

Ms. Little's Last Minute Tips for the AP Exam

MULTIPLE CHOICE SECTION

- 1 hour; 55 questions
- Expect 5 passages with 9-12 questions each (sometimes 4 passages with 10-15 questions each); adjust your time accordingly; usually allow 10 minutes per passage.
- Expect at least 2 poems, two prose passages (occasionally a piece of drama)
- Work systematically. Do not skip around from passage to passage. Answer all the questions for a passage before continuing.
- You will not lose any fraction of a point for a wrong answer so always guess something!
- Read the questions **CAREFULLY**.
- Eliminate answer choices intelligently.
- Write on the test! Read actively! Annotate! Visualize! Paraphrase as you read!

ESSAY SECTION

- 2 hours; 3 essays. Allow approximately 40 minutes for each.
- Address **ALL PARTS OF THE PROMPT**
- DO NOT** wait until the last paragraph to bring up your deep “universal truth” ideas. Remember if you only write an essay on the “obvious” idea (ie. what the speaker’s attitude or reaction is, which character has an inner conflict, etc) you will not score above a 5.
- DO PLAN your essays. Know what your thesis is (and be sure that it answers the entire prompt), what examples you will use, and your organizational scheme.
- Scaffold the writing task and break down timing into sections. For example:
 - 1-2 minutes: read the topic carefully
 - 5-6 minutes: Organize the essay including a thesis, body paragraphs, and example from the text for support.
 - 30 minutes: Write!
 - 2-3 minutes: proofread. Do not make major editing changes.
- Always try to write 2-4 pages per essay.
- Use a blue or black pen...no pencils or other colors.
- For the open topic (question #3), cover the suggested titles at the bottom of the page and think of at least 1-2 titles that will work with the prompt. Then look at the list to see if there is something better.
- Finally, never forget the basics:
 - Stay on topic
 - Organization
 - Development
 - Language/style

I know you are well prepared and can pass this test. Get a good night’s sleep the night before and be sure to eat a good breakfast the morning of the test. Know what time to report to the bus, and be there EARLY!

