

**AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION**  
**2009 SCORING GUIDELINES (Form B)**

**Question 1**

(Edward Field's "Icarus")

The score reflects the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, its style, its mechanics. Students are rewarded for what they do well. The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by 1 point above the otherwise appropriate score. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a 3.

- 9–8** These well-conceived essays offer a persuasive analysis of the language the poet uses to adapt the Icarus myth to a contemporary setting. Although these essays offer a range of interpretations and/or address different literary techniques (tone, point of view, imagery, diction, and structure), they provide convincing readings of how these techniques contribute to the meaning of the poem. They demonstrate consistent control over the elements of effective composition, including the language unique to the analysis of poetry. Their textual references are apt and specific. Although these essays may not be error-free, the writing is clear and sophisticated. The analysis is perceptive and insightful and, in the case of essays that earn 9 points, especially persuasive.
- 7–6** These competent essays offer a reasonable analysis of the language the poet uses to adapt the Icarus myth for a contemporary audience. They demonstrate an ability to express ideas clearly with references to the text, although they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as essays scored in the 9–8 range. They are less thorough or less precise in their discussion of how literary techniques contribute to the meaning of the poem, and their analysis of the poem is less convincing. While essays scored in the 7–6 range are generally well written, those scored a 7 demonstrate more sophistication in both substance and style.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of the poem, but they tend to be superficial in their understanding of how the poet uses language to adapt the Icarus myth. Their analysis of the poem may be vague, formulaic, or inadequately supported by references to the text. There may be minor misinterpretations of the poem. These essays demonstrate some control of language, but the writing may be marred by surface errors. They are not as well organized or developed as are essays scored in the 7–6 range.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of Field's poem. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant. Evidence from the poem may be slight or misconstrued, or the essay may rely on paraphrase only. The writing often demonstrates a lack of control over the conventions of composition. The ideas may be inadequately developed, there may be an accumulation of errors, or the argument may be unclear, inconsistent, or repetitive. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreadings and/or inept writing.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the essays scored in the 4–3 range. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the poem. These essays may contain serious errors in grammar and mechanics. They may offer a complete misreading or be unacceptably brief. Essays scored a 1 contain little coherent discussion of the poem.
- 0** These essays do no more than make reference to the task.
- These essays are either blank or completely off topic.

In "Icarus", a poem by Edward Field, a mythological character is placed in the bustling and oxymoronic reality of the modern world. Figurative language, irony, syntax, and perspectives are essential elements of Field's relocation of Icarus, who through those techniques is immersed in an alienating and unrelenting 20<sup>th</sup> century setting.

Irony and contrast are immediately evident as Icarus's story unfolds in the Second Millennium of the Common Era. Beginning by depicting the setting and its inhabitants, the speaker highlights some oxymorons in current behavior. Witnesses to Icarus's mishap run off to a "gang war", a cruel satire of urban life and ironic reversion of roles in just one line. Furthermore, Icarus's ~~file~~<sup>report</sup> at the police station is "filed and forgotten", one element denying the purpose of the other. In addition to this, modern practices appear to contrast those of Icarus's original setting; in ancient Greece, tales were not written but sung, and they certainly weren't forgotten. Thus, though lacking mention to the protagonist, the first stanza subtly implies immediate differences between Icarus's traditional home and his new one.

The second stanza begins with yet another juxtaposition of the original ~~war~~<sup>world</sup> he modified; while the foolish Icarus would have been deemed "disobedient" in his times, he becomes "nice Mr. Hicks" in modernity. As the speaker begins to describe Icarus directly, another allusion to modern trends is made; Icarus's suit "concealed arms", which we soon find out though that they are not the "arms" used

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in gang wars but those with which he attempted flight. Icarus's neighbors cannot perceive his sadness at the failure of his deed, though, and the gentle time (and air) traveler does not wish to upset them by revealing the truths. In this case, a metonymic "front yards" is used by the speaker to symbolize the suburban lifestyle and "moralistic" attitude of the people who surround Icarus.

In creating the final analogies and contrasts between the past and present Icaruses, the speaker draws into the tragic hero side of the protagonist and uses it in a rhetorical question at the end of the second stanza. Unfortunately for Icarus, it seems, he did not fall to his death but to the "middling stature of the merely talented"; he cannot find ~~the~~ serenity in an environment where personal judgment (Icarus's neighbors) cannot reconcile with the group activities (participating in committees and riding commuter trains). Using anaphora, the first two lines of the third stanza convey all of Icarus's longing for tragic departure, juxtaposing nightly reflection and daily attempts at flight. Lacking the success he had in the past, <sup>even</sup> though it had cost him, Icarus comes to the conclusion that his role would have been much more satisfactory had he drowned.

Field employs techniques of content (contrast and irony) and of how the content is shaped (anaphora and figurative language). In doing so, he conveys both poetically personal reflections and an effective change of Icarus's setting, shaping this work as an even more tragic story for the protagonist than his death in myth had been.

#2

~~the~~ "Icarus", written by Edward Field, is based on the classic myth of Daedalus and ~~the~~ Icarus but portrays it in a ~~contemporary~~ contemporary setting. Field uses specific details, structure, and ~~diction~~ ~~and dictation~~ ~~tone~~ to help him adapt this ~~classic~~ ~~late~~ mythical ~~of tragedy~~ tale of tragedy to a ~~so~~ modern story relevant to today's society.

~~Although the names~~

Although much of the plot and the characters stay the same, the detail used by Field allows the reader to experience the modern adaptation of the myth. ~~Refer~~ Reference's to, "Police", ~~Witnesses~~ "gangs", and, "commuter" trains" ~~clear~~ show the reader the setting of the poem as those things were non-existent at the time the Icarus myth is told in. The fact that Icarus "rents" ~~and~~ a house and "tends" to his garden gives Icarus a more personal feel ~~the~~ which drags him down from the position of fallen hero. Field's use of details ~~shows~~ clearly portrays Icarus living in a modern world.

The structure of the poem is used by Field for a mixture of effects. On the one



hand, the use of a poem mimics the way stories were told in ancient greece, which could serve as a similarity between "Icarus" and the Icarus myth. On the other hand, the poem is ~~split into four stanzas each serving a different purpose~~ lack of a rhyme scheme and pattern contrasts the way in which Ancient Greek poets would have ~~delivered~~ told the Icarus myth. Through the lack of a pattern and rhyme scheme Field is telling the Icarus myth in an ancient writing form, poetry, but with a modern ~~way~~ twist to it, ~~the~~ the lack of a rhyme scheme. In this way, the structure of the poem reflects the way the ~~Icarus~~ Icarus myth is told.

Field also cleverly uses diction to portray to the reader that the poem is a contemporary adaptation of the Icarus myth. The register on the ~~whole~~ whole makes use of ~~very~~ contemporary words and phrases. Words like, "serves", "trying", and "merely" show how Field is giving the reader the sense that the poem is recent. ~~The~~ The poem fails to sound heroic and monumental & like classic tales of greek myth are usually do. The use of words like "that", "those", and, "to" instead



Write in the box the number of the question you are answering  
on this page as it is designated in the exam.

Q 1

1B  
3 of 3

of "~~the~~", "~~these~~" and, "thee" thy and thee  
& further enhance the contemporary diction that  
Field employs.

~~Although~~ ~~Edward~~ Edward Field's contemporary  
adaptation of the Icarus myth is done in  
such a way that it is modern yet it  
keeps the integrity and lure of the greek  
myth. Field's use of detail's that did not exist  
~~and~~ in ~~of~~ Greek times and ~~a~~ modern diction  
clarify the ~~and~~ contemporary setting. ~~The structure~~  
while the structure adds a modern feel  
to ~~an~~ an old storytelling method are everpresent  
in his adaptation of the Icarus myth in "Icarus".

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Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

Question # 1

1C  
1 of 2

Icarus a poem written by Edward Field is a clever piece of work in which the author takes a character from the past and brings him into the reality we live in today. The author uses ~~some~~ <sup>certain</sup> literary devices ~~such as to convey a pleasant idea~~ <sup>such as</sup> to ~~write his poem~~ express his ideas through the poem.

Edward Field, even from the beginning of the poem gives ~~shows the reader what exactly is~~ the reader some uncertainty of what is going on but as seen on line 3 the entrance of the world-police gives the reader a clue that the poem will be set in the present. The author explains and sets up the scenario as if it were a case in which detectives and police are trying to find the solution to Icarus's death but soon come to find out that the author changes the ending of the actual story ~~from where instead~~ of Icarus just ~~dying~~ dying he instead swims away (line 7). The author takes it even further when in lines 10-11 he gives the impression of Icarus as a working class male in a modern society with his gray suit and tending of the garden.

One of the literary devices that was shown throughout the ~~story~~ poem was foreshadowing. This device was used quite a bit, ~~throughout~~ In lines 21-25 the author tells the audience that Icarus bears wounds from his unsuccessful landing from earlier and that the ~~story~~ happenings from the past still haunt and affect him now. ~~Also in~~ "and had he told them they would have answered with a shocked, uncomprehending stare." Once again the author lets the reader know of past incidents ~~through which~~ <sup>through</sup>





1

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

1C  
2 of 2

where ~~he~~ ~~also~~ flew in the sun and the wax from the wings was melted even after the father had told him not to.

The events in this poem seem to be somewhat told from an omniscient narrator. The author gives the reader a taste of such in the beginning of the poem lines 5-9, the author tells about the police trying to find the cause of death while later on the author moves or changes perspective and focuses more on Icarus tending the garden. This narrator is omniscient because of the fact that he/she seems to know everything that is going on from the police to Icarus's garden we see how the author tells the story.

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**AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION**  
**2009 SCORING COMMENTARY (Form B)**

**Question 1**

**Sample: 1A**

**Score: 9**

This essay is not very long, but it is economical in its expression and remarkably sophisticated and insightful in its analysis. It is especially persuasive in explaining how figurative language, metonymy, irony, and contrast contribute to meaning in Edward Field's poem. It eloquently introduces the general conceit of the poem at the outset—"a mythological character is placed in the bustling and oxymoronic reality of the modern world"—and then fluidly moves into an analysis of how Icarus is reduced by the banality of his modern circumstances: "a metonymic 'front yards' is used by the speaker to symbolize the suburban lifestyle and 'moralistic' attitude of the people who surround Icarus." It astutely notices the anaphoric repetition in the first two lines of the third stanza that convey "Icarus's longing for tragic departure, juxtaposing nightly reflection and daily attempts at flight." The essay neatly wraps up its analysis by concluding that "Field employs techniques of content (contrast and irony) and of how the content is shaped (anaphora and figurative language)" to convey "both poetically personal reflections and an effective change of Icarus's setting, shaping this work as an even more tragic story for the protagonist than his death in myth had been."

**Sample: 1B**

**Score: 5**

Focusing on an analysis of the poem's language, this essay offers a plausible but superficial response to the prompt. In the introduction, the essay proposes to examine "specific details, structure, and diction" to show how Field adapts the myth of Daedalus to a contemporary setting. Discussing the modernizing of the ancient myth, it then highlights Field's contemporary vocabulary, noting that "Icarus 'rents' a house and 'tends' to his garden." The essay next considers the poem's structure, particularly its "lack of a rhyme scheme and pattern." But both of these discussions are perfunctory: the only conclusion the essay draws is that the poem is a twist on the original myth and so "reflects the way the Icarus myth is told." There are perceptive comments in the last third of the essay, including remarks about how Field's adaptation retains the "integrity and lure [*sic*] of the [G]reek myth." Still, on the whole, the essay is not quite as well developed or as well supported by textual analysis as higher-scoring essays tend to be.

**Sample: 1C**

**Score: 3**

This essay is marred by surface-level errors and is too underdeveloped to rise into the upper half. It occasionally focuses on irrelevant notions such as "uncertainty" or features such as "foreshadowing." These divert attention from the important aspects of literary devices discussed by the more proficient students. The essay notes that Field changes the outcome of Icarus's story in order to adapt it to a contemporary setting without exploring the consequences of this change. And it remarks that the poet "in lines 10-11 . . . gives the impression of Icarus as a working class male in a modern society with his gray suit and tending of the gardens" without developing what is accomplished by such an impression. Indeed, the essay weakens as it comes to its end.