**AP Lit & Comp**  Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Open Response Question

**Dissecting the Prompt:**

1. Read the complete prompt twice. No skimming!
2. Underline the verbs first, then underline most important terms. Literary terms and techniques (metaphors, irony, imagery, theme etc.) are always a great place to start.
3. Restate the question in simpler words. Boil it down to its essence!
4. Use your key words and restated question as guide to formulating a thesis statement. Often you may rephrase parts of the question in your thesis—just be sure to be specific and choose your verbs wisely!

Ready? Here are 3 prompts you could easily respond to with *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.* Dissect the prompt using the above steps, then create a thesis using *Cuckoo’s Nest* as your text.

**Prompt:** 1998: In his essay "Walking," Henry David Thoreau offers the following assessment of literature:

In literature it is only the wild that attracts us.

Dullness is but another name for tameness. It is the

uncivilized free and wild thinking in *Hamlet* and *The Iliad*,

in all scriptures and mythologies, not learned in schools,

that delights us.

From the works you have studied in school, choose a novel, play, or epic poem that you may initially have thought was conventional and tame but that you value for its "uncivilized free and wild thinking." Write an essay in which you explain what constitutes its "uncivilized free and wild thinking" and how that thinking is central to the value of the work as a whole. Support your ideas with specific references to the work you choose.

**Key Words:**

**Restated Question:**

**Thesis Statement:**

**Prompt:** 1995: Writers often highlight the values of a culture or a society by using characters who are alienated from that culture or society because of gender, race, class, or creed.

Choose a play or novel in which such a character plays a significant role and show how that character's alienation reveals the surrounding society's assumptions and moral values.

You may choose a work from the following list or another suitable play or novel. Do NOT write on a short story, poem, or film.

**Restated Question:**

**Thesis Statement:**

**Prompt:** 1997: Novels and plays often include scenes of weddings, funerals, parties, and other social occasions. Such scenes may reveal the values of the characters and the society in which they live. Select a novel or play that includes such a scene and, in a focused essay, discuss the contribution the scene makes to the meaning of the work as a whole.

**Restated Question:**

**Thesis Statement:**

**Prompt:** 2004 (B): The most important themes in literature are sometimes developed in scenes in which a death or deaths take place. Choose a novel or play and write a well-organized essay in which you show how a specific death scene helps to illuminate the meaning of the work as a whole.

**Restated Question:**

**Thesis Statement:**