

AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

Question 1

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

A course has been created by the District to enlighten students on the period of Transcendentalism in order to get students to think more independently and innovatively. With companies competing more globally, it becomes necessary for employees to rethink, to revise, to revamp, to truly think on their feet and develop something original. It is not a matter of knowing facts, but it is increasingly more important to know how the facts can be applied in a new way to production in these companies. They no longer want their employees acting as robots, complacently punching the clock--they are seeking collaborators, innovators, and pioneers. Therefore, corporations are seeking high school students who graduate to have determination and creativity.

Carefully read the following seven sources, including any introductory information for each source. Then synthesize information from at least three of the sources and incorporate it into a coherent, well-developed essay that identifies the key aspects of the transcendentalist ideas and how they may be woven into a course where students may utilize these ideas in order to become independent, innovative, and vital thinkers within a working corporation.

Your argument should be the focus of the essay. central; use the sources to illustrate and support your reasoning. Use the sources to develop your argument and explain the reasoning for it. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. You may cite the sources as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the descriptions in parentheses.

Source A (Durand--Painting)--use what you know from APUSH

Source B (The Getty--Photo)--we never discussed

Source C (Frost)

Source D (Thoreau)

Source E (Emerson)

Source F (Weir)

Source G (Thoreau)

Source H & I (Whitman)

### Source A

Durand, Asher B. Hudson River School. N.d.  
PBS. PBS. Web. 15 Dec. 2013.



A painting which has become a virtual emblem for the Hudson River School is the dramatic 46" x 36" canvas by Asher B. Durand, *KINDRED SPIRITS*, which hangs in New York City's Public Library. In it Durand depicts himself, together with Cole, on a rocky promontory in serene contemplation of the scene before them: the gorge with its running stream, the gossamer Catskill mists shimmering in a palette of subtle colors, framed by foliage. In the foreground stands one of the school's famous symbols--a broken tree stump-- what Cole called a "memento mori" or reminder that life is fragile and impermanent; only Nature and the Divine within the Human Soul are eternal. Tiny as the human beings are in this composition, they are nevertheless elevated by the grandeur of the landscape in which they are in harmony. As Cole and Durand firmly believed, if the American landscape was a new Garden of Eden, then it was they, as artists, who kept the keys of entry.



### Source B: Aokigahara Forest in Japan

Known as the sea of trees or suicide forest this is one of the world's most popular destinations for suicide.

Located along the northwest base of Mt. Fuji, this dense forest is full of gnarled trees and rocky caverns. There is a striking lack of wildlife, making the forest floor eerily quiet. Some sections have been known to be pitch-black even at midday due to thick, overhanging vegetation. Hiking equipment such as compasses and some GPS have been known to spin out of control due to the high mineral content in the volcanic soil.

Legends tell of a disturbing practice taking place in the forest well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Known as 'ubasute' or 'abandoning a parent', locals would lead their elderly parents into the woods where they would die a slow death by exposure and starvation. Practiced as a form of euthanasia in times of drought and famine, it was seen as a way to free up resources by reducing the population. Though many historians doubt the ritual was ever practiced en masse.

Many tourists now visit the site with hopes of encountering the paranormal or discovering human remains. Some claim they've seen faces in the shadows while others say they've heard tormented screams of spirits left to wander the forest floor. Whatever it is they're looking for, it appears as though this ancient forest is calling out to people, drawing them in, never to return.

**Source C**

Frost, Robert. "1. The Road Not Taken. Frost, Robert. 1920. Mountain Interval." *1. The Road Not Taken. Frost, Robert. 1920. Mountain Interval*. Bartleby Bookstore, n.d. Web. 13 Dec. 2013.

*The following is a poem by Robert Frost written in 1920. His poems are concerned with human tragedies and fears, his reaction to the complexities of life, and his ultimate acceptance of his burdens.*

**The Road Not Taken**

TWO roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
 And sorry I could not travel both  
 And be one traveler, long I stood  
 And looked down one as far as I could  
 To where it bent in the undergrowth; 5

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
 And having perhaps the better claim,  
 Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
 Though as for that the passing there  
 Had worn them really about the same, 10

And both that morning equally lay  
 In leaves no step had trodden black.  
 Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
 Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
 I doubted if I should ever come back. 15

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
 Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
 Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
 I took the one less traveled by,  
 And that has made all the difference. 20

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**Source D**

Thoreau, Henry David. "Civil Disobedience" *Thoreau's Civil Disobedience* - J. N.p., n.d. Web. 16 Dec. 2013.

I HEARTILY ACCEPT the motto, — "That government is best which governs least"; (1) and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe, — "That government is best which governs not at all"; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty, and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, (2) the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure...

[4] After all, the practical reason why, when the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule, is not because they are most likely to be in the right, nor because this seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. But a government in which the majority rule in all cases cannot be based on justice, even as far as men understand it. Can there not be a government in which majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong, but conscience? — in which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable? Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation *with* a conscience. Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is, that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, (5) and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, ay, against their common sense and consciences, which makes it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power? Visit the Navy Yard, and behold a marine, such a man as an American government can make, or such as it can make a man with its black arts — a mere shadow and reminiscence of humanity, a man laid out alive and standing, and already, as one may say, buried under arms with funeral accompaniments, though it may be

[5] The mass of men serve the state thus, not as men mainly, but as machines, with their bodies. They are the standing army, and the militia, jailers, constables, *posse comitatus*, (7) etc. In most cases there is no free exercise whatever of the judgment or of the moral sense; but they put themselves on a level with wood and earth and stones; and wooden men can perhaps be manufactured that will serve the purpose as well. Such command no more respect than men of straw or a lump of dirt. They have the same sort of worth only as horses and dogs. Yet such as these even are commonly esteemed good citizens. Others, as most legislators, politicians, lawyers, ministers, and office-holders, serve the state chiefly with their heads; and, as they rarely make any moral distinctions, they are as likely to serve the devil, without *intending* it, as God. A very few, as heroes, patriots, martyrs, reformers in the great sense, and *men*, serve the state with their consciences also, and so necessarily resist it for the most part; and they are commonly treated as enemies by it...

Unjust laws exist; shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally, under such a government as this, think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy *is* worse than the evil. *It* makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not

encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and *do* better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus (2) and Luther,(3) and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?...

If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it go, let it go; perchance it will wear smooth — certainly the machine will wear out. If the injustice has a spring, or a pulley, or a rope, or a crank, exclusively for itself, then perhaps you may consider whether the remedy will not be worse than the evil; but if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break the law. Let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine. What I have to do is to see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn...

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison. The proper place to-day, the only place which Massachusetts has provided for her freer and less desponding spirits, is in her prisons, to be put out and locked out of the State by her own act, as they have already put themselves out by their principles. It is there that the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race, should find them; on that separate, but more free and honorable ground, where the State places those who are not *with* her, but *against* her — the only house in a slave State in which a free man can abide with honor. If any think that their influence would be lost there, and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the State, that they would not be as an enemy within its walls, they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error, nor how much more eloquently and effectively he can combat injustice who has experienced a little in his own person. Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison, or give up war and slavery, the State will not hesitate which to choose. If a thousand men were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution, if any such is possible. If the tax-gatherer, or any other public officer, asks me, as one has done, "But what shall I do?" my answer is, "If you really wish to do anything, resign your office." When the subject has refused allegiance, and the officer has resigned his office, then the revolution is accomplished. But even suppose blood should flow. Is there not a sort of blood shed when the conscience is wounded? Through this wound a man's real manhood and immortality flow out, and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see this blood flowing now...

I have paid no poll-tax for six years. I was put into a jail once on this account, for one night; and, as I stood considering the walls of solid stone, two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron, a foot thick, and the iron grating which strained the light, I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were mere flesh and blood and bones, to be locked up. I wondered that it should have concluded at length that this was the best use it could put me to, and had never thought to avail itself of my services in some way. I saw that, if there was a wall of stone between me and my townsmen, there was a still more difficult one to climb or break through, before they could get to be as free as I was. I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar. I felt as if I alone of all my townsmen had paid my tax. They plainly did not know how to treat me, but behaved like persons who are underbred. In every threat and in every compliment there was a blunder; for they thought that my chief desire was to stand the other side of that stone wall. I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance, and they were really all that was dangerous. As they could not reach me, they had resolved to punish my body; just as boys, if they cannot come at some person against whom they have a spite, will abuse his dog. I saw that the State was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons, and that it did not know its friends from its foes, and I lost all my remaining respect for it, and pitied it.

[14] Thus the State never intentionally confronts a man's sense, intellectual or moral, but only his body, his senses. It is not armed with superior wit or honesty, but with superior physical strength. I was not born to be forced. I will breathe after my own fashion. Let us see who is the strongest. What force has a multitude? They only can force me who obey a higher law than I. They force me to become like themselves. I do not hear of *men* being *forced* to have this way or that by masses of men. What sort of life were that to live? When I meet a government which says to me, "Your money or your life," why should I be in haste to give it my money? It may be in a great strait, and not know what to do: I cannot help that. It must help itself; do as I do. It is not worth the while to snivel about it. I am not responsible for the successful working of the machinery of society. I am not the son of the engineer. I perceive that, when an acorn and a chestnut fall side by side, the one does not remain inert to make way for the other, but both obey their own laws, and spring and grow and flourish as best they can, till one, perchance, overshadows and destroys the other. If a plant cannot live according to its nature, it dies; and so a man.

**Source E**

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Self-Reliance." *Self-Reliance*. Jone Johnson Lewis, 2001. Web. 14 Dec. 2013.

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better, for worse, as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till...

Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being...

Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser, who was wont to importune me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within? my friend suggested, — "But these impulses may be from below, not from above." I replied, "They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil's child, I will live then from the Devil." No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my constitution, the only wrong what is against it...

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder, because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude...

For nonconformity the world whips you with its displeasure. And therefore a man must know how to estimate a sour face. The by-standers look askance on him in the public street or in the friend's parlour. If this aversation had its origin in contempt and resistance like his own, he might well go home with a sad countenance; but the sour faces of the multitude, like their sweet faces, have no deep cause, but are put on and off as the wind blows and a newspaper directs...

The other terror that scares us from self-trust is our consistency; a reverence for our past act or word, because the eyes of others have no other data for computing our orbit than our past acts, and we are loath to disappoint them...

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict every thing you said to-day. — 'Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood.' — Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood...

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**Source F: *Dead Poets Society* Directed by Peter Weir (1989)**

Painfully shy Todd Anderson has been sent to the school where his popular older brother was valedictorian. His room-mate, Neil, although exceedingly bright and popular, is very much under the thumb of his overbearing father. The two, along with their other friends, meet Professor Keating, their new English teacher, who tells them of the Dead Poets Society, and encourages them to go against the status quo. Each, in their own way, does this, and are changed for life. The story is set in 1959. *Written by Liz Jordan*

**Source G: *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau**

*A contemporary review...*

"The economical details and calculations in this book are more curious than useful; for the author's life in the woods was on too narrow a scale to find imitators. But ... he says so many pithy and brilliant things, and offers so many piquant, and, we may add, so many just, comments on society as it is, that this book is well worth the reading, both for its actual contents and its suggestive capacity."

- A.P. Peabody, *North American Review*, 1854

*100 years later...*

"Thoreau, very likely without quite knowing what he was up to, took man's relation to nature and man's dilemma in society and man's capacity for elevating his spirit and he beat all these matters together, in a wild free interval of self-justification and delight, and produced an original omelette from which people can draw nourishment in a hungry day."

- E.B. White, *The Yale Review*, 1954

**Source H: "I Hear America Singing" and "I Sit and Look Out" by Walt Whitman**

Look at pages 397 & 399 in the Yellow Literature books for these.

Source I

Whitman, Walt. "Whitman's "Song of Myself"" *Whitman's "Song of Myself"* University of Illinois, n.d. Web. 15 Dec. 2013.

One of Walt Whitman's most loved and greatest poems, "Song of Myself" is an optimistic and inspirational look at the world. Originally published as part of "Leaves of Grass" in 1855, "Song of Myself" is as accessible and important today as when it was first written. Read "Song of Myself" and enjoy a true poetic masterpiece.

<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>I CELEBRATE myself, and sing myself,          And what I assume you shall assume,          For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.</p> <p>I loafe and invite my soul,          I lean and loafe at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.</p> <p>My tongue, every atom of my blood, form'd from this soil,          this air,          Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and          their parents the same,          I, now thirty-seven years old in perfect health begin,          Hoping to cease not till death.</p> <p>Creeds and schools in abeyance,          Retiring back a while sufficed at what they are, but never          forgotten,          I harbor for good or bad, I permit to speak at every hazard,          Nature without check with original energy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p>A child said <i>What is the grass?</i> fetching it to me with full          hands,          How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is any          more than he.</p> <p>I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful          green stuff woven.</p> <p>Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,          A scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropt,          Bearing the owner's name someway in the corners, that we          may see and remark, and say <i>Whose?</i></p> <p>Or I guess the grass is itself a child, the produced babe of the          vegetation.</p> <p>Or I guess it is a uniform hieroglyphic,          And it means, Sprouting alike in broad zones and narrow          zones,          Growing among black folks as among white,          Kanuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff, I give them the          same, I receive them the same.</p> <p>And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves.</p> <p>Tenderly will I use you curling grass,          It may be you transpire from the breasts of young men,          It may be if I had known them I would have loved them,</p>	<p>It may be you are from old people, or from offspring taken          soon out of their mothers' laps,          And here you are the mothers' laps.</p> <p>This grass is very dark to be from the white heads of old          mothers,          Darker than the colourless beards of old men,          Dark to come from under the faint red roofs of mouths.</p> <p>O I perceive after all so many uttering tongues,          And I perceive they do not come from the roofs of mouths          for nothing.</p> <p>I wish I could translate the hints about the dead young men          and women,          And the hints about old men and mothers, and the offspring          taken soon out of their laps.</p> <p>What do you think has become of the young and old men?          And what do you think has become of the women and          children?</p> <p>They are alive and well somewhere,          The smallest sprout shows there is really no death,          And if ever there was it led forward life, and does not wait at          the end to arrest it,          And ceas'd the moment life appear'd.</p> <p>All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses,          And to die is different from what any one supposed, and          luckier.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">52</p> <p>The spotted hawk swoops by and accuses me, he complains          of my gab and my loitering.</p> <p>I too am not a bit tamed, I too am untranslatable,          I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.</p> <p>The last scud of day holds back for me,          It flings my likeness after the rest and true as any on the          shadow'd wilds,          It coaxes me to the vapor and the dusk.</p> <p>I depart as air, I shake my white locks at the runaway sun,          I effuse my flesh in eddies, and drift it in lacy jags.</p> <p>I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love,          If you want me again look for me under your boot-soles.</p> <p>You will hardly know who I am or what I mean,          But I shall be good health to you nevertheless,          And filter and fibre your blood.</p> <p>Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged,          Missing me one place search another,          I stop somewhere waiting for you.</p>
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