

Rhetorical Analysis / Close Reading: Multiple-Choice Stems

From the AP Literature and Composition exam:

1. What is the author's attitude toward the subject of the essay?
2. What is this passage about?
3. What does the phrase, _____, mean?
4. How would you characterize the style of the passage?
5. Which of the following best summarizes the main point in lines _____?
6. What is the main point in _____? (the passage, the second paragraph, etc.)
7. How would you restate the meaning of _____?
8. How would you define the phrase _____?
9. What is the speaker's purpose in _____?
10. What thought is reflected in the allusion _____?
11. What is the tone of the passage?
12. How would you define the word _____?
13. How would you describe the diction and style of the passage?
14. In lines _____, what is the speaker asserting?
15. Why is _____ described as _____?
16. What is significant about the structure of sentence # _____ in lines _____?
17. In sentences _____, what contrasts are developed or implied?
18. In lines _____, why does the author pair quotations?
19. In lines _____, what is the effect of pairing quotations?
20. What is the dominant technique used in lines _____?
21. In lines _____, what is the effect of using a metaphor?
22. In lines _____, juxtaposing _____ and _____ serves the purpose of _____.
23. What does the speaker accomplish in using _____?
24. By using the words _____, the speaker shows the belief that _____.
25. In lines _____, how is the speaker portrayed?
26. The shift in point of view from...has the effect of...
27. What is the theme of the _____ (e.g., second paragraph, whole piece)?
28. In lines _____, the passage shifts from _____ to _____.
29. Why does the author represent _____ as _____ in lines _____?
30. What is the purpose of the syntax in sentence _____?
31. What does _____ symbolize in lines _____?
32. The speaker's attitude toward _____ is best described as one of _____.
33. In _____, the author is asserting that _____.
34. The term _____ conveys the speaker's belief that _____.
35. The speaker assumes that the audience's attitude toward _____ will be one of _____.
36. In the _____ (e.g., first, second, last) paragraph, the speaker seeks to interest us in the subjects of the discussion by stressing the _____.
37. It can be inferred by _____ that _____.

38. The _____ (e.g., first, second) sentence is unified by metaphorical references pertaining to _____.
39. The speaker's mention of _____ is appropriate to the development of the argument as an illustration of _____.
40. As the sentence in lines _____ is constructed, _____ is parallel to _____.
41. It can be inferred from the description of _____ that the qualities of _____ are valued by the speaker.
42. According to the passage, _____ is _____ because _____.
43. In the context of the passage, _____ is best interpreted as _____.
44. Sentence _____ is best described as _____.
45. The antecedent for _____ in line _____ is _____.
46. What type of argument does the writer employ in lines _____?
47. Why does the speaker use the sequence of ideas in lines _____?
48. We can infer from _____ that _____.
49. What pattern of exposition does the writer use in this passage?
50. What is the point of view in this passage/poem?
51. What is the purpose of the statement in lines _____?
52. What atmosphere or mood is established in lines _____?
53. The _____ (e.g., first, fourth) sentence is coherent because of its use of _____.
54. What qualities are present in the scene described in lines _____?
55. What words and details suggest a _____ (adjective) attitude on the part of the author?
56. In line _____, the use of _____ instead of _____ accomplishes _____.
57. In line _____, the author emphasizes _____ because he/she _____.
58. The use of _____ suggests that _____.
59. What is the function of the _____ (sentence, detail, clause, phrase, and so on) in lines _____?
60. The subject of the sentence in lines _____ is _____.
61. What assertions does the author make in the passage, and what is his/her purpose in doing this?
62. By _____, the author most probably means _____.
63. What meanings are contained in the word _____ in line _____?
64. What can we infer from the passage about _____?
65. The author apparently believes that _____.
66. In lines _____, the phrase _____ is used to refer to _____.
67. The author believes that we should _____.
68. The _____ (e.g., first, last, third) sentence of the passage is chiefly remarkable for its _____.
69. What does the author want to encourage in a person?
70. What is the function of _____ in relation to _____?

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From the AP Language and Composition exam:

1. What is the author's attitude toward the subject?
2. The word _____ in context (line ____) is best interpreted to mean . . .
3. What does the phrase _____ mean?
4. The phrase _____ functions primarily as . . .
5. The word/phrase _____ in line ____ refers to which of the following?
6. How would you characterize the style of the passage?
7. The style of the passage as a whole is most accurately characterized as . . .
8. What is the main point of the passage?
9. Restate the phrase, _____.
10. Define the phrase, _____.
11. What does the speaker accomplish in this passage?
12. What is the speaker's purpose in writing this passage?
13. What is the speaker's purpose in lines _____.
14. The speaker's reference to _____ serves primarily to . . .
15. Lines ____ can be interpreted to mean . . .
16. In lines ____, the speaker employs which of the following rhetorical strategies?
17. In the sentence beginning _____, the speaker employs all of the following EXCEPT . . .
18. The type of argument employed by the speaker is most similar to which of the following?
19. The speaker describes _____ in an order best described as from the . . .
20. Why does the writer use the allusion to _____?
21. Which of the following best summarizes the main topic of the passage?
22. The attitude of the entire passage (or parts of the passage) is one of . . .
23. What is the tone of the passage?
24. How would you characterize the diction and style of the passage?
25. What is the speaker asserting in lines _____?
26. In relation to the passage as a whole, the statement in the first sentence presents . . .
[syntax]
27. The second sentence (line ____) is unified by metaphorical references pertaining to . . .
28. The sentence _____ in lines ____ contains which of the following?
29. Describe the structure of the sentence in lines _____.
30. What contrast does the speaker develop in lines _____?
31. What effect is achieved by the speaker's using the phrases _____?
32. What dominant technique is the speaker using in lines _____?
33. In lines _____, _____ is a metaphorical way of saying _____.
34. What does the author achieve by juxtaposing _____ and _____?
35. What does the choice of words show about the speaker's beliefs?

36. Where is there a shift of tone in the passage?
37. The reason for the shift in tone is due to . . .
38. The tone of the passage shifts from one of _____ to one of _____.
39. The syntax in lines _____ serves to _____.
40. What is the speaker's attitude toward the subject?
41. What assumptions does the speaker make about the audience?
42. It can be inferred by the description of _____ that which of the following qualities are valued by the speaker?
43. How does the author seek to interest us in the first paragraph?
44. What method does the author use to develop the argument?
45. Line _____ is parallel to what other line in the passage?
46. What can you infer about the author's attitudes toward the subject?
47. What is the antecedent for _____?
48. What type of argument is the author using in this passage?
49. What pattern of exposition is the author using in this passage?
50. What is the atmosphere established in lines _____?
51. Why is the sentence in lines _____ coherent, despite its length?
52. In line _____, the use of _____ instead of _____ accomplishes what?
53. What is the function of _____ in the passage?
54. What is the subject of the sentence in lines _____?
55. The primary rhetorical function of lines _____ is to . . .
56. The main rhetorical strategy of the _____ paragraph is for the purpose of . . .
57. What does the author apparently believe about the subject?
58. What does the author believe we should do in response to this passage?
59. The author uses this (certain image) for the purpose of . . .
60. The principal contrast employed by the author in the passage/paragraph is between _____ and _____.
61. Why is the sentence in lines _____ remarkable?
62. The antecedent for _____ in the clause _____ is . . .
63. The pattern of exposition exemplified in the passage is best described as . . .
64. The point of view indicated in the phrase _____ in line _____ is that of . . .
65. The atmosphere established in the _____ sentence of paragraph _____ is mainly one of . . .
66. The function of the clauses introduced by _____) in lines _____ is to. . .
67. What is the function of paragraph _____? of line _____?
68. In the passage, the speaker makes all of the following assumptions about his/her readers EXCEPT
69. The diction in the passage is best described as
70. One prominent stylistic characteristic of the _____ paragraph is the use of _____