

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## AP English Literature and Composition

### Unit 2: *Pygmalion*, *Emma*, and *The Taming of the Shrew* essay assessment

Directions: Answer **three of the following questions** in well-organized essays. You will compose one essay at home and submit it at the beginning of the class period. The other two essays, you will compose under time constraints in class. You must analyze a different literary work in each essay.

1. In retrospect, the reader often discovers that the first chapter of a novel or the first scene of a play introduces some of the major themes of the work. Write an essay about act 1 of *Pygmalion*, the induction of *The Taming of the Shrew*, or chapter 1 of *Emma* in which you explain how the initial scenes function to set forth a major theme of the play. (Remember that a theme expresses some truth about humanity.)
2. One of the strongest human drives seems to be a desire for power. Write an essay in which you discuss how a character in *Pygmalion*, *Emma*, or *The Taming of the Shrew* struggles to free himself or herself from the power of others or seeks to gain power over others. Be sure to demonstrate in your essay how the author uses this power struggle to enhance the meaning of the work.
3. George Meredith said, "The true test of comedy is that it shall awaken thoughtful laughter." Choose a scene(s), character(s), recurring idea, or repeated concept from *Pygmalion*, *Emma*, or *The Taming of the Shrew* that awakens "thoughtful laughter" in the reader. Write an essay in which you show why this laughter is "thoughtful" and how it contributes to the meaning of the work, especially considering the purpose of comedy.
4. Novels and plays often include scenes of weddings, funerals, parties, and other social occasions. Such scenes may reveal the values of the characters and the society in which they live. Choose such a scene from *Pygmalion*, *Emma*, or *The Taming of the Shrew* and, in a focused essay, discuss the contribution the scene makes to the meaning of the work as whole.
5. In a literary work, a minor character, often known as a foil, possesses traits that emphasize, by contrast and/or comparison, the distinctive characteristics and qualities of the main character. For example, the ideas or behavior of the minor character might be used to highlight the weaknesses or strengths of the main character. Choose a minor character in *Pygmalion*, *Emma*, or *The Taming of the Shrew* who serves as a foil to a main character. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the relation between the minor character and the major character illuminates the meaning of the work.