

English IV AP – Literature and Composition
A Doll House by Henrik Ibsen
Choice Essay Assignment

Name _____

Period _____

Option #1:

Oscar Wilde once wrote, “Every saint has a past and every sinner has a future,” thus revealing the ambiguity of character that so often exists in literature. Consider Henrik Ibsen’s *A Doll House*. Select a complex yet important character from the drama (not necessarily the protagonist) who, on the basis of the character’s *actions* alone, might be considered evil or immoral, but who also might be viewed sympathetically. Then, in a well-organized essay, explain *both how and why* the full presentation of the character contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary.

Option #2:

Critics of Henrik Ibsen argue that *A Doll House* is not a feminist play, and is more about asserting self, regardless of gender. Yet Joan Templeton, in her afterward to the Signet Classics edition of the play disagrees, asserting, “Make (Nora) a man, and the play becomes not only ludicrous, but impossible.” In a well-organized essay, consider if *A Doll House* is a work centered in feminism, humanism, or some major focus. Avoid mere plot summary.

Option #3:

Create an essay prompt of your own and respond to it in a clear, concise, and textually-supported manner.

This assignment is due Monday, November 12, 2018.

English IV AP – Literature and Composition
A Doll House ESSAY C | SCORING GUIDE

The score reflects the quality of the essay as a whole—it content, its style, its mechanics. Students are rewarded for what they do well.

9-8 (51-49) | These essays offer a **well-focused and persuasive** analysis of both how and why the full presentation of the character contributes to the **overall meaning of the work**. Using **apt and specific textual references**, these essays show mastery of the work by fully examining the character. Although not without flaws, these essays make a strong case for their interpretation and discuss the literary work with significant insight and understanding that reaches beyond the ideas presented and discussed in class. Generally, essays scored a 9 reveal more sophisticated analysis and more effective control of language than do essays scored an 8.

7-6 (48-42) | These essays offer a **reasonable** analysis of both how and why the full presentation of the character contributes to the **overall meaning of the work**. These essays show sufficient command of the work by examining specific **complex attributes of the character**. These works have insight and understanding that reaches beyond the ideas presented and discussed in class, but the analysis is less thorough, less perceptive, and/or less specific in supporting detail than that of the 9-8 essays. Generally, essays scored a 7 present better-developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than those scored a 6.

5 (41-38) | These essays respond to the assigned task with a **plausible argument**, but they tend to be **superficial, primarily reliant on class lecture and/or discussion, or underdeveloped in analysis**. They often rely upon plot summary that contains some analysis, implicit or explicit—revealing only some command of the work. Although the student attempts to identify the **complexity of the character** and his or her actions in relationship to both **how and why** the full character contributes to the meaning of the work, they may demonstrate a rather simplistic understanding of the work. Typically, these essays reveal unsophisticated thinking and/or immature

writing. The student demonstrates adequate control of language, but the essay lacks effective organization and may be marred by surface errors.

4-3 (37-30) | These lower-half essays offer a **less than thorough understanding** of the task or a **less than adequate treatment** of it. They reflect an **incomplete or oversimplified understanding** of the work, or they may **fail to establish how and why the full presentation of the character contributes to the work's meaning**, or they may rely on plot summary alone. Their assertions may be unsupported or even irrelevant. Often wordy, elliptical, or repetitious, these essays may lack control over the elements of college-level composition. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreading and demonstrate inept writing and/or incomplete reading.

2-1 (29 and below) | Although these essays make some attempt to respond to the prompt, they compound the weakness of the essays in the 4-3 range. They may be unacceptably brief, incoherent in development of ideas, or off task. They may be poorly written on several counts and contain distracting errors in grammar and mechanics. The remarks are presented with little clarity, organization, or supporting evidence. Particularly inept, vacuous, and/or incoherent essays are given a 1.