Prose-Based Essay Prompts

- 2018: *The Blithedale Romance* by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1852)
- 2016: *The Mayor of Casterbridge* by Thomas Hardy (1886)
- 2015: *The Beet Queen* by Louise Erdrich (1986)
- 2013: *The Rainbow* by D.H. Lawrence (1915)
- 2012: *Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes (1995)
- 2011A: *Middlemarch* by George Eliot (1871)
- 2011B: *Kiss of the Fur Queen* by Tomson Highway (1998)
- 2010: *Belinda* by Maria Edgeworth (1801)
- 2010B: “Cherry Bomb” by Maxine Clair (????)
- 2009: *The Street* by Ann Petry (1946)
- 2009B: *Seraph on the Suwanee* by Zora Neale Hurston (1948)
- 2008B: *Northanger Abbey* by Jane Austen (1803)
- 2007: *Johnny Got His Gun* by Dalton Trumbo (1939)
- 2005: *A Story of San Francisco* by Norris McTeague (1899)
- 2004: *Mary Barton* by Elizabeth Gaskell (1848)
- 2004: “The Pupil” by Henry James (1891)
- 2003: “The Other Paris” by Mavis Gallant (1956)
- 2003: *We Were the Mulvaneys* by Joyce Carol Oates (1996)

Poetry-Based Essay Prompts

- 2016: “Juggler” by Richard Wilbur (1949)
- 2015: “XIV” from *MIDSUMMER* by Derek Walcott (1984)
- 2014: “For That He Looked Not upon Her” by George Gascoigne (15??)
- 2013: “The Black Walnut Tree” in *Twelve Moons* by Mary Oliver (1979)
2012: “Thou Blind Man’s Mark” by Sir Philip Sidney (between 1560-1586)
2011: “A Story” by Li-Young Lee from The City in Which I Love You (1990)
2011B: “An Echo Sonnet” by Robert Pack (Contemporary 1970-Present)
2009: “Icarus” by Edward Field (1963)
2009: Speech from Henry VIII by William Shakespeare (1623)
2008: “Hawk Roosting” by Ted Hughes (1989ish)
2006: “To Paint a Water Lily” by Ted Hughes (1989ish)
2004: “We Grow Accustomed to the Dark” by Emily Dickinson (1862)
2004: “Acquainted with the Night” by Robert Frost (1928)
2003: “ΕΡΩΣ” by Robert Bridges (1882-1904)
2003: “Eros” by Anne Stevenson (Contemporary)
2001: The Odyssey by Homer (Ancient)
2001: “Siren Song” by Margaret Atwood (1970-ish)

Open Response Prompts

2018: Character with a double-faceted blessing and curse.
2017: Character with unusual origins & its significance.
2016: Deceptive character and his/her motives for deception & subsequent results.
2015: Analysis of acts of cruelty & their role/effects in a text.
2014: Character that exemplifies what we value is demonstrated by willingness to sacrifice.
2013: Single moment that shapes the rest of the text. (Think bildungsroman)
2012: How environment and socio-psycho-inter-cultural relations shape character.
2011A: Character response to justice or injustice.
2011B: Single moment illuminates the text in its whole.