

2007 AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Question 2

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

In the passage below from *Staying Put: Making a Home in a Restless World*, Scott Russell Sanders responds to an essay by Salman Rushdie, a writer who left his native India for England. Rushdie describes the “effect of mass migrations” as being “the creation of radically new types of human being: people who root themselves in ideas rather than places.” Read the Sanders passage carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze the strategies Sanders uses to develop his perspective about moving.

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Claims for the virtues of shifting ground are familiar and seductive to Americans, this nation of restless movers. From the beginning, our heroes have been sailors, explorers, cowboys, prospectors, speculators, backwoods ramblers, rainbow-chasers, vagabonds of every stripe. Our Promised Land has always been over the next ridge or at the end of the trail, never under our feet. One hundred years after the official closing of the frontier, we have still not shaken off the romance of unlimited space. If we fish out a stream or wear out a field, or if the smoke from a neighbor’s chimney begins to crowd the sky, why, off we go to a new stream, a fresh field, a clean sky. In our national mythology, the worst fate is to be trapped on a farm, in a village, in the sticks, in some dead-end job or unglamorous marriage or played-out game. Stand still, we are warned, and you die. Americans have dug the most canals, laid the most rails, built the most roads and airports of any nation. In the newspaper I read that, even though our sprawling system of interstate highways is crumbling, the president has decided that we should triple it in size, and all without raising our taxes a nickel. Only a populace drunk on driving, a populace infatuated with the myth of the open road, could hear such a proposal without hooting.

So Americans are likely to share Rushdie’s enthusiasm for migration, for the “hybridity, impurity, intermingling, the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs.” Everything about us is mongrel, from race to language, and we are stronger for it. Yet we might respond more skeptically when Rushdie says that “to be a migrant is, perhaps, to be the only species of human being free of the shackles of nationalism (to say nothing of its ugly sister, patriotism).” Lord knows we could do with less nationalism (to say nothing of its ugly siblings, racism, religious sectarianism, or class snobbery). But who would pretend that a history of

migration has immunized the United States against bigotry? And even if, by uprooting ourselves, we shed our chauvinism, is that all we lose?

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In this hemisphere, many of the worst abuses—of land, forests, animals, and communities—have been carried out by “people who root themselves in ideas rather than places.” Rushdie claims that “migrants must, of necessity, make a new imaginative relationship with the world, because of the loss of familiar habitats.” But migrants often pack up their visions and values with the rest of their baggage and carry them along. The Spaniards devastated Central and South America by imposing on this New World the religion, economics, and politics of the Old. Colonists brought slavery with them to North America, along with smallpox and Norway rats. The Dust Bowl of the 1930s was caused not by drought but by the transfer onto the Great Plains of farming methods that were suitable to wetter regions. The habit of our industry and commerce has been to force identical schemes onto differing locales, as though the mind were a cookie-cutter and the land were dough.

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I quarrel with Rushdie because he articulates as eloquently as anyone the orthodoxy that I wish to counter: the belief that movement is inherently good, staying put is bad; that uprooting brings tolerance, while rootedness breeds intolerance; that imaginary homelands are preferable to geographical ones; that to be modern, enlightened, fully of our time is to be displaced. Wholesale displacement may be inevitable; but we should not suppose that it occurs without disastrous consequences for the earth and for ourselves. People who root themselves in places are likelier to know and care for those places than are people who root themselves in ideas. When we cease to be migrants and become inhabitants, we might begin to pay enough heed and respect to where we are. By settling in, we have a chance of making a durable home for ourselves, our fellow creatures, and our descendants.

(1993)

AP[®] ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 2

The score should reflect a judgment of the essay's quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 40 minutes to read and write; therefore, the essay is not a finished product and should not be judged by standards that are appropriate for an out-of-class assignment. Evaluate the essay as a draft, making certain to reward students for what they do well.

All essays, even those scored 8 or 9, may contain occasional flaws in analysis, prose style, or mechanics. Such features should enter into the holistic evaluation of an essay's overall quality. In no case may an essay with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics be scored higher than a 2.

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- 9 Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for 8 essays and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their explanation or demonstrate particularly impressive control of language.

8 Effective

Essays earning a score of 8 **effectively** analyze the strategies Sanders uses to develop his perspective about moving. The prose demonstrates an ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not necessarily flawless.

- 7 Essays earning a score of 7 fit the description of 6 essays but provide a more complete explanation or demonstrate a more mature prose style.

6 Adequate

Essays earning a score of 6 **adequately** analyze the strategies Sanders uses to develop his perspective about moving. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

- 5 Essays earning a score of 5 analyze the strategies Sanders uses to develop his perspective about moving. These essays may, however, provide uneven, inconsistent, or limited explanations. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the student's ideas.

4 Inadequate

Essays earning a score of 4 **inadequately** analyze the strategies Sanders uses to develop his perspective about moving. The prose generally conveys the student's ideas but may suggest immature control of writing.

- 3 Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for a score of 4 but demonstrate less success in analyzing the strategies Sanders uses to develop his perspective about moving. The essays may show less control of writing.

2 Little Success

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in analyzing the strategies Sanders uses to develop his perspective about moving. These essays may misunderstand the prompt; fail to analyze the strategies Sanders uses to develop his perspective about moving; or substitute a simpler task by responding to the prompt tangentially with unrelated, inaccurate, or inappropriate explanation. The prose often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing.

Question II

2A 1 of 3

Rushdie

In response to an essay by Salman ~~Rushdie~~ on the benefits of moving, Scott Russell Sanders refutes "the belief that movement is inherently good" (Sanders). He claims that we should root ourselves in places rather than ideas, that we should care for the earth rather than our own selfish desires. Through his use of direct quotes, acknowledgement of the counter-argument, and informal yet respectful tone, Sanders relates his belief that we must settle down and cease our tireless moving if we are to ever "pay enough ~~need~~ need and respect to where we are" (Sanders).

Sanders' essay was written purely in response to Rushdie's essay — therefore, he ~~uses~~ quotes Rushdie several times directly and then states his own beliefs in similar ways. For example, Sanders quoted Rushdie in saying that "'to be a migrant is perhaps to be the only species of human being free of the shackles of nationalism (to say nothing of its ugly sister, patriotism)'" (Sanders). Sanders asserts this statement by saying "Lord knows we could do with less nationalism (to say nothing of its ugly siblings, racism, religious sectarianism, or class snobbery" (Sanders). In quoting Rushdie directly and repeating his words and syntax, Sanders not only assures the reader of his careful thoughtfulness on the issue, but also states his own belief that moving does nothing to rid us of the



unfortunate aspects of humanity of which we all wish to be free. He also quotes Rushdie several other times; for example, he says, "Rushdie claims that 'migrants must ... make a new imaginative relationship with the world'" (Sanders). He then uses this quote as a counterexample to ^{one of} his main points — how can one create a new relationship with the world when they are constantly altering their place in it?

Sanders use of direct quotes goes hand in hand with his acknowledgement of the opponent's argument — he quotes Rushdie only to refute his point and bring up his own points. At first he states parts of Rushdie's argument and agrees with them, such as the "hybridity" (Sanders) of American culture which makes us all the more stronger and wiser. He then moves on to another quote with which he does not so readily agree, but to which he "might respond more skeptically" (Sanders). He then moves on to a third quote and completely disagrees with it. Finally, his development of stating the counter-argument is completed when he states that Rushdie articulates exactly "the orthodoxy that [he] wishe[s] to ~~cert~~ counter — that movement is inherently good, staying put bad" (Sanders). He finishes by asserting that we must root ourselves to a specific place ~~and~~ in order to "pay enough heed and respect to where we are" (Sanders).



This gradual movement from agreement to complete disagreement reinforces Sanders' point and respectfully refutes Rushdie's point consequently.

His disagreement with Rushdie in principle could have been marked by a condescending and imposing tone—however through his choice of phrases, Sanders' tone is informal, yet respectful of Rushdie's point of view. He connects himself with the reader and Rushdie by using such words as "I", "our", and "we" (Sanders). He places himself on our level as well as Rushdie's; he is conversational and informal. Yet he is still respectful towards Rushdie and admits that even though he disagrees completely with him, Rushdie articulated his views "as eloquently as anyone" (Sanders). He is respectful of the man whose ideas he is refuting—there is not even a hint of ad hominem argument in this essay, for Sanders never attacks Rushdie himself. This tone develops his point as one that is accessible and easy to understand for all people, as one that we all should hold as a fundamental belief of society.

Sanders does not develop his point of view with vicious verbal slander or disrespectful destruction of Rushdie's well-thought out argument. Rather, he uses a respectful as well as informal tone, direct quotes, and acknowledgement and sometimes agreement with his opponent's argument.

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In his passage *Staying Put: Making a Home in a Restless World*, Scott Russell Sanders employs a veritable plethora of ~~is~~ rhetorical strategies in order to create a skeptical, critical, and even at times mocking tone towards incessant migration. As this idea is exemplified by Salman Rushdie, Sanders systematically attacks the philosophy that "movement is inherently good [and that] staying put is bad."

Sanders begins his criticism by outlining opposition. His colorful diction depicts America as a land of "heroes," and he implements Zeugma in order to equate "explorers" and "cowboys" with "rainbow-chasers," seeming to embrace such an idealistic view. He also addresses the audience using the 1st person plural pronoun "we" and ~~our~~ the possessive "our" which immediately unities the perspective of the author and the reader. However, beginning with the short and grim sentence ~~containing~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ the first paragraph, Sanders' skepticism begins to shine through as he qualifies the statement "stand still ... and you die" with his own editorial "we are ~~worried~~" All of a sudden the author begins to question this idealism, asking how Americans ~~could listen to~~ "could hear such [intense] a proposal without hooting."

In the second paragraph Sanders addresses Rushdie's direct points, and only adds to his



credibility as an authority by making the admission that because of the diversity created by migration "we are stronger." Still, Sanders attacks Rushdie's assertion that "to be a migrant is the only species of human being free of the shackles of nationalism," even mocking his syntactical structure by using parenthesis to offer his analysis on the state of which social problems have (or have not) been resolved. In the third paragraph, Sanders bolsters his argument by ~~adding~~ citing historical examples to lend ethos to his opinions, and concludes the paragraph by metaphorically exposing the ridiculous notion that the world was meant to accept heterogenous ~~cultures~~ practices (suited for and specialized in one region), in all locales. Ultimately, Rushdie believed in a world based on ideas because he himself was a consummate romantic, but as a pragmatist, Sanders does not overlook how "By settling in, we have a chance of making a durable home for ourselves, our fellow creatures, and our descendants"

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