

# AP Literature & Composition

SSS#3B

## Multiple Choice



NATIONAL  
MATH + SCIENCE  
INITIATIVE



THE  
COLORADO  
EDUCATION  
INITIATIVE

*White Noise*

## AP Literature and Composition Multiple-Choice Questions - Strategies for Passages

Below are 12 strategies you can use to hone in on the right answer for multiple-choice questions. Remember – the passages on the test will be new to you, but the types of questions asked about those passages will seem very familiar after you practice with the next two activities.

**Strategy 1:** Read the first and last lines to see how the writer opens and closes the door to the passage’s core concern.

**Strategy 2:** Read around the line number indicated in the question – two lines below if at the start of stanza/paragraph; one line above and below if in the middle; two lines above if at the end of a stanza/paragraph.

**Strategy 3:** Play positive and negative with the poem and eliminate the choices that are the opposite of your choice. Example: the speaker’s note is positive, so eliminate all negative tone words like “critical.”

**Strategy 4:** Play too broad, too narrow, or not mentioned in the passage to eliminate choices.

**Strategy 5:** Ask “Why would the author write \_\_\_\_\_? What is she trying to accomplish by \_\_\_\_\_?”

**Strategy 6:** How is the passage organized? Where are the shifts in subject or tone that might help me follow the writer’s ideas?

**Strategy 7:** What words are used in an unusual way or are new to me? Can I use the sentence above and/or below the word to figure it out? Can I substitute choices provided to figure out which choice best replaced an unusual word OR which choice best fills in a gap left between two words in a sentence?

**Strategy 8:** Look for extremes in the answers (always, never, universally) or “loaded” words and be suspicious of selecting that answer.

**Strategy 9:** For antecedent questions, look in the middle of the line numbers suggested: often the answer is neither the farthest nor the nearest to the pronoun in the question.

**Strategy 10:** Rephrase, restate, paraphrase, summary – all are useful to capture the basic thrust of an author’s writing.

**Strategy 11:** What are the core literary devices used in the passage? How can I use my knowledge of AP vocabulary to quickly eliminate three or even four possible answers?

**Strategy 12:** Are there patterns or significant repetitions that I can use to get to the complexity of the poem’s meaning(s)?

**Close Reading and Question Stems Exercise**  
**Excerpt from *White Noise***  
**Chapter 1**

*Read the passage carefully, first to understand the content and then again to gain a sense of the overall style of writing. The questions on the following page ask you to practice the same close reading skills expected on the multiple choice section of the AP Literature and Composition exam.*

The station wagons arrived at noon, a long shining line that coursed through the west campus. In single file they eased around the orange I-beam sculpture and moved toward the dormitories. The roofs of the station wagons were loaded down with carefully secured suitcases full of light and heavy clothing; with boxes of blankets, books and shoes, stationery and books, sheets pillows, quilts; with rolled-up rugs and sleeping bags; with bicycles, skis, rucksacks, English and Western saddles, inflated rafts. As cars slowed to a crawl and stopped, students sprang out and raced to the rear doors to begin removing the objects inside; the stereo sets, radios, personal computers; small refrigerators and table ranges; the cartons of phonograph records and cassettes; the hair dryers and styling irons; the tennis rackets, soccer balls, hockey and lacrosse sticks, bows and arrows, the controlled substances, the birth control pills and devices; the junk food still in shopping bags – onion-and-garlic chips, nacho thins, peanut crème patties. Waffelos and

Kabooms, fruit chews and toffee popcorn; the Dum-Dum pops, the mystic mints.

I've witnessed this spectacle every September for twenty-one years. It is a brilliant event, invariably. The students greet each other with comic cries and gestures of sodden collapse. Their summer has been bloated with criminal pleasures, as always. The parents stand sun-dazed near their automobiles, seeing images of themselves in every direction. The conscientious suntans. The well-made faces and wry looks. They feel a sense of renewal, of communal recognition. The women crisp and alert, in diet trim, knowing people's names. Their husbands content to measure out the time, distant but ungrudging, accomplished in parenthood, something about them suggesting massive insurance coverage. This assembly of station wagons, as much as anything they might do in the course of the year, more than formal liturgies or laws, tells the parents they are a collection of the like-minded and the spiritually akin, a people, a nation.

### Active Reading

As you read the multiple choice passage – annotate and highlight sections/passages you believe will be asked about.

Try for a minimum of three – and for our purposes write your predictions here (on the actual exam you would just highlight) and fill out the first two columns:

Line number(s)	Why chosen	Yes or No?

**Close Reading and AP Literature and Composition Multiple Choice**  
**Excerpt from *White Noise***  
**Chapter 40**

*Now that you have practiced close reading skills with the first excerpt from *White Noise* you will work with a different passage from the same novel. Read and annotate the passage first. A glossary has been provided at the end of the passage for use on the multiple choice questions.*

This was the day Wilder got on his plastic tricycle, rode it around the block, turned right onto a dead end street and pedaled noisily to the dead end. He walked the tricycle around the guard rail and then  
5 rode along a paved walkway that went winding past some overgrown lots to a set of twenty concrete steps. The plastic wheels rumbled and screeched. Here our reconstruction yields to the awe-struck account of two elderly women watching from the  
10 second-story back porch of a tall house in the trees. He walked the tricycle down the steps, guiding it with a duteous and unsentimental hand, letting it bump right along, as if it were an odd-shaped little sibling, not necessarily cherished. He remounted,  
15 rode across the street, rode across the sidewalk, proceeded onto the grassy slope that bordered the expressway. Here the women began to call. Hey, hey, they said, a little tentative at first, not ready to accept the implications of the process unfolding  
20 before them. The boy pedaled diagonally down the slope, shrewdly reducing the angle of descent, then paused on the bottom to aim his three-wheeler at the point on the opposite side which seemed to represent the shortest distance across. Hey, sonny,  
25 no. Waving their arms, looking frantically for some able-bodied pedestrian to appear on the scene. Wilder, meanwhile, ignoring their cries or not hearing them in the serial whoosh of dashing hatchbacks and vans, began to pedal across the  
30 highway, mystically charged. The women could only look, empty-mouthed, each with an arm in the air, a plea for the scene to reverse, the boy to pedal backwards on his faded blue and yellow toy like a cartoon figure on morning TV. The drivers could not  
35 quite comprehend. In their knotted posture, belted in, they knew this picture did not belong to the

hurtling consciousness of the highway, the broad-ribboned modernist stream. In speed there was sense. In signs, in patterns, in-split-second lives.  
40 What did it mean, this little rotary blur? Some force in the world had gone awry. They veered, braked, sounded their horns down the long afternoon, an animal lament. The child would not even look at them, pedaled straight for the median strip, a  
45 narrow patch of pale grass. He was pumped up, chesty, his arms appearing to move as rapidly as his legs, the round head wagging in a jig of lame-brained determination. He had to slow down to get onto the raised median, rearing up to let the front wheel edge  
50 over, extremely deliberate in his movements, following some numbered scheme, and the cars went wailing past, horns blowing belatedly, drivers' eyes searching the rearview mirror. He walked the tricycle across the grass. The women watched him  
55 regain a firm placement on the seat. Stay, they called. Do not go. No, no. Like foreigners reduced to simple phrases. The cars kept coming, whipping into the straightaway, endless streaking traffic. He set off to cross the last three lanes, dropping off the median  
60 like a bouncing ball, front wheel, rear wheels. Then the head-wagging race to the other side. Cars dodged, strayed, climbed the curbstone, astonished heads appearing in the side windows. The furiously pedaling boy could not know how slow he seemed to  
65 be moving from the vantage point of the women on the porch. The women were silent by now, outside the event, suddenly tired. How slow he moved, how mistaken he was in thinking he was breezing right along. It made them tired. The horns kept blowing,  
70 sound waves mixing in the air, flattening, calling back from vanished cars, scolding. He reached the other side, briefly rode parallel to the traffic, seemed to

75 lose his balance, fall away, going down the embankment in a multicolored tumble. When he reappeared a second later, he was sitting in a water furrow, part of the intermittent creek that accompanies the highway. Stunned, he made the

80 decision to cry. It took him a moment, mud and water everywhere, the tricycle on its side. The women began to call once more, each raising an arm to revoke the action.

**Active Reading**

As you read the multiple choice passage – annotate and highlight sections/passages you believe will be asked about.

Try for a minimum of three – and for our purposes write your predictions here (on the actual exam you would just highlight) and fill out the first two columns:

Line number(s)	Why chosen	Yes or No?

**White Noise Multiple Choice Questions**  
**Chapter 40 Passage**

*After you've read the passage, answer the multiple choice questions. You will be timed. Use the strategies at the beginning of this packet in order to eliminate answer choices. Use the glossary located on the previous page when answering the multiple choice questions.*

1. The primary mood of the passage is
  - A. anxious anticipation
  - B. exaggerated peril
  - C. clandestine danger
  - D. mysterious adventure
  - E. shocking disbelief
  
2. The child's name, Wilder,
  - A. foreshadows the boy's doom
  - B. satirizes the adventurism in youth
  - C. comments on the boy's apparent personality
  - D. displays the author's appreciation for danger
  - E. reveals America's love of the romantic
  
3. Which of the following devices help develop tension in the passage?
  - I. Rhetorical Fragments
  - II. Action Verbs
  - III. Abstract Nouns
  - A. I only
  - B. I and II
  - C. II only
  - D. I and III only
  - E. I, II and III
  
4. The simile in lines 32-34 emphasizes
  - A. the child's naïve understanding of the danger
  - B. the women's desire for the scene to reverse itself
  - C. the narrator's comic view of the situation
  - D. the child's youth and inexperience
  - E. the drivers' indifference to the possible outcome
  
5. The antecedent of the pronoun "their" (line 42) is
  - A. the cars
  - B. the old women
  - C. wilder and his tricycle
  - D. the drivers
  - E. the toy and the cartoon figure

6. All of the following contribute to the image of the “broad-ribboned modernist stream” EXCEPT
- A. “the serial whoosh of dashing hatchbacks and vans” (lines 28-29)
  - B. “What did it mean, this little rotary blur?” (line 40)
  - C. “They veered, braked, sounded their horns” (lines 41-42)
  - D. “the cars went wailing past, horns blowing belatedly” (lines 51-52)
  - E. “whipping into the straightaway, endless streaking traffic” (lines 57-58)
7. The effect of the fragments in lines 55-57 is to
- A. allude to Wilder’s current mental state
  - B. slow the pace of the chain of events
  - C. represent the women’s emotional stress
  - D. lessen the emotional intensity of the action
  - E. heighten the narrator’s involvement in the scene
8. The function of the words “It made them tired” (line 69) is to
- A. increase the intensity and stress of the events
  - B. confirm the women’s powerlessness
  - C. illustrate the women’s advanced age
  - D. contribute dialogue to the passage
  - E. emphasize the distance between the women and the boy
9. Overall, the language and style of the passage
- A. shows Wilder’s detachment from the world
  - B. characterizes society as indifferent to the problems of others
  - C. mimics Wilder’s control over the situation
  - D. creates action and a sense of heightened danger
  - E. mirrors American’s obsession with driving
10. Which of the following sentences most clearly demonstrates the author’s use of juxtaposition of control and chaos?
- A. “This was the day Wilder got on his plastic tricycle, rode it around the block, turned right onto a dead end street and pedaled noisily to the dead end” (lines 1-3)
  - B. “He remounted, rode across the street, rode across the sidewalk, proceeded onto the grassy slope that bordered the expressway” (lines 14-17)
  - C. “In their knotted posture, belted in, they knew this picture did not belong to the hurtling consciousness of the highway, the broad-ribboned modernist stream” (lines 35-38)
  - D. “Cars dodged, strayed, climbed the curbstone, astonished heads appearing in the side windows” (lines 61-63)
  - E. “When he reappeared a second later, he was sitting in a water furrow, part of the intermittent creek that accompanies the highway” (lines 74-77)
11. The rapid pace of the scene is PRIMARILY developed through
- A. asyndeton and participial phrases
  - B. similes and complex sentences
  - C. polysyndeton and simple sentences
  - D. personification and infinitive phrases
  - E. repetition and appositive phrases

12. A likely function of the elderly women in the passage is to
- A. serve to distract the reader from the real danger of the situation
  - B. provide humor to an otherwise tragic scene
  - C. heighten the awareness of the drivers
  - D. contribute to the positive outcomes of the scene
  - E. represent the unheeded wisdom of age and experience