

1. In Colleen McElroy's poem "Monologue for Saint Louis," published in 1980, the speaker returns to her childhood home in St. Louis, Missouri, after an extended absence and contemplates how she has changed. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how McElroy uses literary elements and techniques to convey the speaker's complex experience of returning home.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Monologue for Saint Louis

home again and the heart barely there
when choked by clusters of words
thick as the clumps of blue-black
grapes we snatched every summer

Line 5 from the neighbor's arbor¹
succulent pockets of flesh laced
with green staining our lips and fingers

it is summer again and I am home
vowing penance² for all my disappearances
10 since that first summer
when the arbor was clotted
with pockets of grapes latticed on each
interlocking vine

now earthworms have trellised the arbor
15 and that crumbling heap of rotting black
sticks cannot shield us from wind or words
we are the women we whispered about each summer
familiar houses and schoolyards have disappeared
childhood streets are blocked with singular black

20 one-way signs aligned like a lacework
of warnings or accusing fingers
I am home again
and my cousins sit in their cloaks of black
skin dragging me through twisted vines
25 of genetic maps thick with childhood vows

they remember each summer
how each year I vowed to return home
forever but I am lost in a riddle of words
home is a vacant lot its back yard clotted
30 with a stainless-steel arch³ and clusters
of tiny parks sprouting like trelliswork

enclosing some strange summer
resort my cousins have disappeared
into like the shadows of beasts and bad air
35 that infect this flat country and I am home
a stranger in love with words
with tart sweet clusters of poems

“Monologue for Saint Louis” from *Queen of the Ebony Isles* ©1984 by Colleen J. McElroy. Published by Wesleyan University Press.
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1: vining plants trained to grow over a lattice, framework, or trellis

2: an act that demonstrates regret and offers amends through self-sacrifice

3: the Gateway Arch, a 630-foot-tall arch located in a national park

1. In Victor Hernández Cruz's poem "Two Guitars," published in 2001, the speaker imagines that two guitars are alive and engaging in conversation about their musical experiences. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Hernández Cruz uses literary elements and techniques to convey a complex portrayal of the guitars' musical world.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Two Guitars

Two guitars were left in a room all alone
They sat on different corners of the parlor
In this solitude they started talking to each other

My strings are tight and full of tears

Line 5 The man who plays me has no heart

I have seen it leave out of his mouth

I have seen it melt out of his eyes

It dives into the pores of the earth

When they squeeze me tight I bring

10 Down the angels who live off the chorus

The trios singing loosen organs

With melodious screwdrivers

Sentiment comes off the hinges

Because a song is a mountain put into

15 Words and landscape is the feeling that

Enters something so big in the harmony

We are always in danger of blowing up

With passion

The other guitar:

- 20 In 1944 New York
When the Trio Los Panchos¹ started
With Mexican & Puerto Rican birds²
I am the one that one of them held
Tight like a woman
- 25 Their throats gardenia³ gardens
An airport for dreams
I've been in theaters and cabarets
I played in an apartment on 102nd street
After a baptism pregnant with women
- 30 The men flirted and were offered
Chicken soup
Echoes came out of hallways as if from caves
Someone is opening the door now
The two guitars hushed and there was a
- 35 Resonance in the air like what is left by
The last chord of a bolero.⁴

Victor Hernández Cruz, "Two Guitars" from *Maraca: New and Selected Poems, 1965-2000*. Copyright © 2001 by Victor Hernández Cruz. Reprinted with the permission of Coffee House Press. www.coffeehousepress.org.

1: a musical group that specializes in boleros and other romantic ballads

2: guitars

3: a type of plant known for its striking flowers

4: a genre of romantic music that originated in Cuba and has been popular throughout the Americas; common themes include unrequited love, betrayal, and abandonment

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

3 Questions

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In John Rollin Ridge’s poem “To a Star Seen at Twilight,” published in 1868, the speaker admires a solitary star shining at twilight and considers its significance. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Ridge uses literary elements and techniques to convey the speaker’s complex reflection on the star.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

To a Star Seen at Twilight

Hail solitary star!
That shinest from thy far blue height,
And overlookest Earth
And Heaven, companionless in light!
The rays around thy brow
Are an eternal wreath for thee;
Yet thou’rt not proud, like man,
Though thy broad mirror is the sea,
And thy calm home eternity!
Shine on, night-bosomed star!
And through its realms thy soul’s eye dart,
And count each age of light,
For their eternal wheel thou art.
Thou dost roll into the past days,
Years, and ages too,
And naught thy giant progress stays.

I love to gaze upon
Thy speaking face, thy calm, fair brow,
And feel my spirit dark
And deep, grow bright and pure as thou.
Like thee it stands alone;
Like thee its native home is night,
But there the likeness ends,—
It beams not with thy steady light.
Its upward path is high,
But not so high as thine—thou’rt far
Above the reach of clouds,
Of storms, of wreck, oh lofty star!
I would all men might look
Upon thy pure sublimity,
And in their bosoms drink
Thy loveliness and light like me;
For who in all the world
Could gaze upon thee thus, and feel
Aught in his nature base,
Or mean, or low, around him steal!

Shine on companionless

As now thou seem'st. Thou art the throne

Of thy own spirit, star!

2 And mighty things must be alone.

Alone the ocean heaves,

Or calms his bosom into sleep;

Alone each mountain stands

Upon its basis broad and deep;

5 Alone through heaven the comets sweep,

Those burning worlds which God has thrown

Upon the universe in wrath,

As if he hated them—their path

No stars, no suns may follow, *none*—

2 'Tis great, 'tis great to be alone!

Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

3 Questions

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In George Moses Horton’s poem “On Summer,” published in 1829, the author describes multiple aspects of summer in a rural area. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Horton uses literary elements and techniques to develop a complex portrayal of the setting.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

On Summer

Esteville¹ fire begins to burn;
The auburn fields of harvest rise;
The torrid flames again return,
And thunders roll along the skies.

5 Perspiring Cancer² lifts his head,
And roars terrific from on high;
Whose voice the timid creatures dread;
From which they strive with awe to fly.

The night-hawk ventures from his cell,
10 And starts his note in evening air;
He feels the heat his bosom swell,
Which drives away the gloom of fear.

Thou noisy insect, start thy drum;
Rise lamp-like bugs to light the train;
5 And bid sweet Philomela³ come,
And sound in front the nightly strain.

The bee begins her ceaseless hum,
And doth with sweet exertions rise;
And with delight she stores her comb,
10 And well her rising stock supplies.

Let sportive children well beware,
While sprightly frisking o’er the green;
And carefully avoid the snare,
Which lurks beneath the smiling scene.

25 The mistress bird assumes her nest,
And broods in silence on the tree,
Her note to cease, her wings at rest,
She patient waits her young to see.

The farmer hastens from the heat;
30 The weary plough-horse droops his head;
The cattle all at noon retreat;
And ruminates beneath the shade.

The burdened ox with dauntless rage,
Flies heedless to the liquid flood,
35 From which he quaffs,⁴ devoid of gauge,⁵
Regardless of his driver’s rod.

Pomaceous⁶ orchards now expand
Their laden branches o’er the lea;
And with their bounty fill the land,
40 While plenty smiles on every tree.

On fertile borders, near the stream,
Now gaze with pleasure and delight;
See loaded vines with melons teem—
'Tis paradise to human sight.

5 With rapture view the smiling fields,
Adorn the mountain and the plain,
Each, on the eve of Autumn, yields
A large supply of golden grain.

¹ a town in North Carolina

² zodiac constellation associated with midsummer

³ a character in Greek mythology who was transformed
into a nightingale

⁴ drinks

⁵ measure

⁶ of or relating to apples

**Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet
and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.**

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

3 Questions

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In Alice Cary's poem "Autumn," published in 1874, the speaker contemplates the onset of autumn. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Cary uses literary elements and techniques to convey the speaker's complex response to the changing seasons.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Autumn

Shorter and shorter now the twilight clips
The days, as though the sunset gates they crowd,
And Summer from her golden collar slips
Line And strays through stubble-fields, and moans aloud,

5 Save when by fits the warmer air deceives,
And, stealing hopeful to some sheltered bower,¹
She lies on pillows of the yellow leaves,
And tries the old tunes over for an hour.

The wind, whose tender whisper in the May
10 Set all the young blooms listening through th' grove,
Sits rustling in the faded boughs to-day
And makes his cold and unsuccessful love.

The rose has taken off her tire² of red—
The mullein-stalk³ its yellow stars have lost,
15 And the proud meadow-pink⁴ hangs down her head
Against earth's chilly bosom, witch'd with frost.

The robin, that was busy all the June,
Before the sun had kissed the topmost bough,
Catching our hearts up in his golden tune,
20 Has given place to the brown cricket now.

The very cock crows lonesomely at morn—
Each flag⁵ and fern the shrinking stream divides—
Uneasy cattle low,⁶ and lambs forlorn
Creep to their strawy sheds with nettled sides.

25 Shut up the door: who loves me must not look
Upon the withered world, but haste to bring
His lighted candle, and his story-book,
And live with me the poetry of Spring.

¹ a spot in a garden shaded by a covering of vines or branches

² attire

³ stem of a woolly-leaved plant

⁴ slender plant with pink flowers

⁵ plant with long tapering leaves

⁶ moo

Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION**SECTION II****Total time—2 hours****3 Questions****Question 1**

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

In William Ellery Channing’s poem “The Barren Moors,” published in 1843, the speaker addresses moors, open expanses of wild, uncultivated land. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Channing uses literary elements and techniques to develop a complex portrayal of the speaker’s experience of this natural setting.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

The Barren Moors

On your bare rocks, O barren moors,
On your bare rocks I love to lie,—
They stand like crags upon the shores,
Or clouds upon a placid sky.

Across those spaces desolate,
The fox pursues his lonely way,
Those solitudes can fairly sate¹
The passage of my loneliest day.

Like desert Islands far at sea
Where not a ship can ever land,
Those dim uncertainties to me,
For something veritable stand.

A serious place distinct from all
Which busy Life delights to feel,
I stand in this deserted hall,
And thus the wounds of time conceal.

No friend’s cold eye, or sad delay,
Shall vex me now where not a sound
Falls on the ear, and every day
20 Is soft as silence most profound.

No more upon these distant wolds²
The agitating world can come,
A single pensive thought upholds
The arches of this dreamy home.

25 Within the sky above, one thought
Replies to you, O barren moors!
Between, I stand, a creature taught
To stand between two silent floors.

¹ fully satisfy

² hills

Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.