

Free Response Practice  
in

*Shakespeare's Tragedies*  
*PRE-AP\*/AP\**

By Shakespeare

**RESOURCE GUIDE**

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**APPLIED PRACTICE**  
***Free Response Practice in Shakespeare’s Tragedies***

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Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes)

Read the following passage from Act II, scene iii of *Romeo and Juliet*. Then, in a well-organized essay, discuss how the passage serves both to reveal the nature of the relationship between Friar Lawrence and Romeo and to illuminate the personalities of the two characters.

*Enter Friar Lawrence alone, with a basket.*

- Fri. L.* The grey-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning night,  
Check'ring the eastern clouds with streaks of light,  
And fleckled darkness like a drunkard reels  
From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels.  
(5) Now ere the sun advance his burning eye,  
The day to cheer and night's dank dew to dry,  
I must up-fill this osier cage of ours  
With baleful weeds and precious-juiced flowers.  
The earth that's nature's mother is her tomb;  
(10) What is her burying grave, that is her womb;  
And from her womb children of divers kind  
We sucking on her natural bosom find:  
Many for many virtues excellent,  
Not but for some, and yet all different.  
(15) O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies  
In plants, stones, and their true qualities;  
For nought so vile that on the earth doth live  
But to the earth some special good doth give;  
Nor aught so good but, strain'd from that fair use,  
(20) Revolts from the true birth, stumbling on abuse.  
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,  
And vice sometime by action dignified.

*Enter Romeo*

- Within the infant rind of this weak flower  
(25) Poison hath residence and medicine power;  
For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part,  
Being tasted, stays all senses with the heart.  
Two such opposed kings encamp them still  
In man as well as herbs, grace and rude will;  
(30) And where the worser is predominant,  
Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

*Rom.* Good morrow, father.

*Fri. L.* *Benedicite!*

- What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?  
(35) Young son, it argues a distempered head  
So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed.  
Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,  
And where care lodges, sleep will never lie;  
But where unbruised youth with unstuff'd brain  
(40) Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign.  
Therefore thy earliness doth me assure  
Thou art up-rous'd with some distemp'rature;  
Or if not so, then here I hit it right—  
Our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night.

- (45) *Rom.* That last is true—the sweeter rest was mine.  
*Fri. L.* God pardon sin! Wast thou with Rosaline?  
*Rom.* With Rosaline? my ghostly father, no;  
I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.  
*Fri. L.* That's my good son, but where hast thou been then?
- (50) *Rom.* I'll tell thee ere thou ask it me again.  
I have been feasting with mine enemy,  
where on a sudden one hath wounded me  
That's by me wounded; both our remedies  
Within thy help and holy physic lies.
- (55) I bear no hatred, blessed man, for lo  
My intercession likewise steads my foe.  
*Fri. L.* Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift,  
Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.  
*Rom.* Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set
- (60) On the fair daughter of rich Capulet.  
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine,  
And all combin'd, save what thou must combine  
By holy marriage. When and where and how  
We met, we woo'd, and made exchange of vow,
- (65) I'll tell thee as we pass, but this I pray,  
That thou consent to marry us to-day.  
*Fri. L.* Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here!  
Is Rosaline, that thou didst love so dear,  
So soon forsaken? Young men's love then lies
- (70) Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.  
Jesu Maria, what a deal of brine  
Hath wash'd thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!  
How much salt water thrown away in waste,  
To season love, that of it doth not taste!
- (75) The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,  
Thy old groans yet ringing in mine ancient ears;  
Lo here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit  
Of an old tear that is not wash'd off yet.  
If e'er thou wast thyself and these woes thine,
- (80) Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline.  
And art thou chang'd? Pronounce this sentence then:  
Women may fall, when there's no strength in men.  
*Rom.* Thou chidst me oft for loving Rosaline.  
*Fri. L.* For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.
- (85) *Rom.* And badst me bury love.  
*Fri. L.* Not in a grave,  
To lay one in, another out to have.  
*Rom.* I pray thee chide me not. Her I love now  
Doth grace for grace and love for love allow;
- (90) The other did not so.  
*Fri. L.* O, she knew well  
Thy love did read by rote that could not spell.  
But come, young waverer, come go with me,  
In one respect I'll thy assistant be;
- (95) For this alliance may so happy prove  
To turn your households' rancor to pure love.  
*Rom.* O, let us hence, I stand on sudden haste.  
*Fri. L.* Wisely and slow, they stumble that run fast  
*Exeunt.*

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes)

Read the following passage from Act I, scene vii of *Macbeth*. Then, in a well-organized essay, discuss how Lady Macbeth uses the resources of language to convince her husband to carry out the murder as planned.

- Macb.* If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well  
It were done quickly. If th' assassination  
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch  
With his surcease, success; that but this blow  
(5) Might be the be-all and the end-all—here,  
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,  
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases  
We still have judgment here, that we but teach  
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return  
(10) To plague th' inventor. This even-handed justice  
Commends th' ingredience of our poison'd chalice  
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:  
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,  
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,  
(15) Who should against his murderer shut the door,  
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan  
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been  
So clear in his great office, that his virtues  
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongu'd, against  
(20) The deep damnation of his taking-off;  
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,  
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin, hors'd  
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,  
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,  
(25) That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur  
To prick the sides of my intent, but only  
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself,  
And falls on th' other—  
*Enter Lady Macbeth.*  
(30) How now? what news?  
*Lady M.* He has almost supp'd. Why have you left the chamber?  
*Macb.* Hath he ask'd for me?  
*Lady M.* Know you not he has?  
*Macb.* We will proceed no further in this business:  
(35) He hath honor'd me of late, and I have bought  
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,  
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,  
Nor cast aside so soon.  
*Lady M.* Was the hope drunk wherein you dress'd yourself?  
(40) Hath it slept since?  
And wakes it now to look so green and pale  
At what it did so freely? From this time  
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard  
To be the same in thine own act and valor  
(45) As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that  
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,  
And live a coward in thine own esteem,  
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"

Like the poor cat i' the adage?  
 (50) *Macb.* Prithee peace!  
 I dare do all that may become a man;  
 Who dares do more is none.  
*Lady M.* What beast was't then  
 That made you break this enterprise to me?  
 (55) When you durst do it, then you were a man;  
 And to be more than what you were, you would  
 Be so much more the man. Nor time, nor place,  
 Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:  
 They have made themselves, and that their fitness now  
 (60) Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know  
 How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me;  
 I would, while it was smiling in my face,  
 Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,  
 And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you  
 (65) Have done to this.  
*Macb.* If we should fail?  
*Lady M.* We fail?  
 But screw your courage to the sticking place,  
 And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep  
 (70) (Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey  
 Soundly invite him), his two chamberlains  
 Will I with wine and wassail so convince,  
 That memory, the warder of the brain,  
 Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason  
 (75) A limbeck only. When in swinish sleep  
 Their drenched natures lies as in a death,  
 What cannot you and I perform upon  
 Th' unguarded Duncan? what not put upon  
 His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt  
 (80) Of our great quell?  
*Macb.* Bring forth men-children only!  
 For thy undaunted mettle should compose  
 Nothing but males. Will it not be receiv'd,  
 When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two  
 (85) Of his own chamber, and us'd their very daggers,  
 That they have done't?  
*Lady M.* Who dares receive it other,  
 As we shall make our griefs and clamor roar  
 Upon his death?  
 (90) *Macb.* I am settled, and bend up  
 Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.  
 Away, and mock the time with fairest show:  
 False face must hide what the false heart doth know.  
*Exeunt.*

## Question 2

(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 purposes of applied practice in class, the question given here was written with *Macbeth* 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.

In many works of literature, the main character is developed partially through the use of a “foil,” that is, a character who, by providing a strong contrast to the main character, underscores the characteristics of the main character. In a well-organized essay, discuss the ways in which Banquo serves as a foil to Macbeth. Draw evidence from the play to support your assertions. Do not merely summarize.