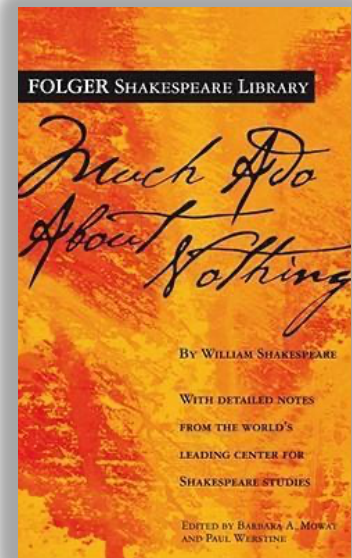
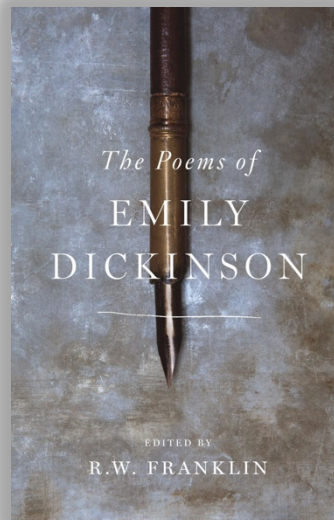
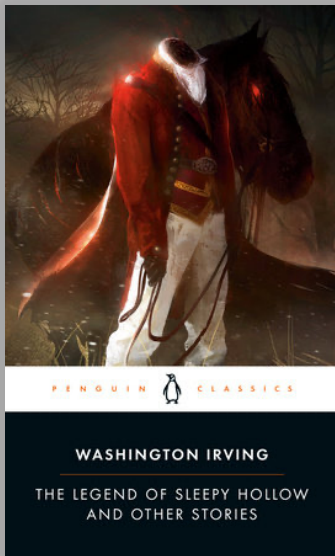




UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE

Literary Criticism

Region • 2025



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University Interscholastic League
Literary Criticism Contest • Region • 2025

Part 1: Knowledge of Literary Terms and of Literary History

30 items (1 point each)

1. Commonplace in literature and movies, the character serving as a mysterious look-alike is known as (a/n)
A) doppelgänger.
B) *femme fatale*.
C) ingénue.
D) tritagonist.
E) twinner.
2. The group of American writers, including Ernest Hemingway and Gertrude Stein, born around 1900, some of whom served in WWI and reacted during the 1920s against certain tendencies of older writers of their time, is known as the
A) Beat Generation.
B) Black Mountain Group.
C) Harlem Renaissance.
D) Knickerbocker Group.
E) Lost Generation.
3. The recipient of the 2020 Nobel Prize for Literature "for her unmistakable poetic voice that with austere beauty makes individual existence universal" is
A) Pearl Buck.
B) Annie Ernaux.
C) Louise Glück.
D) Nadine Gordimer.
E) Doris Lessing.
4. Any person who through contrast underscores the distinctive characteristics of another person is a(n)
A) alazon.
B) foil.
C) nemesis.
D) persona.
E) tritagonist.
5. **Not** designated by Kenneth Burke in his *Grammar of Motives* as one of the four master tropes (master because of their role in the discovery and description of "the truth") is
A) irony.
B) metaphor.
C) metonymy.
D) simile.
E) synecdoche.
6. The pattern in which the second part of a line of verse or a grammatical structure is balanced against the first part but with the parts reversed is an example of
A) chiasmus.
B) metalepsis.
C) parallelism.
D) reduplication.
E) zeugma.
7. The group of faculty and students associated with Vanderbilt University that between 1922 and 1925 published a literary magazine of poetry and criticism to which John Crowe Ransom and Robert Penn Warren contributed, is
A) the Free Verse Movement.
B) The Fugitives.
C) The Movement.
D) the Oxford Movement.
E) the Parnassians.
8. The stanzaic form, credited to Boccaccio, consisting of eight iambic pentameter (or hendecasyllabic) lines rhyming *abababcc* is the
A) occasional verse.
B) octameter.
C) octapla.
D) octastich.
E) *ottava rima*.
9. The recipient of the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for her short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies* is
A) Geraldine Brooks.
B) Jennifer Egan.
C) Jhumpa Lahiri.
D) E. Annie Proulx.
E) Marilynne Robinson.
10. Closely related to both Aristotle's "catharsis" and Longinus's "transport," the judging of a work of art in terms of its results, especially and primarily its emotional effect, is
A) aesthetic distance.
B) affective fallacy.
C) intentional fallacy.
D) logical positivism.
E) pathetic fallacy.

11. The descriptive term applied to any decorative art characterized by fantastic representations of human and animal forms often combined into formal distortions of the natural to the point of absurdity, ugliness, or caricature is
 - A) dystopian.
 - B) gnomic.
 - C) grotesque.
 - D) macabre.
 - E) stichomythian.
12. Lines of verse in which both the grammatical structure and the sense reach completion at a line's end are known as
 - A) end-stopped lines.
 - B) enjambment.
 - C) reduplication.
 - D) run-on line.
 - E) truncation.
13. Historically, **not** one of the Elizabethan playwright William Shakespeare's tragedies is
 - A) *All's Well That Ends Well*.
 - B) *Coriolanus*.
 - C) *The Life of Timon of Athens*.
 - D) *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*.
 - E) *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*.
14. The award-winning twentieth-century American playwright whose characters struggle to succeed, or at least survive, at the fringes of society in plays like *Beyond the Horizon*, *The Hairy Ape*, *Mourning Becomes Electra*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, and *The Iceman Cometh* is
 - A) Edward Albee.
 - B) Horton Foote.
 - C) Arthur Miller.
 - D) Eugene O'Neill.
 - E) Neil Simon.
15. The process of reasoning from data to conclusions and in literature the type of writing that solves—through logical processes—some sort of enigma is known as
 - A) exegesis.
 - B) philology.
 - C) positivism.
 - D) ratiocination.
 - E) vorticism.
16. The portion of the Renaissance during the reign of James I that was characterized by both an ever-widening breach between the Puritan and the Cavalier, as well as the flourishing of English drama, is known as the
 - A) Augustan Age.
 - B) Caroline Age.
 - C) Elizabethan Age.
 - D) Jacobean Age.
 - E) Restoration Age.
17. A short lyric usually dealing with love or a pastoral theme and designed for—or at least suitable for—a musical setting is a(n)
 - A) aubade.
 - B) ballad.
 - C) madrigal.
 - D) masque.
 - E) paean.
18. The recipient of the 1987 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for her collection titled *Thomas and Beulah* is
 - A) Rita Dove.
 - B) Louise Glück.
 - C) Carolyn Kizer.
 - D) Lisel Mueller.
 - E) Mary Oliver.
19. Literature—more especially, that body of writing—comprising drama, fiction, criticism, and essays that lives because of inherent imaginative and artistic rather than scientific, philosophical, or intellectual qualities (and sometimes used to characterize light or artificial writing) is known collectively as
 - A) belles-lettres.
 - B) chrestomathy.
 - C) incunabulum.
 - D) prosody.
 - E) purple patch.
20. The twentieth-century American author of *The Red Pony*, *Tortilla Flat*, *In Dubious Battle*, *Of Mice and Men*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *East of Eden*, and *The Winter of Our Discontent* is
 - A) William Faulkner.
 - B) F. Scott Fitzgerald.
 - C) Ernest Hemingway.
 - D) J. D. Salinger.
 - E) John Steinbeck.

21. The recipient of the 1996 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for his musical *Rent* is
 - A) David Auburn.
 - B) Jonathan Larson.
 - C) Neil Simon.
 - D) August Wilson.
 - E) Doug Wright.
22. The early nineteenth-century New York literary society that includes Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, and William Cullen Bryant, and which was based more on geography and chance rather than on close organization, is the
 - A) Hartford Wits.
 - B) Knickerbocker Group.
 - C) Muckrakers.
 - D) New York School.
 - E) Scriblerus Club.
23. The narrative point of view that offers the mind of an individual at a given moment as a mixture of all levels of awareness and emotive-mental responses from the lowest pre-speech level to the highest fully articulated level of rational thought is known as (an)
 - A) intrusive narrator.
 - B) naïve narrator.
 - C) omniscient point of view.
 - D) putative point of view.
 - E) stream of consciousness.
24. The often-ludicrous effect, intended or otherwise, resulting from the unsuccessful effort to achieve dignity or sublimity of style is known as
 - A) bathos.
 - B) ethos.
 - C) logos.
 - D) mythos.
 - E) pathos.
25. The basic principles of dramatic structure involving action, time, and place attributed to Aristotle (though he addresses only the principle of action) are known collectively as the
 - A) Five Points.
 - B) Four Ages.
 - C) Great Chain of Being.
 - D) Seven Cardinal Virtues.
 - E) Three Unities.
26. **Not** among the twentieth-century British author Joseph Conrad's novels is
 - A) *Heart of Darkness*.
 - B) *Lord Jim*.
 - C) *Nostromo*.
 - D) *Silas Marner*.
 - E) *Victory*.
27. The closed-poem form that is made up of four-line stanzas rhyming *abab*, a form characterized by the second and fourth lines of one stanza reappearing as the first and third lines of the following stanza, is the
 - A) pantoum.
 - B) rondeau.
 - C) sestina.
 - D) *terza rima*.
 - E) villanelle.
28. The sophisticated analysis of the relations among a story—conceived in simple terms—and all the other elements involved in the telling thereof, an analysis that addresses, including the possibility of a neutral quasi-historical telling or the nature of the connections among the story, the teller, and the story is
 - A) didacticism.
 - B) free indirect discourse.
 - C) narratology.
 - D) suspension of disbelief.
 - E) transliteration.
29. An alternate name for the heroic couplet, a fixed form in poetic expression that is comprised of iambic pentameter lines rhymed in pairs, is
 - A) blank verse.
 - B) echo verse.
 - C) open couplet.
 - D) projection verse.
 - E) riding rhyme.
30. The frequently ritualized state of being, either metaphorical or literal, on a threshold in space or time where, in anthropological terms, many social meanings congregate is known as (an)
 - A) aesthetic distance.
 - B) alienation effect.
 - C) epiphany.
 - D) liminality.
 - E) luminism.

Part 2: The UIL Reading List

20 items (2 points each)

Items 31-36 are associated with William Shakespeare's *Much Ado about Nothing*.

Items 37-41 are associated with Washington Irving's *"Sleepy Hollow" and Other Stories*.

Items 42-50 are associated with Emily Dickinson's selected poetry.

31. In the first act of William Shakespeare's *Much Ado about Nothing*, the response to learning of an intended marriage, "Will [the marriage] serve for any model to build mischief on?" is uttered by
 - A) Benedick.
 - B) Borachio.
 - C) Claudio.
 - D) Don John.
 - E) Leonato.
32. The strength of Benedick's declaration, "I would not marry her though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed. She would have made Hercules have turned spit [. . .]" depends on, respectively, both a
 - A) biblical allusion and mythological allusion.
 - B) classical allusion and biblical allusion.
 - C) historical allusion and topical allusion.
 - D) literary allusion and biblical allusion.
 - E) topical allusion and literary allusion.
33. Margaret's response to Beatrice's "By my troth, I am sick": "Get you some of this distilled *carduus benedictus* and lay it to your heart. It is the only thing for a qualm," relies heavily on a pair of
 - A) allusions.
 - B) euphemisms.
 - C) paradoxes.
 - D) puns.
 - E) similes.
34. "What your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light"; the fools are
 - A) the brothers.
 - B) the constables.
 - C) the friars.
 - D) the messengers.
 - E) the watchmen.
35. "And since you could not be my son-in-law, / Be yet my nephew" is an offer made by
 - A) Claudio.
 - B) Dogberry.
 - C) Don Pedro.
 - D) Leonato.
 - E) Verges.
36. The directly accusatory "You seem to me as Dian in her orb, / As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown. / But you are more intemperate in your blood / Than Venus [. . .]" is delivered by
 - A) Benedick to Hero.
 - B) Claudio to Hero.
 - C) Don John to Margaret.
 - D) Don Pedro to Beatrice.
 - E) Don Pedro to Margaret.
37. In Irving's folktale "Rip Van Winkle," the species of irony employed in the narrator's early declaration, "Its chief merit is its scrupulous accuracy, which indeed was a little questioned on its first appearance, but has since been completely established" is
 - A) accismus.
 - B) enantiosis.
 - C) situational irony.
 - D) tragic irony.
 - E) verbal irony.
38. In Washington Irving's "John Bull," from *The Sketch Book*, the narrator opines, declaring that "there is no species of humour in which the English more excel, than that which consists in caricaturing and giving
 - A) deadpan parody."
 - B) hyperbolic misdirection."
 - C) ludicrous appellation."
 - D) misguided satire."
 - E) sarcastic bullying."
39. **Not** among the descriptor applicable to Dame Van Winkle is
 - A) henpecked.
 - B) sharp-tongued.
 - C) shrewish.
 - D) termagant.
 - E) virago-like.
40. The narrator's observance, "the places that now know them will know them no more for ever," refers to the
 - A) disappearance of Christmas traditions.
 - B) disappearance of the Indigenous American.
 - C) disappearance of ludicrous appellation.
 - D) disappearance of sailing ships.
 - E) disappearance of stage coaches.

41. The character who is described as having an "insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor" is
- A) Jonathan Doolittle.
 - B) Brom Dutcher.
 - C) Derrick Van Bummel.
 - D) Rip Van Winkle.
 - E) Nicholas Vedder.

Items 42-45 refer to Emily Dickinson's

[Rearrange a "Wife's" Affection!]

Rearrange a "Wife's" Affection!
 When they dislocate my Brain!
 Amputate my freckled Bosom!
 Make me bearded like a man! 4

Blush, my spirit, in thy Fastness—
 Blush, my unacknowledged clay—
 Seven years of troth have taught thee
 More than Wifehood every may! 8

Love that never leaped its socket—
 Trust entrenched in narrow pain—
 Constancy thro' fire—awarded—
 Anguish—bare of anodyne! 12

Burden—borne so far triumphant—
 None suspect me of the crown,
 For I wear the "Thorns" till *Sunset*—
 Then—my Diadem put on. 16

Big my Secret but it's *bandaged*—
 It will never get away
 Till the Day its Weary Keeper
 Leads it through the Grave to thee. 20

42. The distinctive repetition *across* lines 2-6 of Emily Dickinson's "[Rearrange a "Wife's" Affection!]" that reinforces the speaker's striving for effect is
- A) alliteration.
 - B) assonance.
 - C) consonance.
 - D) dissonance.
 - E) resonance.
43. Lines 6-9—"unacknowledged clay"; "seven years of troth"; "love never leaped its socket"—speak to
- A) the persona's verbosity.
 - B) the persona's youthfulness.
 - C) the poet's exasperation.
 - D) the speaker's fear of death.
 - E) the speaker's virginity.

44. In line 17, "Big my Secret but it's *bandaged*—", the speaker's secret is her
- A) crown.
 - B) diadem.
 - C) love.
 - D) pain.
 - E) wifehood.

45. The word *anodyne* (line 12) infers

- A) amputated and dislocated.
- B) anguish-inducing.
- C) painkilling.
- D) triumphant.
- E) unacknowledged.

Items 46-50 refer to Emily Dickinson's

[Who never lost, are unprepared]

Who never lost, are unprepared
 A Coronet to find!
 Who never thirsted
 Flagons, and Cooling Tamarind! 4

Who never climbed the weary league—
 Can such a foot explore
 The purple territories
 On Pizarro's shore? 8

How many Legions overcome—
 The Emperor will say?
 How many Colors taken
 On Revolution Day? 12

How many Bullets bearest?
 Hast Thou the Royal scar?
 Angels! Write "Promoted"
 On this Soldier's brow! 16

46. Lines 1-2 of "[Who never lost . . .]" constitute a

- A) conceit.
- B) hyperbole.
- C) kenning.
- D) paradox.
- E) tautology.

47. The imperative "Angels! Write 'Promoted' / On this Soldier's brow" (15-16) suggests an encounter with a
- A) celestial tattoo artist.
 - B) Purple Heart.
 - C) stern shrew.
 - D) threshold at the crossing to the afterlife.
 - E) winning emperor.

48. The reference to "Pizarro's shore" (line 8) is a
 A) biblical allusion.
 B) classical allusion.
 C) historical allusion.
 D) literary allusion.
 E) topical allusion.
49. Line 2's "Coronet" is an example of
 A) ambiguity.
 B) controlling image.
 C) metonymy.
 D) paradox.
 E) pun.
50. Line 11's "Colors" is an example of
 A) chiaroscuro.
 B) conceit.
 C) metaphor.
 D) synæsthesia.
 E) synecdoche.
51. The sonnet's volta occurs in
 A) line 4.
 B) line 8.
 C) line 9.
 D) line 12.
 E) line 13.
52. Lines 2 and 4, among others, are characterized by
 A) hyperbole.
 B) inversion.
 C) litotes.
 D) metathesis.
 E) zeugma.
53. The poem's theme is
 A) Elizabethan sonnets are superior to other sonnets.
 B) the fair sex does not appreciate poetry.
 C) nature works against declarations of love.
 D) vanity supersedes immortalization.
 E) verse can make someone essentially immortal.

Part 3: Ability in Literary Criticism
15 items (2 points each)

Items 51-56 refer to Edmund Spenser's

Sonnet 75
 from *Amoretti*

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,
 But came the waves, and washéd it away:
 Again I wrote it with a second hand,
 But came the tide, and made my pains his prey. 4
 "Vain man," said she, "that dost in vain assay
 A mortal thing so to immortalise;
 For I myself shall like to this decay,
 And eke my name be wipéd out likewise." 8
 "Not so," quod I, "let baser things devise
 To die in dust, but you shall live by fame:
 My verse your virtues rare shall eternise,
 And in the heavens write your glorious name: 12
 Where, whenas death shall all the world subdue,
 Our love shall live, and later life renew."

51. Edmund Spenser's Sonnet 75, of his sonnet cycle *Amoretti*, is an example of the
 A) Anglo-Italian sonnet.
 B) Miltonic sonnet.
 C) Petrarchan sonnet.
 D) Shakespearean sonnet.
 E) Spenserian sonnet.

54. The action that is introduced in line 1 serves as a metaphor that becomes the poem's
 A) aphoristic idiom.
 B) controlling image.
 C) epigrammatic core.
 D) metaphysical conceit.
 E) objective correlative.
55. One of the schemes of repetition found throughout Spenser's sonnet, including, especially, line 4 is
 A) assonance.
 B) dissonance.
 C) plocé.
 D) polyptoton.
 E) symplocé.

Items 57-60 refer to William Wordsworth's

Matthew

poem found on the next page

If Nature, for a favourite child,
In thee hath tempered so her clay,
That every hour thy heart runs wild,
Yet never once doth go astray, 4

Read o'er these lines; and then review
This tablet, that thus humbly rears
In such diversity of hue
Its history of two hundred years. 8

—When through this little wreck of fame,
Cipher and syllable! thine eye
Has travelled down to Matthew's name,
Pause with no common sympathy. 12

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,
Then be it neither checked nor stayed:
For Matthew a request I make
Which for himself he had not made. 16

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
Is silent as a standing pool;
Far from the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school. 20

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness;
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness. 24

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up—
He felt with spirit so profound. 28

—Thou soul of God's best earthly mould!
Thou happy Soul! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee? 32

57. The verse form of William Wordsworth's lyric poem "Matthew" is the
- A) common measure.
 - B) hymnal measure.
 - C) long measure.
 - D) Poulter's measure.
 - E) short measure.

58. The construction *o'er* (lines 5 and 17) is an example of
- A) caesura.
 - B) elision.
 - C) hiatus.
 - D) litotes.
 - E) syllepsis.

59. Line 20's *murmur* and line 21's *sighs* are examples of auditory imagery known as

- A) euphony.
- B) heteroglossia.
- C) onomatopoeia.
- D) resonance.
- E) xenoglossia.

60. Lines 10 and 12 exhibit

- A) eye rhyme.
- B) half rhyme.
- C) leonine rhyme.
- D) perfect rhyme.
- E) slant rhyme.

Items 61-65 refer to Sally Ann Roberts's

It All Started with a Packet of Seeds

It all started with a packet of seeds,
To be planted with tenderness and care,
At the base of an Oak, free from all weeds.
They will produce such beauty and flare. 4

To be planted with tenderness and care,
A cacophony of colorful flowers,
They will produce such beauty and flare.
With an aroma that can continue for hours. 8

A cacophony of colorful flowers,
Bright oranges with yellows and reds,
With an aroma that can continue for hours,
Delivered from their fresh flower beds. 12

Bright oranges with yellows and reds,
At the base of an oak, free from all weeds,
Delivered from their fresh flower beds,
It all started with a packet of seeds. 16

61. Sally Ann Roberts's "It All Started with a Packet of Seeds" is an example of the

- A) limerick.
- B) pantoum.
- C) rondeau.
- D) sestina.
- E) villanelle.

62. The senses addressed in Roberts's poem are

- A) auditory and gustatory.
- B) auditory and tactile.
- C) gustatory and kinesthetic.
- D) olfactory and tactile.
- E) olfactory and visual imagery.

63. Line 9's "cacophony of colorful flowers" is an example of
- A) discordia concors.
 - B) enantiosis.
 - C) sigmatism.
 - D) synæsthesia.
 - E) transferred epithet.
64. The rhyme that characterizes lines 9 and 11 is
- A) eye rhyme.
 - B) feminine rhyme.
 - C) leonine rhyme.
 - D) masculine rhyme.
 - E) riding rhyme.
65. The overall metrical pattern of Roberts's closed-form poem is best understood in terms of
- A) accentual verse.
 - B) accentual-syllabism.
 - C) blank verse.
 - D) free verse.
 - E) syllabism.

Required Tie-Breaking Essay

Note well: Contestants who do not write an essay will be disqualified even if they are not involved in any tie. Any essay that does not demonstrate a sincere effort to discuss the assigned topic will be disqualified. The judge(s) should note carefully this criterion when breaking ties: ranking of essays for tie-breaking purposes should be based primarily on how well the topic has been addressed.

Three sheets of paper have been provided; your written response should reflect the *Handbook's* notion that an essay is a "moderately brief discussion of a restricted topic": something more than just a few sentences.

Read Wendell Berry's "Vacation," and fully address the irony.

Vacation

Once there was a man who filmed his vacation.
 He went flying down the river in his boat
 with his video camera* to his eye, making
 a moving picture of the moving river
 upon which his sleek boat moved swiftly
 toward the end of his vacation. He showed
 his vacation to his camera, which pictured it,
 preserving it forever: the river, the trees,
 the sky, the light, the bow of his rushing boat
 behind which he stood with his camera
 preserving his vacation even as he was having it
 so that after he had had it he would still
 have it. It would be there. With a flick
 of a switch, there it would be. But he
 would not be in it. He would never be in it.

* predates a GoPro-type of POV

5

10

15

Wendell Berry
2012

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UIL Literary Criticism
Region • 2025

line arrows up ➔

1.	A	151
2.	E	279
3.	C	
4.	B	202
5.	D	445
6.	A	84
7.	B	212
8.	E	343
9.	C	603
10.	B	7
11.	C	223
12.	A	170
13.	A	
14.	D	581
15.	D	397
16.	D	261
17.	C	283
18.	A	605
19.	A	52
20.	E	579
21.	B	608
22.	B	267
23.	E	457
24.	A	51
25.	E	490
26.	D	563
27.	A	349
28.	C	314
29.	E	417
30.	D	273

31.	D	1.3.44
32.	A	2.1.247
33.	D	3.4.70
34.	E	5.1.242
35.	D	5.1.300
36.	B	4.1.58
37.	B	32; 179
38.	C	283
39.	A	
40.	B	
41.	D	34
42.	A	13
43.	E	
44.	C	
45.	C	
46.	D	349
47.	D	
48.	C	
49.	C	298
50.	E	470
51.	E	451
52.	C	
53.	B	257
54.	E	
55.	B	108
56.	A	43
57.	C	279
58.	B	167
59.	C	337
60.	A	191
61.	B	349
62.	E	
63.	D	469
64.	B	196
65.	E	466

FOLD

along the **three**
longitudinal
lines for ease
in grading. ➔

Please note that the objective
scores should not be altered to
reflect the breaking of any ties.
Simply adjust ranking.

The thirty items in Part 1
are worth one point each.

The twenty items in Part 2
are worth two points each.

The fifteen items in Part 3
are worth two points each.

DO NOT
mark (cross out)
actual **LETTER** answer;
mark the answer **NUMERAL**.

Page numbers refer
to the *Handbook 12e*,

Folger-Simon & Schuster
Much Ado about Nothing,

Penguin Classics
*"The Legend of Sleepy
Hollow" and Other Stories*,

and
Belknap Press-HarvardUP
*The Poems of
Emily Dickinson*

Part 4: Tie-Breaking Essay

These notes are not intended to be understood as a key for the Tie-Breaking Essay prompt; rather, they should serve the judge(s) as a presentation of critical ideas that might appear in an essay responding to the prompt.

Criteria for judging the Tie-Breaking Essay **SHOULD** include

- the degree to which the instructions have been followed,
- the quality of the critical insight offered in response to the selection,
- the overall effectiveness of the written discussion, and
- the grammatical correctness of the essay.

Note well that the quality of the contestant's critical insight is more important than the contestant's prose style. In short, the Literary Criticism contest is one that promotes the critical analysis of literature. The quality of the writing, which should never go unappreciated, does not trump evidence of critical analysis.

Critical Notes on Wendell Berry's "Vacation"

Literary concepts that **MIGHT** be used in a discussion of irony in Wendell Berry's "Vacation" include

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| allegory, | metaphor, |
| connotation, | paradox (at some level), |
| etymology, | parallelism, |
| denotation, | personification, |
| formula ("once there was a man"), | polyptoton, |
| free verse, | theme, and |
| imagery, | tone. |
| irony (including verbal), | |

The contestant should find an observation central to the irony that informs the totality of Wendell Berry's "Vacation," perhaps either "He showed / his vacation to his camera [. . .]" (lines 6-7) or "But he / would not be in it. He would never be in it" (lines 14-15) and build from there.

The first of the speaker's observations suggests a vicarious personification of the video camera and its memory, thus the camera's experiencing the vacation and, in the future, the memories recorded not recalled, as would be human memory.

The second observation sums up the vacationer's seeming relinquishing of experiencing of the ride on the river for recording the boat on the river . . . without any record in the footage of his having been on the river himself, except by the interpolation associated with a sharing of the footage with, presumably, friends: Where is the vacationer in the actual video recording?

The contestant might extend this irony a bit further by dwelling on the word *vacation*, noting that to vacate means 'to not occupy.' The verbal irony is the speaker's commentary—beginning with the poem's title—on the vacationer's not being in the experience of the boat ride itself, that he is experiencing a species of movie-making in which he is the producer, the director, and the cameraman but not even the central character; indeed, at best, he is someone on a job (making the movie) and not on a distancing-from-a-job, which is what a vacation is usually taken to be.

The young writer might recognize the presentation as either an allegory or a metaphor, in which the poet's central message is that being in nature should be a being-one-with-nature, that documenting an experience and having the experience are not one and the same.