

Applied Practice  
in

*King Lear*  
*PRE-AP\*/AP\**

By William Shakespeare

**RESOURCE GUIDE**

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**APPLIED PRACTICE**  
**Resource Guide**  
*King Lear*  
**Pre-AP\*/AP\* Version**

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## GLOSSARY OF LITERARY TERMS

- absolute**—a word free from limitations or qualifications (“best,” “all,” “unique,” “perfect”)
- adage**—a familiar proverb or wise saying
- ad hominem* argument**—an argument attacking an individual’s character rather than his or her position on an issue
- allegory**—a literary work in which characters, objects, or actions represent abstractions
- alliteration**—the repetition of initial sounds in successive or neighboring words
- allusion**—a reference to something literary, mythological, or historical that the author assumes the reader will recognize
- analogy**—a comparison of two different things that are similar in some way
- anaphora**—the repetition of words or phrases at the beginning of consecutive lines or sentences
- anecdote**—a brief narrative that focuses on a particular incident or event
- antecedent**—the word, phrase, or clause to which a pronoun refers
- antithesis**—a statement in which two opposing ideas are balanced
- aphorism**—a concise statement that expresses succinctly a general truth or idea, often using rhyme or balance
- apostrophe**—a figure of speech in which one directly addresses an absent or imaginary person, or some abstraction
- archetype**—a detail, image, or character type that occurs frequently in literature and myth and is thought to appeal in a universal way to the unconscious and to evoke a response
- argument**—a statement of the meaning or main point of a literary work
- asyndeton**—a construction in which elements are presented in a series without conjunctions

## VOCABULARY LIST FOR *KING LEAR*

Note: Vocabulary from the literary passage is listed first, followed by vocabulary from the questions and answers.

### Passage 1

conferring  
amorous  
sojourn  
merit  
bounds  
profess  
felicitate  
ponderous  
strive  
opulent  
propinquity

---

fawning  
derisive  
petulant  
obsequious  
equivocating  
celestial

### Passage 2

wrath  
reservation  
revenue  
coronet  
potency  
banishments  
adieu

---

didactic  
jocular

### Passage 3

insolent  
fraught  
dispositions  
sovereignty  
savor  
riotous  
degenerate  
sterility  
cadent  
dotage  
visage

---

prudent  
folly  
reinforcing

Directions: This part consists of selections from *King Lear* and questions on their content, form, and style. After reading each passage, choose the best answer to each question.

Note: Pay particular attention to the requirement of questions that contain the words NOT, LEAST, or EXCEPT.

Passage 1, Questions 1-8. Read the following passage from Act I, scene i of *King Lear* carefully before you choose your answers.

*Enter one bearing a coronet, then King Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Goneril, Regan, Cordelia, and Attendants.*

*Lear.* Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.

*Glou.* I shall, my lord. *[Exit with Edmund].*

*Lear.* Mean time we shall express our darker purpose.

Give me the map there. Know that we have divided

- (5) In three our kingdom; and 'tis our fast intent  
To shake all cares and business from our age,  
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we  
Unburthen'd crawl toward death. Our son of Cornwall,  
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,  
(10) We have this hour a constant will to publish  
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife  
May be prevented now. The princes, France and Burgundy,  
Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,  
Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,  
(15) And here are to be answer'd. Tell me, my daughters  
(Since now we will divest us both of rule,  
Interest of territory, cares of state),  
Which of you shall we say doth love us most,  
That we our largest bounty may extend  
(20) Where nature doth with merit challenge? Goneril,  
Our eldest-born, speak first.

*Gon.* Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter,  
Dearer than eyesight, space, and liberty,  
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare,

- (25) No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honor;  
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found;  
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable:  
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

*Cor.* *[Aside.]* What shall Cordelia speak?

- (30) Love, and be silent.

*Lear.* Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,  
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,  
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,  
We make thee lady. To thine and Albany's issue

- (35) Be this perpetual. What says our second daughter,  
Our dearest Regan, wife of Cornwall? Speak.

*Reg.* I am made of that self metal as my sister,  
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart  
I find she names my very deed of love;

- (40) Only she comes too short, that I profess  
Myself an enemy to all other joys

- Which the most precious square of sense possesses,  
 And find I am alone felicitate  
 In your dear Highness' love.
- (45) *Cor.* [*Aside.*] Then poor Cordelia!  
 And yet not so, since I am sure my love's  
 More ponderous than my tongue.  
*Lear.* To thee and thine hereditary ever  
 Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom,
- (50) No less in space, validity, and pleasure,  
 Than that conferr'd on Goneril.—Now, our joy,  
 Although our last and least, to whose young love  
 The vines of France and milk of Burgundy  
 Strive to be interest'd, what can you say to draw
- (55) A third more opulent than your sisters'? Speak.  
*Cor.* Nothing, my lord.  
*Lear.* Nothing?  
*Cor.* Nothing.  
*Lear.* Nothing will come of nothing, speak again.
- (60) *Cor.* Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave  
 My heart into my mouth. I love your Majesty  
 According to my bond, no more nor less.  
*Lear.* How, how, Cordelia? Mend your speech a little,  
 Lest you may mar your fortunes.
- (65) *Cor.* Good my lord,  
 You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me: I  
 Return those duties back as are right fit,  
 Obey you, love you, and most honor you.  
 Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
- (70) They love you all? Happily, when I shall wed,  
 That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry  
 Half my love with him, half my care and duty.  
 Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,  
 To love my father all.
- (75) *Lear.* But goes thy heart with this?  
*Cor.* Aye, my good lord.  
*Lear.* So young, and so untender?  
*Cor.* So young, my lord, and true.  
*Lear.* Let it be so: thy truth then be thy dow'r!
- (80) For by the sacred radiance of the sun,  
 The mysteries of Hecat and the night;  
 By all the operation of the orbs,  
 From whom we do exist and cease to be;  
 Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
- (85) Propinquity and property of blood,  
 And as a stranger to my heart and me  
 Hold thee from this for ever. The barbarous Scythian,  
 Or he that makes his generation messes  
 To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom  
 Be as well neighbor'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
- (90) As thou my sometime daughter.

1. As it is used in line 3, “darker” most likely means
  - (A) more sinister
  - (B) more dishonest
  - (C) more private
  - (D) more complicated
  - (E) more questionable
  
2. In context of the phrases “more than words can wield” (line 22) and “and speech unable” (line 27), Goneril’s words in lines 22-28 are
  - (A) sarcastic
  - (B) prophetic
  - (C) symbolic
  - (D) euphemistic
  - (E) ironic
  
3. The tone of Regan’s words in lines 37-44 is best described as
  - (A) assertive
  - (B) sincere
  - (C) patronizing
  - (D) fawning
  - (E) derisive
  
4. Cordelia’s words in lines 46-47 are best understood to mean that she believes her love for her father
  - (A) is strong enough not to require flattering words
  - (B) is so burdensome that she cannot speak of it openly
  - (C) is certainly greater than her sisters’ love for him
  - (D) will be made clear when she gets a chance to describe it
  - (E) is strong enough to give her words equal to those of her sisters
  
5. Lines 65-74 reveal Cordelia to be
  - (A) spiteful
  - (B) petulant
  - (C) realistic
  - (D) obsequious
  - (E) equivocating

6. In the same lines, Cordelia reinforces her primary point by employing a(n)
- (A) simile describing her love
  - (B) rhetorical question undercutting her sisters
  - (C) allusion to a greater power
  - (D) paradox concerning the nature of family
  - (E) aphorism communicating a truth about marriage
7. Lines 73-74 mean that Cordelia will
- (A) never marry since she loves her father so much
  - (B) not give all of her love to her father once she is married
  - (C) prove her love by marrying the person her father chooses for her
  - (D) be sure to marry a foreigner in order to strengthen her father's power
  - (E) not turn from her father when she marries as her sisters have
8. Which of the following statements is most consistent with the idea conveyed in lines 80-84?
- (A) Lear experiences a strong sense of purpose.
  - (B) Cordelia's actions were premeditated.
  - (C) Witchcraft is commonly practiced in the kingdom.
  - (D) Human destiny is under celestial control.
  - (E) The mysteries of the universe are unknowable.



## Question 6

(Suggested time—40 minutes)

Note to teachers and students: On the English Literature and Composition Exam, students are given an open free-response question and a list of possible works from which to choose in answering the question. For the purpose of applied practice in class, the question given here was written with *King Lear* in mind. However, the question could be applied to numerous literary works. It is important for students to understand that, on the actual exam, a student's choice would not be restricted to a given work.

A tragic hero is traditionally defined as the main character in a drama who is a person of significance and whose experience culminates in a catastrophe which is treated with dignity and seriousness. Often an error, frailty, or misstep causes the fortunes of the hero to be reversed. Using specific evidence from the play, discuss whether or not the character of King Lear fits the definition of a tragic hero.