

**Student Name:** ..... **ID:** ..... **Section:** .....

1. (20 points) Compare and contrast the power of stereotypes in two of the works listed below. What fixed or formulaic images or ideas are used in the works? Where are they placed and what literary techniques are used to present them? How do these oversimplified notions affect other elements in the text and the work overall?

- *Beauty*
- “You’re Beautiful”
- “Segregationist”
- “The £1,000,000 Bank-Note”
- “Happy Endings”
- “The Search Engine”
- “The Lottery”

2. (30 points) Read the following passage carefully. Then, write a well-organized essay analyzing the contrast between the serious and the trivial, or consequence and inconsequence, in the scene. What techniques does Priestley use to create this dramatic tension? You might consider devices such as irony, juxtaposition, word choice, and gestures. How are the techniques used, and to what effect?

MRS BIRLING. (*smiling*) And I must say, Gerald, you’ve argued this very cleverly, and I’m most grateful.

GERALD. (*going for his drink*) Well, you see, while I was out of the house I’d time to cool off and think things out a little.

BIRLING. (*giving him a drink*) Yes, he didn’t keep you on the run as he did the rest of us. I’ll admit now he gave me a bit of a scare at the time. But I’d a special reason for not wanting any public scandal just now. (*Has his drink now, and raises his glass.*) Well, here’s to us. Come on, Sheila, don’t look like that. All over now.

SHEILA. The worst part is. But you’re forgetting one thing I still can’t forget. Everything we said had happened really had happened. If it didn’t end tragically, then that’s lucky for us. But it might have done.

BIRLING. (*jovially*) But the whole thing’s different now. Come, come, you can see that, can’t you? (*Imitating INSPECTOR in his final speech*) *You all helped to kill her.* (*Pointing at SHEILA and ERIC, and laughing*) And I wish you could have seen the look on your faces when he said that. (*SHEILA moves towards the door.*) Going to bed, young woman?

SHEILA. (*tensely*) I want to get out of this. It frightens me the way you talk.

BIRLING. (*heartily*) Nonsense! You’ll have a good laugh over it yet. Look, you’d better ask Gerald for that ring you gave back to him, hadn’t you? Then you’ll feel better.

SHEILA. (*passionately*) You’re pretending everything’s just as it was before.

ERIC. I’m not!





## Scoring Rubric for Test Practice Question 2

### Question Overview

The prompt asks students to read carefully a passage toward the end of Priestley’s play *An Inspector Calls*, and to write a well-organized essay analyzing the contrast between aspects which are serious and those that are non-serious, trivial or trivializing in the excerpt.

The additional parallel pair “consequence-inconsequence” in the question aims to give students further vocabulary and encourage them to think about the relation between content and theme in the play. Sub-questions calling students’ attention to techniques urge students to consider the connection between content and presentation, to examine not only the earnest versus joking qualities of the scene, but also how those characteristics are achieved.

This prompt is looking to give students an opportunity to exercise and showcase their close reading skills as well as their ability to relate specific observations about the text’s techniques to its purpose and eventual effect.

<p><b>Top Scores</b> 80–100% (16–20)</p> <p>Excellent to Outstanding <b>A</b></p>	<p>Essays in the top range give a well-focused and compelling analysis of the contrastive relationship between the grave and the blithe elements in the excerpt and its dramatic results. Their reading of what is serious and trivial is sensitive and nuanced (ex. they make a distinction between degrees or kinds of seriousness and triviality). They use apt and specific textual evidence to effectively support a thoughtful and insightful discussion of juxtaposed gravity and laughter, of Priestley’s techniques and their outcome. These essays demonstrate sophisticated understanding and examination of the text (both the quoted passage and the play as a whole) and great control of language and grasp of academic convention in their writing.</p>
<p><b>Upper Scores</b> 70–79% (14–15.75)</p> <p>Good to Very Good <b>B</b></p>	<p>Essays in the upper range show a reasonable analysis of aspects which are serious and those which are lighthearted in the passage. They give appropriate textual support for their argument but their examination of the text is less thorough, perceptive, and not as well-developed as in the top range. While they acknowledge contrast, they may not elaborate fully on the tension created through various techniques and its significance or end result. <u>Writing is clear, coherent, and consistent.</u></p>
<p><b>Middle Scores</b> 60–69% (12–13.75)</p> <p>Competent, Average <b>C</b></p>	<p>Essays in the middle range deals with issues of seriousness and triviality in the passage but in a rote, cursory, oversimplified or overgeneralized way. There tends to be plot summary or descriptions of the excerpt rather than pointed examples to illustrate and advance an argument. They give a plausible list or explanation of the devices and techniques that Priestley uses to mark opposing attitudes toward consequence but offer little exploration of how they are used and to what effect. Prose is often vague and has several technical and grammatical problems ex. spelling, agreement, tense, diction.</p>
<p><b>Lower Scores</b> 50–59% (10–11.75)</p> <p>Marginal, Poor but Passing <b>D</b></p>	<p>Essays in the lower range try to answer the test question but sometimes misunderstand it or refer to it in a very rudimentary way. Some cases evade engaging with the question. They may repeat a few key words like contrast, serious or trivial from the prompt but main discussion minimally expands on these topics or connects them to technique and eventual effect. There may be frequent descriptions and misreadings of the excerpted text as well as of the play as a whole and inadequate usage or understanding of concepts or terms used. Points made are sometimes rote or contradictory, with very little or ineffective substantiation for interpretations. Writing is marred by frequent and compounded grammatical and mechanical problems.</p>
<p><b>Lowest Scores</b> 0–49% (0–9.75)</p> <p>Insufficient, Unacceptable <b>F</b></p>	<p>Essays in the failing range do not answer the test question (ex. off topic), do not discuss manifestations of seriousness or triviality, or offer discussion that is irrelevant to the prompt, and/or is plagiarized. They may be incomplete (ex. ran out of time), more than half a page left blank, or are incoherent in presenting their ideas. There are frequent and serious misinterpretations of the text, excessive or inaccurate plot summary, rambling, minimal or no substantiation, and frequent basic grammatical and mechanical problems or carelessness.</p>