary:** Become comfortable with the multiple-choice section of the exam. If you know what to expect, you can prepare.

#### KEY IDEA

#### Key Ideas

- ✦ Review the types of multiple-choice questions asked on the exam
- ✦ Learn strategies for approaching the multiple-choice questions
- ✦ Prepare yourself for the multiple-choice section of the exam
- ✦ Take the multiple-choice section of the exam
- ✦ Score yourself by checking the answer key and explanations for the multiple-choice section of the diagnostic/master exam

### Introduction to the Multiple-Choice Section of the Exam

Multiple choice? Multiple guess? Multiple anxiety? The day after the exam students often bemoan the difficulties and uncertainties of Section I of the AP Literature exam.

“It’s unfair.”

“It’s crazy.”

“Was that in English?”

“Did you get four Ds in a row for the second poem?”

“I just closed my eyes and pointed.”

Is it really possible to avoid these and other exam woes? We hope that by following along with us in this chapter you will begin to feel a bit more familiar with the world of

multiple-choice questions and, thus, become a little more comfortable with the multiple-choice section of the exam.

### What is it about the multiple-choice questions that causes such anxiety?

Basically, a multiple-choice literature question is a flawed method of gauging understanding because, by its very nature, it forces you to play a cat-and-mouse game with the test maker who demands that you concentrate on items that are incorrect before you can choose what is correct. We know, however, that complex literature has a richness that allows for ambiguity. When you are taking the exam, you are expected to match someone else's take on a work with the answers you choose. This is what often causes the student to feel that the multiple-choice section is unfair. And maybe, to a degree, it is. However, the test is designed to allow you to shine, *not* to be humiliated. To that end, you will not find "cutesy" questions, and the test writers will not play games with you. What they will do is to present several valid options as a response to a challenging and appropriate question. These questions are designed to separate the perceptive and thoughtful reader from the superficial and impulsive one.

This said, it's wise to develop a strategy for success. Practice is the key to this success. You've been confronted with all types of multiple-choice questions during your career as a student. The test-taking skills you have learned in your social studies, math, and science classes may also apply to the AP Literature exam.

### What should I expect in Section I?

For this first section of the AP Literature exam, you are allotted 1 hour to answer between 45 and 60 objective questions on four or five prose and poetry selections. The prose passages may come from works of fiction, or nonfiction, or drama. You can expect the poems to be complete and from different time periods and of different styles and forms. In other words, you will not find two Shakespearean sonnets on the same exam.

These are *not* easy readings. They are representative of the college-level work you have been doing throughout the year. You will be expected to

- Follow sophisticated syntax
- Respond to diction
- Be comfortable with upper-level vocabulary
- Be familiar with literary terminology
- Make inferences
- Be sensitive to irony and tone
- Recognize components of style

The good news is that the selection is self-contained. This means that if it is about the Irish Potato Famine, you will not be at a disadvantage if you know nothing about it prior to the exam. Frequently there will be biblical references in a selection. This is especially true of works from an earlier time period. You are expected to be aware of basic allusions to biblical and mythological works often found in literature, but the passage will never require you to have any specific religious background.

*Do not let the subject matter of a passage throw you.* Strong analytical skills will work on any passage.

## How should I begin to work with Section I?

STRATEGY

Take no more than a minute and thumb through the exam, looking for the following:

- The length of the selections
- The time periods or writing styles, if you can recognize them
- The number of questions asked
- A quick idea of the type of questions

This brief skimming of the test will put your mind into gear because you will be aware of what is expected of you.

## How should I proceed through this section of the exam?

Timing is important. Always maintain an awareness of the time. Wear a watch. (Some students like to put it directly in front of them on the desk.) Remember, this will not be your first encounter with the multiple-choice section of the test. You've probably been practicing timed exams in class; in addition, this book provides you with three timed experiences. We're sure you will notice improvements as you progress through the timed practice activities.

Although the test naturally breaks into 15 minute sections, you may take less or more time on a particular passage, but you must know when to move on. The test does not become more difficult as it progresses. So, you will want to give yourself adequate opportunity to answer each set of questions.

✦ Work at a pace of about one question per minute. Every question is worth the same number of points, so don't get bogged down on those that involve multiple tasks. Don't panic if a question is beyond you. Remember, it will probably be beyond a great number of other students as well. There has to be a bar that determines the 5's and 4's for this exam. Just do your best.

Reading the text carefully is a must. Begin at the beginning and work your way through. Do not waste time reading questions before you read the selection.

Most people read just with their eyes. We want you to slow down and read with your senses of sight, sound, and touch.

- Underline, circle, bracket, or highlight the text. *Talk to the Text*
- Read closely, paying attention to punctuation and rhythms of the lines or sentences.
- Read as if you were reading the passage aloud to an audience emphasizing meaning and intent.
- As corny as it may seem, hear those words in your head.
- This technique may seem childish, but it works. Using your finger as a pointer, underscore the line as you are reading it aloud in your head. This forces you to slow down and to really notice the text. This will be helpful when you have to refer to the passage.
- Use all the information given to you about the passage, such as title, author, date of publication, and footnotes.
- Be aware of foreshadowing.
- Be aware of thematic lines and be sensitive to details that will obviously be material for multiple-choice questions.
- When reading poetry, pay particular attention to enjambment and end-stopped lines because they carry meaning.
- With poetry, it's often helpful to paraphrase a stanza, especially if the order of the lines has been inverted.

*"Creating my own multiple-choice questions was a terrific help to me when it came to doing close readings and correctly answering multiple-choice questions on the exam."*

—Bill N.  
AP student

STRATEGY



You can practice these techniques any time. Take any work and read it aloud. Time yourself. A good rate is about 1½ minutes per page.

## Types of Multiple-Choice Questions



Multiple-choice questions are not written randomly. There are certain formats you will encounter. The answers to the following questions should clarify some of the patterns.

### Is the structure the same for all of the multiple-choice questions?

No. Here are several basic patterns that the AP test makers often employ:

1. **The straightforward question**, such as:
  - The poem is an example of a
    - C. lyric
  - The word “smooth” refers to
    - B. his skin
2. **The question that refers you to specific lines and asks you to draw a conclusion or to interpret.**
  - Lines 52–57 serve to
    - A. reinforce the author’s thesis
3. **The “all . . . except” question** requires extra time because it demands that you consider every possibility.
  - The AP Literature exam is all of the following *except*:
    - A. It is given in May of each year.
    - B. It is open to high school seniors.
    - C. It is published in *The New York Times*.
    - D. It is used as a qualifier for college credit.
    - E. It is a 3-hour test.
4. **The question that asks you to make an inference or to abstract a concept that is not directly stated in the passage.**
  - In the poem “My Last Duchess,” the reader can infer that the speaker is
    - E. arrogant
5. Here is the killer question. It uses **Roman Numerals**, no less! The question employing Roman numerals is problematic and time-consuming. You can be certain that each exam will have several of these questions.
  - In the poem, “night” refers to
    - I. the death of the maiden
    - II. a pun on Sir Lancelot’s title
    - III. the end of the affair
    - A. I only
    - B. I and II
    - C. I and III
    - D. II and III
    - E. I, II, and III

★  
Skip  
if these  
cause you  
problems

This is the type of question to skip if it causes you problems and/or you are short on time. Remember, it will cost you a quarter of a point if you are wrong and 0 if you skip it. (An explanation of how the exam is scored appears later in this chapter.)

### What kinds of questions should I expect on the exam?

The multiple-choice questions center around form and content. The test makers want to assess your understanding of the meaning of the selection as well as your ability to draw inferences and perceive implications based on it. They also want to know whether you understand *how* a writer develops his or her ideas.

The questions, therefore, will be factual, technical, analytical, and inferential. The two tables that follow illustrate the types of key words and phrases in these four categories that you can expect to find in questions for both the prose and poetry selections.

*Note: Do not memorize these tables.* Also, do not panic if a word or phrase is unfamiliar to you. You may or may not encounter any or all of these words or phrases on any given exam. You can, however, count on meeting up with many of these in the practice exams in this book.



Prose: Key Words and Phrases found in Multiple-Choice Questions

FACTUAL	TECHNICAL	ANALYTICAL	INFERENTIAL
words refer to	sentence structure	rhetorical strategy	effect of diction
allusions	style	shift in development	tone
antecedents	grammatical purpose	rhetorical stance	inferences
pronoun referents	dominant technique	style	effect of last paragraph
genre	imagery	metaphor	effect on reader
setting	point of view	contrast	narrator's attitude
	organization of passage	comparison	image suggests
	narrative progress of passage	cause/effect	effect of detail
	conflict	argument	author implies
	irony	description	author most concerned with
	function of	narration	symbol
		specific-general	
		how something is characterized	
imagery			
passage is primarily concerned with			
function of			

## Poetry: Key Words and Phrases found in Multiple-Choice Questions

FACTUAL	TECHNICAL	ANALYTICAL	INFERENTIAL
all except	imagery	character portrayal	mood
definition	literary devices	imagery	attitude of
thesis	paradox	literary devices	poet's attitude
sequence of events	organizational pattern	paradox	purpose of
the object of ___ is ___	syntax	purpose of	tone of the poem
allusion	metrics	rhetorical shifts	theme of the poem
the subject of dramatic situation	parallel structure	ironies presented	reader may infer
	rhetorical shifts	least important	best interpreted as
paraphrasing	ironies presented	most important	effect of diction
subject	function of diction		speaker implies
references	dramatic moment		___ is associated with ___
	meaning conveyed by	context	
			symbol



*A word about jargon.* Jargon refers to words that are unique to a specific subject. A common language is important for communication, and there must be agreement on the basic meanings of terms. Even though it is important to know the universal language of a subject, it is also important that you *not* limit the scope of your thinking to a brief definition. All the terms used in the tables are interwoven in literature. They are categorized only for easy reference. They also work in many other contexts. *In other words, think beyond the box.*

## Scoring the Multiple-Choice Section

It may be an English exam, but math is a necessary evil when it comes to tabulating the score.

### How does the scoring of the multiple-choice section work?

The scan sheet containing your answers is run through a computer that counts the number of wrong answers and subtracts a fraction of that number from the number of correct answers. The AP Lit questions always have five choices. Therefore, the fraction would be one-fourth. A question left blank receives a zero. The following is what the formula for this calculation looks like:

$$\text{number right} - (\text{number wrong} \times .25) = \text{raw score rounded up or down to nearest whole number}$$

Let's work with a fictional scoring situation. Assume there were 55 multiple-choice questions, and you answered 40 correctly and 15 incorrectly. You did not leave any question blank.

$$40 - (15 \times .25) = 40 - 3.75 = 36.25 = 36$$

Thus 36 is your raw score for the multiple-choice section of the exam. This raw score, which is 45 percent of the total, is combined with that of the essay section to make up a composite score. This is then manipulated to form a scale on which the final AP grade is based. For each of the practice multiple-choice sections in this book you will have a chance to practice this formula to obtain your score.

## Strategies for Answering the Multiple-Choice Questions

You've been answering multiple-choice questions most of your academic life, and you've probably figured out ways to deal with them. However, there may be some points you have not considered that will be helpful for this particular exam.

### General Guidelines



- Work in order. This is a good approach for several reasons:
  - It's clear.
  - You will not lose your place on the scan sheet.
  - There may be a logic to working sequentially that will help you answer previous questions. But, this is your call. If you are more comfortable moving around the exam, do so.
- Write on the exam booklet. Mark it up. Make it yours. Interact with the test.
- Do not spend too much time on any one question.
- Focus on your strengths. If you are more comfortable working with poetry, answer the poetry questions first.
- Don't be misled by the length or appearance of a selection. There is no correlation between length or appearance and the difficulty of the questions.
- Don't fight the question or the passage. You may know other information about the subject of the text or a question. It's irrelevant. Work within the given context.
- \* • Consider all the choices in a given question. This will keep you from jumping to a false conclusion. It helps you to slow down and to really look at each possibility. You may find that your first choice is not the best or most appropriate one.
- Maintain an open mind as you answer subsequent questions in a series. Sometimes the answer to a later question will contradict your answer to a previous one. Reconsider both answers. Also, the phrasing of a question may point to an answer in a previous question.
- Remember that all parts of an answer must be correct.
- When in doubt, go to the text.

### Specific Techniques

- **Process of elimination:** This is your primary tool, except for direct knowledge of the answer.
  1. Read the five choices.
  2. If no choice immediately strikes you as correct, you can
    - Eliminate those that are obviously wrong
    - Eliminate those choices that are too narrow or too broad
    - Eliminate illogical choices
    - Eliminate answers that are synonymous
    - Eliminate answers that cancel each other out

Elimination



2 Correct  
Answers \*

3. If two answers are close, do one *or* the other of the following:

- Find the one that is general enough to cover all aspects of the question
- Find the one that is limited enough to be the detail the question is looking for

• **Substitution/fill in the blank**

1. Rephrase the question, leaving a blank where the answer should go.
2. Use each of the choices to fill in the blank until you find the one that is the best fit.

• **Using context**

1. Consider the context when the question directs you to specific lines, words, or phrases.
2. Locate the given word, phrase, sentence, or poetic line and read the sentence or line before and after the section of the text to which the question refers. Often this provides the information or clues you need to make your choice.

- **Anticipation:** As you read the passage for the first time, mark any details and ideas that you would ask a question about. You may be able to anticipate the test makers this way.
- **Intuition or the educated guess:** You have a wealth of skills and knowledge in your literary subconscious. A question or a choice may trigger a “remembrance of things past.” This can be the basis for your educated guess. Have the confidence to use the educated guess as a valid technique. Trust your own resources.

Good TIP



### Survival Plan

If time is running out and you haven't finished the fourth selection:

1. Scan the remaining questions and look for:
  - The shortest questions
  - The questions that direct you to a specific line.
2. Look for specific detail/definition questions.
3. Look for self-contained questions. For example: “The sea slid silently from the shore” is an example of C. alliteration. You do not have to go to the passage to answer this question.

### If I don't know an answer, should I guess?

If you do the math, you will see that a wrong answer is worth  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a point. Thus, you would have to miss four questions to lose a full point. THEREFORE, WE AND THE AP TEST MAKERS URGE YOU TO TRY TO ANSWER EVERY QUESTION. You can't be seriously hurt by making *educated guesses* based on a careful reading of the selection.

Be smart. Understand that you need to come to this exam well prepared. You must have a foundation of knowledge and skills. You cannot guess through the entire exam and expect to do well.

This is not lotto. This book is **not** about how to “beat the exam.” We want to maximize the skills you already have. There is an inherent integrity in this exam and your participation in it. With this in mind, when there is no other direction open to you, it is perfectly fine to make an educated guess.



## Is there anything special I should know about preparing for the prose multiple-choice questions?

After you have finished with the Diagnostic/Master exam, you will be familiar with the format and types of questions asked on the AP Lit exam. However, just practicing answering multiple-choice questions on specific works will not give you a complete understanding of this questioning process. We suggest the following to help you hone your multiple-choice answering skills with prose multiple-choice questions:

- Choose a challenging passage from a full-length prose work.
- Read the selection a couple of times and create several multiple-choice questions about specific sections of the selection.
- Make certain the section is self-contained and complex.
- Choose a dialogue, monologue; introductory setting, set description, stage directions, philosophical passage, significant event, or a moment of conflict.
- Create a variety of question types based on the previous chart.
- Refer to the prose table given earlier in this chapter for suggested language and type.
- Administer your miniquiz to a classmate, study group, or class.
- Evaluate your results.
- Repeat this process through several different full-length works during your preparation for the exam. The works can certainly come from those you are studying in class.

Here's what should happen as a result of your using this process:

- Your expectation level for the selections in the actual test will be more realistic.
- You will become familiar with the language of multiple-choice questions.
- Your understanding of the process of choosing answers will be heightened.
- Questions you write that you find less than satisfactory will trigger your analytical skills as you attempt to figure out "what went wrong."
- Terminology will become more accurate.
- *Bonus:* If you continue to do this work throughout your preparation for the AP exam, you will have created a mental storehouse of literary information. So when you are presented with a prose or free-response essay in Section II, you will have an extra resource at your disposal.

### Your Turn

#### To Do:

1. Circle/highlight/underline the words and/or phrases that appear to be important for the meaning of the excerpt.
2. Carefully consider each of the given sample questions.
3. Construct your own question that is an example of the specific type.

#### from Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*

*Sometimes we'd have the whole river all to ourselves for the longest time. Yonder was the banks and the islands, across the water; and maybe a spark—which was a candle in a cabin window—and sometimes on the water you could see a spark or two—on a raft or a scow, you know; and maybe you could hear a fiddle or a song coming over from one of them crafts. It's lovely to live on a raft. We had the sky, up there, all speckled with stars, and we used to lay on our backs and look up at*



*"One of my biggest challenges in preparing for the exam was to learn not to jump to conclusions when I was doing the multiple-choice questions."*

—Samantha S.  
AP student



*them, and discuss about whether they was made, or only just happened—Jim he allowed they was made, but I allowed they happened; I judged it would have took too long to make so many. Jim said the moon could a laid them; well, that looked kind of reasonable, so I didn't say nothing against it, because I've seen a frog lay most as many, so of course it could be done. We used to watch the stars that fell, too, and see them streak down. Jim allowed they'd got spoiled and was hove out of the nest.*

10

Title: *Huckleberry Finn*

Author: Mark Twain

Type of passage: Narrative description

**Sample Factual Question:** In lines 10–11, “I’ve seen a frog lay most as many” refers to

Answer: stars

Rationale: The implied comparison has Huck inferring that the number of stars in the sky is similar to the number of eggs a frog lays.

**Your Factual Question:**

Answer:

Rationale:

**Sample Technical Question:** A primary function of the sentence “It’s lovely to live on a raft” is

Answer: to contrast with the lyrical description in the passage

Rationale: The straightforward break in the middle of the passage emphasizes the key point of the description.

**Your Technical Question:**

Answer:

Rationale:

**Sample Analytical Question:** The primary purpose of using dialect is most likely to

Answer: reinforce the innocence and natural state of Huck and Jim

Rationale: The regional dialect illustrates the lack of the stereotypical education and background of the period.

**Your Analytical Question:**

Answer:

Rationale:

**Sample Inferential Question:** The tone of the passage can best be described as

Answer: nostalgic and philosophical

Rationale: The diction supports their reverie and their curiosity about their place in the universe.

**Your Inferential Question:**

Answer:

Rationale:

### Is there anything special I should do to prepare for the poetry questions?

The points made about prose hold true for the poetry multiple-choice questions as well. But there are a few specific pointers that may prove helpful:

- Choose thoughtful and interesting poems of some length. (See our suggested reading list.)
- Read the poem several times. Practice reading the poems aloud.
- The greatest benefit will be that as you read any poem, you will automatically begin to respond to areas of the poem that would lend themselves to a multiple-choice question.



Good Suggestion

• Here is a list of representative poets you may want to read.

- Shakespeare
- John Donne
- Philip Larkin
- Emily Dickinson
- Sylvia Plath
- Dylan Thomas
- May Swenson
- Theodore Roethke
- Sharon Olds
- Billy Collins
- Pablo Neruda
- Richard Wilbur
- Adrienne Rich
- Edmund Spenser
- W. H. Auden
- W. B. Yeats
- Gwendolyn Brooks
- Elizabeth Bishop
- Langston Hughes
- Galway Kinnell
- Marianne Moore
- May Sarton

You might want to utilize this process throughout the year with major works studied in and out of class and keep track of your progress. See the Bibliography of this book.

**Your Turn**

To Do:



4. Circle/highlight/underline the words and/or phrases that appear to be important for the meaning of the poem.
5. Carefully consider each of the given sample questions.
6. Construct your own question that is an example of the specific type.

**It Sifts from Leaden Sieves**

By Emily Dickinson

It sifts from leaden sieves,  
 It powders all the wood,  
 It fills with alabaster wool  
 The wrinkles of the road.

It makes an even face 5  
 Of mountain and of plain, –  
 Unbroken forehead from the east  
 Unto the east again.

It reaches to the fence,  
 It wraps it, rail by rail, 10  
 Till it is lost in fleeces,  
 It flings a crystal veil

On stump and stack and stem, –  
 The summer's empty room,  
 Acres of seams where harvests were, 15  
 Recordless, but for them.

It ruffles wrists of posts,  
As ankles of a queen, –  
Then stills its artisans like ghosts,  
Denying they have been.

20

Title: "It Sifts from Leaden Sieves"

Poet: Emily Dickinson

**Sample Factual Question:** The subject of the poem's dramatic situation is

Answer: the falling snow

Rationale: The images all support the snow metaphor.

**Your Factual Question:**

Answer:

Rationale:

**Sample Technical Question:** The primary literary device used in the poem is

Answer: metaphor

Rationale: Metaphor is used in every stanza.

**Your Technical Question:**

Answer:

Rationale:

**Sample Analytical Question:** Paradox is most readily seen in

Answer: the softness imagery vs. the last two lines of the poem

Rationale: There is a shift from description to the effect of the cold in the last two lines.

**Your Analytical Question:**

Answer:

Rationale:

**Sample Inferential Question:** Based on the poem, the reader could infer that

Answer: the power of nature is all encompassing

Rationale: Nothing in the poem is excluded from the power of the snow.

**Your Inferential Question:**

Answer:

Rationale:

### The Time Is at Hand

It is now time to try the Diagnostic/Master exam, Section I. Do this section in *one* sitting. Time yourself! Be honest with yourself when you score your answers.

*Note:* If the 1 hour passes before you finish all the questions, stop where you are and score what you have done up to this point. Afterwards, answer the remaining questions, but do not count the answers as part of your score.

When you have completed all the multiple-choice questions in this Diagnostic/Master exam, carefully read the explanations of the answers. Spend time here and assess which types of questions give you trouble. Use this book to learn from your mistakes.

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## ANSWER SHEET FOR DIAGNOSTIC MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

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- |           |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____  | 13. _____ | 25. _____ | 37. _____ |
| 2. _____  | 14. _____ | 26. _____ | 38. _____ |
| 3. _____  | 15. _____ | 27. _____ | 39. _____ |
| 4. _____  | 16. _____ | 28. _____ | 40. _____ |
| 5. _____  | 17. _____ | 29. _____ | 41. _____ |
| 6. _____  | 18. _____ | 30. _____ | 42. _____ |
| 7. _____  | 19. _____ | 31. _____ | 43. _____ |
| 8. _____  | 20. _____ | 32. _____ | 44. _____ |
| 9. _____  | 21. _____ | 33. _____ | 45. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 22. _____ | 34. _____ | 46. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 23. _____ | 35. _____ | 47. _____ |
| 12. _____ | 24. _____ | 36. _____ |           |

I \_\_\_\_\_ did \_\_\_\_\_ did not finish all the questions in the allotted 1-hour.

I had \_\_\_\_\_ correct answers. I had \_\_\_\_\_ incorrect answers. I left \_\_\_\_\_ questions blank.

Scoring Formula:

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} - \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

number right      -      (number wrong  $\times$  .25)      =      raw score

I have carefully reviewed the explanations of the answers, and I think I need to work on the following types of questions:



## THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE SECTION OF THE DIAGNOSTIC/MASTER EXAM

The multiple-choice section of the Diagnostic/Master exam follows. You have seen the questions in the “walk through” in Chapter 3.

### Advanced Placement Literature and Composition

#### Section 1

Total Time—1 hour

Carefully read the following passages and answer the accompanying questions. Questions 1–10 are based on the following poem.

#### Now Goes Under . . . by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Now goes under, and I watch it go under, the sun  
That will not rise again.  
Today has seen the setting, in your eyes cold  
and senseless as the sea,  
Of friendship better than bread, and of bright charity 5  
That lifts a man a little above the beasts that run.

That this could be!  
That I should live to see  
Most vulgar Pride, that stale obstreperous clown,  
So fitted out with purple robe and crown 10  
To stand among his betters! Face to face  
With outraged me in this once holy place,  
Where Wisdom was a favoured guest and hunted  
Truth was harboured out of danger,  
He bulks enthroned, a lewd, and insupportable stranger! 15

I would have sworn, indeed I swore it:  
The hills may shift, the waters may decline,  
Winter may twist the stem from the twig that bore it,  
But never your love from me, your hand from mine.

Now goes under the sun, and I watch it go under. 20  
Farewell, sweet light, great wonder!  
You, too, farewell—but fare not well enough to dream  
You have done wisely to invite the night before the darkness came.

1. The poem is an example of a(n)
  - A. sonnet
  - B. lyric
  - C. ode
  - D. ballad
  - E. dramatic monologue
2. The setting of the sun is a symbol for
  - A. the beginning of winter
  - B. encountering danger
  - C. the end of a relationship
  - D. facing death
  - E. the onset of night
3. The second stanza is developed primarily by
  - A. metaphor
  - B. simile
  - C. personification
  - D. hyperbole
  - E. allusion
4. "He" in line 15 refers to
  - A. Wisdom
  - B. Truth
  - C. I
  - D. Pride
  - E. charity
5. According to the speaker, what separates man from beast?
  - A. love
  - B. friendship
  - C. charity
  - D. truth
  - E. wisdom
6. For the speaker, the relationship has been all of the following *except*
  - A. honest
  - B. dangerous
  - C. spiritual
  - D. ephemeral
  - E. nourishing
7. The reader can infer from the play on words in the last stanza that the speaker is
  - A. dying
  - B. frantic
  - C. wistful
  - D. bitter
  - E. capricious
8. "This once holy place" (line 12) refers to
  - A. the sunset
  - B. the relationship
  - C. the sea
  - D. the circus
  - E. the Church
9. The cause of the relationship's situation is
  - A. a stranger coming between them
  - B. the lover not taking the relationship seriously
  - C. the lover feeling intellectually superior
  - D. the lover's pride coming between them
  - E. the lover being insensitive
10. The speaker acknowledges the finality of the relationship in line(s)
  - A. 1–2
  - B. 7
  - C. 8
  - D. 16
  - E. 18–19

Questions 11–23 are based on the following passage.

The sea-reach of the Thames stretched before us like the beginning of an interminable waterway. The air was dark above Gravesend, and farther back still seemed condensed into a mournful gloom, brooding motionless over the biggest and the greatest town on earth.

"I was thinking of very old times, when the Romans first came here, nineteen hundred years ago—the other day . . . Light came out of this river since—you say knights? Yes; but it is like a running blaze on a plain, like a flash of lightning in the clouds. We live in the flicker—may it last as long as the old earth keeps rolling! But darkness was here yesterday. Imagine the feelings of a commander of a fine—what d'ye call 'em?—trireme in the Mediterranean, ordered suddenly to the north; run overland across the Gauls in a

5

10

hurry; put in charge of one of these craft the legionnaires—a wonderful lot of handy men they must have been, too—used to build, apparently by the hundred, in a month or two, if we may believe what we read. Imagine him here—the very end of the world, a sea the color of lead, a sky the color of smoke, a kind of ship about as rigid as a concertina—and going up this river with stores, or orders, or what you like. Sandbanks, marshes, forests, savages—precious little to eat for a civilized man, nothing but Thames water to drink. No Falernian wine here, no going ashore. Here and there a military camp lost in a wilderness, like a needle in a bundle of hay—cold, fog, tempests, disease, exile, and death—death skulking in the air, in the water, in the bush. They must have been dying like flies here. Oh yes—he did it. Did it very well, too, no doubt, and without thinking much about it either, except afterwards to brag of what he had gone through in his time, perhaps. They were men enough to face darkness. And perhaps he was cheered by keeping his eye on a chance of promotion to the fleet at Ravenna by and by, if he had good friends in Rome and survived the awful climate. Or think of a decent young citizen in a toga—perhaps too much dice, you know—coming out here in the train of some prefect, or tax-gatherer, or trader even, to mend his fortunes. Land in a swamp, march through the woods, and in some inland post feel the savagery, the utter savagery, had closed round him—all that mysterious life of the wilderness that stirs in the forest, in the jungles, in the hearts of wild men. There's no initiation either into such mysteries. He has to live in the midst of the incomprehensible, which is also detestable. And it has a fascination, too, that goes to work upon him. The fascination of the abomination—you know, imagine the growing regrets, the longing to escape, the powerless disgust, the surrender, the hate.”

He paused.

“Mind,” he began again, lifting one arm from the elbow, the palm of the hand outwards, so that, with his legs folded before him, he had the pose of a Buddha preaching in European clothes and without a lotus flower—“Mind, none of us would feel exactly like this. What saves us is efficiency—the devotion to efficiency. But these chaps were not much account, really. They were no colonists; their administration was merely a squeeze, and nothing more, I suspect. They were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force—nothing to boast of, when you have it, since your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others. They grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale, and men going at it blind—as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness. The conquest of the earth, which mostly means taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look at it too much. What redeems it is the idea only. An idea at the back of it; not a sentimental pretense but an idea; and an unselfish belief in the idea—something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to . . .”

11. In the passage, *darkness* implies all of the following except

- A. the unknown
- B. savagery
- C. ignorance
- D. death
- E. exploration

12. The setting of the passage is

- A. Africa
- B. Ancient Rome
- C. London
- D. the Mediterranean
- E. Italy

13. The tone of the passage is
- condescending
  - indignant
  - scornful
  - pensive
  - laudatory
14. Later events may be foreshadowed by all of the following phrases *except*
- "Imagine the feelings of a commander . . ."
  - " . . . live in the midst of the incomprehensible . . ."
  - " . . . in some inland post feel the savagery . . ."
  - "They must have been dying like flies here."
  - " . . . the very end of the world . . ."
15. The narrator draws a parallel between
- light and dark
  - past and present
  - life and death
  - fascination and abomination
  - decency and savagery
16. In this passage, "We live in the flicker . . ." (lines 7–8) may be interpreted to mean
- In the history of the world, humanity's span on earth is brief.
  - Future civilizations will learn from only a portion of the past.
  - Periods of enlightenment and vision appear only briefly.
- I
  - II
  - III
  - II and III
  - I and III
17. One may conclude from the passage that the speaker
- admires adventurers
  - longs to be a crusader
  - is a former military officer
  - recognizes and accepts the presence of evil in human experience
  - is prejudiced
18. In the context of the passage, which of the following phrases presents a paradox?
- "The fascination of the abomination"
  - " . . . in the hearts of wild men"
  - "There's no initiation . . . into such mysteries . . ."
  - " . . . a flash of lightning in the clouds . . ."
  - " . . . death skulking in the air . . ."
19. The lines "Imagine him here . . . concertina . . ." (lines 13–14) contain examples of
- hyperbole and personification
  - irony and metaphor
  - alliteration and personification
  - parallel structure and simile
  - allusion and simile
20. According to the speaker, the one trait which saves Europeans from savagery is
- sentiment
  - a sense of mystery
  - brute force
  - religious zeal
  - efficiency
21. According to the speaker, the only justification for conquest is
- the "weakness of others"
  - it's being "proper for those who tackle a darkness . . ."
  - their grabbing "what they could get for the sake of what was to be got"
  - " . . . an unselfish belief in the idea . . ."
  - "The fascination of the abomination"
22. In the statement by the speaker, "Mind none of us would feel exactly like this" (line 36), "this" refers to
- " . . . a Buddha preaching in European clothes . . ." (lines 35–36)
  - " . . . imagine the growing regrets . . . the hate." (lines 31–32)
  - "What redeems it is the idea only." (lines 45–46)
  - " . . . think of a decent young citizen in a toga . . ." (line 24)
  - "I was thinking of very old times . . ." (line 5)

23. The speaker presents all of the following reasons for exploration and conquest *except*
- A. military expeditions
  - B. "... a chance of promotion"
  - C. "... to mend his fortunes ..."
  - D. religious commitment
  - E. punishment for a crime

Questions 24–35 are based on the following poem.

That time of year thou mayst in me behold  
 When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang  
 Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,  
 Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.  
 In me thou see'st the twilight of such day 5  
 As after sunset fadeth in the west;  
 Which by and by black night doth take away,  
 Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.  
 In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,  
 That on the ashes of his youth doth lie, 10  
 As the deathbed whereon it must expire,  
 Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.  
 This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,  
 To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

24. "That time of year" (line 1) refers to
- A. youth
  - B. old age
  - C. childhood
  - D. senility
  - E. maturity
25. "Death's second self" (line 8) refers to
- A. "That time of year"
  - B. "sunset fadeth"
  - C. "the west"
  - D. "ruin'd choirs"
  - E. "black night"
26. Line 12 is an example of
- A. paradox
  - B. caesura
  - C. parable
  - D. hyperbole
  - E. metonymy
27. "Twilight of such day" (line 5) is supported by all of the following images except
- A. "sunset fadeth"
  - B. "the glowing of such fire"
  - C. "west"
  - D. "Death's second self"
  - E. "ashes of his youth"
28. "This thou perceiv'st" (line 13) refers to
- A. the beloved's deathbed
  - B. the sorrow of unrequited love
  - C. the passion of youth expiring
  - D. the beloved's acknowledgment of the speaker's mortality
  - E. the speaker sending the lover away
29. The poem is an example of a(n)
- A. elegy
  - B. Spenserian sonnet
  - C. Petrarchan sonnet
  - D. Shakespearean sonnet
  - E. sestina

30. The poem is primarily developed by
- metaphor
  - argument
  - synecdoche
  - alternative choices
  - contradiction
31. The irony of the poem is best expressed in line
- 5
  - 7
  - 10
  - 11
  - 14
32. "It" in line 12 can best be interpreted to mean
- a funeral pyre
  - spent youth
  - the intensity of the speaker's love
  - the impending departure of his beloved
  - the immortality of the relationship
33. An apt title for the poem could be
- Love Me or Leave Me
  - Death Be Not Proud
  - The End Justifies the Means
  - Love's Fall
  - Grow Old Along with Me
34. The tone of the poem can best be described as
- contemplative
  - defiant
  - submissive
  - arbitrary
  - complaining
35. The speaker most likely is
- jealous of the beloved's youth
  - pleased that the lover will leave
  - unable to keep up with the young lover
  - unwilling to face his own mortality
  - responsive to the beloved's constancy

Questions 36–47 are based on the following passage.

### Poets and Language

by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Poets, according to the circumstances of the age and nation in which they appeared, were called, in the earlier epochs of the world, legislators, or prophets: a poet essentially comprises and unites both these characters. For he not only beholds intensely the present as it is, and discovers those laws according to which present things ought to be ordered, but he beholds the future in the present, and his thoughts are the germs of the flower and the fruit of latest time. Not that I assert poets to be prophets in the gross sense of the word, or that they can foretell the form as surely as they foreknow the spirit of events; such is the pretense of superstition, which would make poetry an attribute of prophecy, rather than prophecy an attribute of poetry. A poet participates in the eternal, the infinite, and the one; as far as relates to his conceptions, time and place and number are not. The grammatical forms which express the moods of time, and the difference of persons, and the distinction of place, are convertible with respect to the highest poetry without injuring it as poetry; and the choruses of Aeschylus, and the book of Job, and Dante's Paradise, would afford, more than any other writings, examples of this fact, if the limits of this essay did not forbid citation. The creations of sculpture, painting, and music, are illustrations still more decisive. Language, colour, form, and religious and civil habits of action, are all the instruments and materials of poetry; they may be called poetry by that figure of speech which considers the effect as a synonym for a cause. But poetry in a more restricted sense expresses those arrangements of language, and especially metrical language, which are created by that imperial faculty, whose throne is curtained within the invisible nature of man. And this

springs from the nature itself of language, which is a more direct representation of the actions and passions of our internal being, and is susceptible of more various and delicate combinations, than colour, form, or motion, and is more plastic and obedient to the control of that faculty of which it is the creation. For Language is arbitrarily produced by the imagination, and has relation to thoughts alone; but all other materials, instruments, and conditions of art, have relations among each other, which limit and interpose between conception and expression. The former is a mirror which reflects the latter as a cloud which enfeebles, the light of which both are mediums of communication . . .

25

Poets are the hierophants\* of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present, the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle, and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.

30

\*Hierophants: chief priests, advocates

36. The passage is an example of  
 A. the opening of a novel  
 B. the opening of an autobiography  
 C. an essay  
 D. an ode  
 E. a dramatic monologue
37. According to Shelley, a poet is a combination of  
 A. historical figure and patriot  
 B. artist and priest  
 C. grammarian and poet  
 D. sculptor and musician  
 E. lawmaker and seer
38. In lines 5 and 6 "the germs of the flower and the fruit of latest time" can best be interpreted to mean  
 A. the guardian of the future  
 B. that the poet's thoughts destroy conventional thinking  
 C. that the poet is clairvoyant  
 D. that the poet is the gardener of thought  
 E. that the current thoughts of the poet presage the future
39. According to Shelley, "the pretense of superstition" (lines 7–8) is  
 A. the ability to "foreknow" events  
 B. the ability to control the future  
 C. to grant immortality to the poet  
 D. to be a legislator  
 E. the ability to change the future
40. Shelley asserts that grammatical forms (lines 10–15) serve all the following purposes *except*  
 A. to indicate verb tense  
 B. to clarify pronoun agreement  
 C. to solidify relative pronouns  
 D. to forbid citation  
 E. to enhance poetry
41. The reader may infer that the Bible and the works of Aeschylus and Dante  
 A. are too far in the past to be of value today  
 B. are examples of Shelley's theories  
 C. have injured poetry  
 D. deal with superstition  
 E. are more decisive than art
42. According to Shelley, poetry, sculpture, music, and painting have what characteristic in common?  
 A. They are dependent on one another.  
 B. They rely on grammatical forms.  
 C. They are at odds with one another.  
 D. They are eternal.  
 E. They can only relate to a specific time and place.
43. In lines 19–20, the phrase "that imperial faculty, whose throne . . ." refers to  
 A. legislators  
 B. language  
 C. synonyms  
 D. nature  
 E. poetry

44. According to Shelley, which of the following is not part of the nature of language?
- A. It is imaginative.
  - B. It is a reflection of passion.
  - C. It causes civil habits of action.
  - D. It deals with the eternal self.
  - E. It is connected only to thought.
45. In line 27, if the word “former” refers to language, then “latter” refers to
- A. art
  - B. motion
  - C. limits
  - D. imagination
  - E. metrics
46. Lines 27–28, beginning with “The former . . . ,” contain which of the following literary devices?
- I. parallel structure
  - II. simile
  - III. personification
- A. I only
  - B. II only
  - C. III only
  - D. I and II
  - E. I, II, and III
47. According to the final paragraph, the greatest attribute of the poet is his
- A. sensitivity to light and dark
  - B. depiction of fantasy and reality
  - C. perception of others
  - D. ability to reflect the future
  - E. creation of art

**STOP.**

**THIS IS THE END OF THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE SECTION OF THE  
DIAGNOSTIC/MASTER EXAM**



## Answers and Explanations

### Now Goes Under . . . by Edna St. Vincent Millay

1. **B.** This question requires the student to know the characteristics of various poetic forms. (See Chapter 8.) Using the process of elimination, the correct answer B is readily confirmed. Lyric poetry is emotional and personal.
2. **C.** Although the setting sun is often associated with winter, death, and darkness, these answers are not symbolic of the literal topic of the poem—the end of the love relationship.
3. **C.** The poet uses personification in lines 9–15: “vulgar Pride,” “Where Wisdom was a favored guest,” “hunted Truth” as characters to develop the conflicts apparent in the poem. [TIP: Capitalization of nouns often indicates personification.]
4. **D.** This is an antecedent question. The student must retrace the reference “He” back to its origins to locate the correct answer. Try asking “who is enthroned, lewd and unsupportable?” Since truth, charity, and wisdom are described positively, only *vulgar* pride qualifies as the answer.
5. **C.** This question requires you to find the antecedent. Ask yourself, “Who or what lifts man?” The answer, *charity*, should be obvious.
6. **B.** Sometimes you can find information from a previous question. In question 2, “danger” was eliminated as a choice; therefore, it probably wouldn’t be suitable for this question either. Try finding proof of the others. Truth = honest; holy = spiritual; bread = nourishment. Therefore, *dangerous* has to be the answer.
7. **D.** This is a tone question based on a repetitive contradictory phrase. She does *not* wish him well; therefore, she is bitter and resigned. There is nothing playful, wistful, or frantic in the conclusion.
8. **B.** This is a relationship question. You should realize this by the intensity of the opposing lewd force, pride, which destroyed the sanctity of the love. (If you see this, you could validate your answer to question 9.)
9. **D.** The cause is developed in the longest stanza, lines 7–15. Find the proof for your answer in lines 7–12.
10. **A.** Interestingly enough, the speaker reveals the conclusion in the first two lines of the poem. “The sun that will not rise again” establishes the totality of the circumstances.

### Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad

11. **E.** Here’s an easy question to start you off. For years you heard your English teachers and your classmates discussing all the elements that could be associated with *darkness*. All the choices given in this question would qualify except for *exploration*.
12. **C.** Line 1 gives you the answer. The Thames is the river that runs through the heart of London.
13. **D.** A careful reading of the passage will introduce you to a speaker who is *thinking* about the past, *thinking* about exploration and conquest, and *thinking* about the conqueror and the conquered.
14. **A.** Here, the speaker is asking his listeners to picture the past. Therefore, it is *not* pointing to the future. The feelings of a commander have nothing to do with a future event; whereas, each of the other choices hints at a future concept.
15. **B.** The first paragraph is about ancient Rome and its conquests. The second paragraph has the speaker considering “us” and what saves “us.” This is past and present.
16. **D.** The first ten lines support the inclusion of I. Choice III is supported in the second paragraph. Choice II is *not* part of the speaker’s conversation.
17. **D.** Lines 26–30 and 39–45 indicate the speaker’s attitude toward the human condition. There is no evidence in the passage to support any of the other choices.
18. **A.** The question assumes you know the definition of *paradox*. Therefore, you should

be able to see that to be fascinated by that which is repulsive, awful, and horrible is a paradox.

19. **D.** “A sea,” “a sky,” “a kind,” “or orders,” “or what” are examples of parallel structure. The simile is “ship about as rigid as a concertina.”
20. **E.** This is a straightforward, factual question. The answer is found in line 37.
21. **D.** In lines 45–47 the speaker is philosophizing about what it is that “redeems” the “conquest of the earth.” It is the *idea*.
22. **B.** This question asks you to locate the antecedent of “this.” You could use the substitution method here. Just replace “this” with the word or phrase. Or, you could look carefully at the text itself. The omniscient narrator is describing the speaker as a Buddha. Lines 45–46 come after “this.” D and E are not real possibilities. Also, they are too far away from the pronoun.
23. **E.** A careful reading of the passage allows you to find references to A and D and to locate the quoted phrases in B and C. What you will *not* find are any references to “punishment for a crime.”

### Sonnet 73

by William Shakespeare

24. **B.** The difficulty with this question lies in the similarity between B and E. However, it should be apparent by the numerous references to death and the contrast to youth that the poet is speaking of a literal time period in life and not of a state of emotional development.
25. **E.** Use the process of substitution and work backward in the poem to find the antecedent. Recognize the appositive phrase, which is set off by commas, to spot the previous image—“black night.” Another trick is to recast the line into a directly stated sentence instead of the poetic inversion. Asking “who or what is Death’s second self” will help you locate the subject of the line.
26. **A.** Once again you are being tested on terminology and your ability to recognize an example. Deconstruct the line and find its

essence; here it is obvious that “consumed” and “nourished” are contradictory.

27. **B.** Even without returning to the poem, you should notice that A, C, D, and E suggest death or diminishment. The only image of intensity and life appears in choice B.
28. **D.** The keys to this question can be found in lines 10–12 and line 14, which restate the irony of the beloved’s devotion and the speaker’s mortality. A good technique is to always check the previous and subsequent lines in order to clarify your answer. Also, careful reading would eliminate A and B. Passion is not mentioned in the poem.
29. **D.** For the prepared student, this question is a giveaway. Definitions of these terms in Chapter 8 clarify the differences among the types of sonnets. The rhyme scheme should lead you to choose D.
30. **A.** The sonnet depends on several extended comparisons with nature—the seasons, day and night, and fire. Although there may be a contradiction in the final three lines, the primary means of development is metaphor. (See Chapter 8 for examples of synecdoche.)
31. **E.** Since contradiction and paradox are techniques that create irony, you should be able to see that choice E restates the essential opposing forces in the sonnet.
32. **C.** You must reread and interpret the entire third quatrain to clearly figure out this question. You need to decode the metaphor and realize that fires must be fed and that they expire when they exhaust the source of fuel.
33. **D.** Even though E is a lovely thought, the speaker never expresses the desire to have the beloved age along with him. This answer depends on the pun in the title of choice D—fall. Here it may refer to the season of age as well as to the decline of the speaker and the relationship. No other choice is supported in the sonnet.
34. **A.** At first glance, one might think the speaker is submissive to the greater force of death; however, at no time does he acquiesce to the demands of mortality. The speaker thinks about and reflects on his circumstances.
35. **E.** You should notice that three of the five choices are negative. If you have read carefully,

you will be aware that the poem is laudatory and positive with regard to the depth of the beloved's love. And, at no time is the speaker looking forward to his lover's departure.

### Poets and Language

by Percy Bysshe Shelley

36. C. This question is an example of how important the knowledge of definitions of literary terms is if you hope to do well on the AP Lit exam. Using your knowledge and experience, you would obviously choose C after reading just a few of the opening lines.
37. E. Lines 2–3 give you the answer to this factual question. You simply have to know a couple of synonyms for “legislators” and “prophets.”
38. E. Here, you are being asked to make some serious associations with germination and flowering of buds and plants that lead to the future production of fruit. Also, the word “latest” should lead you to choose E.
39. A. This question centers around a literary definition and requires you to look at the words preceding and following the given phrase. “Foreknow the spirit of events” and “attribute of prophecy” point only to A.
40. D. A careful reading of lines 10–15 will lead you to conclude that all choices *except* “forbid citation” can be seen as a function of grammatical forms. Citation is associated with the limits of the essay.
41. B. In line 14, “examples of this fact” refers to Aeschylus, the Bible, and Dante. The word “examples” must lead you to choose B.
42. D. This is a rather difficult question. In lines 9–10, the reader is told that the poet participates in the eternal. Lines 11–12 state that grammatical forms will not injure poetry, and the reader is given examples of this. At the end of the paragraph, Shelley states that sculpture, etc. is even “more decisive,” meaning indicative of the eternal.
43. E. Simply, the antecedent of “that” is “poetry.” If in doubt, use substitution.
44. C. Lines 21–24 indicate all the characteristics given except for C.
45. A. This question demands nothing more than knowing the meanings of two words and locating an antecedent. To find the answer, you must go to the preceding sentence. In line 26, you will see the *last* item is “art.”
46. D. Notice the use of “which” in the construction of the sentence and “reflects the latter as a cloud . . .” Here are both parallel structure and simile.
47. D. Carefully read the words in lines 29–30, beginning with “the mirrors” and ending with “upon the present.” Here, Shelley compares poets to mirrors of the future. Mirrors reflect.

