Sample AP Language Open Question Persuasive 2012

**2012 AP® ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

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**-12-**

**Question 3**

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)Consider the distinct perspectives expressed in the following statements.

If you develop the absolute sense of certainty that powerful beliefs provide, then you can get

yourself to accomplish virtually anything, including those things that other people are certain

are impossible.

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*William Lyon Phelps, American educator, journalist, and professor (1865–1943)*

I think we ought always to entertain our opinions with some measure of doubt. I shouldn’t

wish people dogmatically to believe any philosophy, not even mine.

*Bertrand Russell, British author, mathematician, and philosopher (1872–1970)*

AP Literature 2012

In a well-organized essay, take a position on the relationship between certainty and doubt. Support your argument with appropriate evidence and examples.

In a novel by William Styron, a father tells his son that life “is a search for justice.”

Choose a character from a novel or play who responds in some significant way to justice or injustice. Then writea well-developed essay in which you analyze the character’s understanding of justice, the degree to which the character’s search for justice is successful, and the significance of this search for the work as a whole.You may choose a work from the list below or another work of comparable literary merit. Do not merely summarize the plot.

*All the King’s Men*

*All the Pretty Horses*

*Antigone*

*Atonement*

*Beloved*

*No Country for Old Men*

*Oedipus Rex*

*The Poisonwood Bible*

*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*

*Set This House on Fire*

*The Story of Edgar Sawtelle*

*The Stranger*

*Things Fall Apart*

*A Thousand Acres*

*A Thousand Splendid Suns*

*To Kill a Mockingbird*