**Tackling AP English Literature Multiple Choice Questions: A How-To Guide**

There are 55 AP English Literature multiple choice questions and you will be given one hour to complete them. What follows are some basic strategies to keep in mind while studying for this section of the test, doing practice questions, and taking the exam itself.

1. **Close Reading**

Because the AP English Literature multiple choice questions are centered around passages selected from works of literature throughout the ages, it is important to read the passages thoroughly, but efficiently (as you only have 1 minute per question on this section of the exam).

There are a few different helpful strategies for reading the passages in this section; you should try each with a different set of practice questions and see which one works best for you.

Some students feel they perform better when they read the questions before the passages. One of the advantages of this strategy is that you will already know what you’re looking for when you start to tackle the passage.

Others prefer to read the passage twice, once being a skim for main ideas the other a full reading. Although this may take a bit longer than the other strategies, you may make up time later when working on the questions, as you won’t have to go back and refer to the passage often.

Of course, simply reading the passage through once and then starting on the questions may work for you better than these. Try all three strategies and any others you can think of to see what works best for you.

1. **Make Critical Inferences**

There is no guessing penalty on the AP English Literature multiple choice questions; you are graded based on the number of questions you get right. There is also no penalty for leaving a question blank. This means that you shouldn’t waste time and effort on guessing wildly (blindly picking choice C on a question you don’t know anything about), but that you also shouldn’t be afraid to guess if you can think critically and eliminate certain answers.

If you can eliminate 3 of the 5 possible answers, you have a 50% chance of getting the question right, and should take a guess, because the potential benefits outweigh the very minimal risk.

1. **Be Mindful of Your Time**

Because there is no penalty for leaving questions blank, if a question is giving you trouble you should skip and mark it to return to later if you have time. You only have 1 hour for the test, which breaks down to about one minute per question with a little extra time for reading the associated passage. As such, you need to work through the test efficiently; it’s better to miss out on the points for one tough question than three easy ones, as the questions are all counted equally, despite their difficulty levels.

These tips should help you tackle your AP English Literature multiple choice questions, but be sure to practice as much as possible between now and the exam.