
AP® English Language

Scoring Rubrics

Free-Response Question 1: Synthesis

Free-Response Question 2: Rhetorical Analysis

Free-Response Question 3: Argument Essay

Effective **Fall 2019**

Scoring Rubric for Question 1: Synthesis Essay

6 points

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0-1 points) 4.B	0 points For any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no defensible thesis. • The intended thesis only restates the prompt. • The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. • There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt. 	1 point Responds to the prompt with a defensible thesis that may establish a line of reasoning.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
Responses that do not earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intended thesis only restates the prompt. • The intended thesis is vague, must be inferred, does not take a position, equivocates or summarizes other's arguments but not the student's (e.g., some people say it's good, some people say it's bad). • The intended thesis simply states an obvious fact rather than a making a claim that requires a defense. 	Responses that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis responds to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt <u>and</u> the thesis clearly takes a position rather than just stating there are pros/cons. 	
Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis may appear anywhere within the essay. • A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning. 		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points) 2.A 4.A 6.A 6.B 6.C	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present). OR Fewer than 2 of the provided sources are referenced. OR Provides examples that are generally irrelevant and/or incoherent.	1 point Provides evidence from or references at least two of the provided sources. Evidence provided must be relevant to the <u>subject of the prompt</u> . AND Provides little or no commentary.	2 points Provides evidence from or references at least three of the provided sources. Evidence provided must be relevant to the <u>subject of the prompt</u> . AND Provides commentary; however, it repeats, oversimplifies, or misinterprets the cited information or evidence.	3 points Provides evidence from or references at least three of the provided sources. Evidence provided must be relevant to the <u>thesis</u> . AND Provides commentary that explains the relationship between evidence and the thesis; however, commentary is uneven, limited, or incomplete.	4 points Provides evidence from or references at least three of the provided sources. Evidence provided must be relevant to the <u>thesis</u> . AND Provides well-developed commentary that consistently and explicitly explains the relationship between the evidence and the thesis.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes					
Typical responses that earn 0 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are incoherent and do not address the prompt. May offer just opinion or repeat the ideas from a single source. Do not reference information from any of the provided sources. 	Typical responses that earn 1 point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only use 2 of the provided sources. 	Typical responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide commentary that frequently misunderstands, misrepresents, or overgeneralizes complex ideas (is reductive). Summarize conflicting positions from the sources but fails to compare, contrast, or reach a conclusion. 	Typical responses that earn 3 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide commentary that is well-developed in places but with occasional lapses into description or summary (rather than explanation). Provide commentary that is clear but there are times when the link between the evidence and the thesis may be strained. 	Typical responses that earn 4 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide commentary that engages specific details from the sources to draw conclusions. Integrate evidence from sources throughout to support the student's reasoning. 	
Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. 					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0-1 points) 2.A 4.C 6.B 8.A 8.B 8.C	0 points Does not meet the criteria for 1 point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.
	<p style="text-align: center;">Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</p> <p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempt to contextualize their argument, but such attempts consist of predominantly sweeping generalizations. • Only hint or suggest other arguments. • Use complicated or complex sentences or language that are ineffective in that they do not enhance the argument. 	<p>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Crafting a thesis that demands nuanced consideration of textual evidence to prove – and then successfully proves it. 2. Situating the argument within a broader context, recognizing the implications of the argument. 3. Engaging concession, rebuttal, and/or refutation of other arguments relating to the thesis. 4. Making effective rhetorical choices that strengthen the force and impact of the student's argument. 5. Utilizing a prose style that is especially vivid, persuasive, convincing, or appropriate to the student's argument.
	<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This point should be awarded only if the demonstration of sophistication or complex understanding is part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference. 	

Scoring Rubric for Question 2: Rhetorical Analysis

6 points

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0-1 points) 1.A 4.B	0 points For any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no defensible thesis. • The intended thesis only restates the prompt. • The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. • There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt 	1 point Responds to the prompt with a defensible thesis that analyzes the writer's rhetorical choices.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
	Responses that do not earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intended thesis only restates the prompt. • The intended thesis fails to address the rhetorical choices the writer makes. • The intended thesis simply describes or repeats the text rather than making a claim that requires a defense. 	Responses that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis responds to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt <u>and</u> clearly articulates a defensible thesis about the rhetorical choices the writer makes.
Additional Notes:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis may appear anywhere within the essay. • A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning. 	

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points) 1.A 2.A 4.A 6.A 6.B 6.C	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present). OR Repeats provided information. OR Provides examples that are generally irrelevant and/or incoherent	1 point Summarizes the text without reference to a thesis. OR Provides non-specific references to the text. OR Provides references to the text that are vaguely relevant. AND Provides little or no commentary.	2 points Makes textual references (direct quotes or paraphrases) that are relevant to the thesis. AND Provides commentary; however, it repeats, oversimplifies, or misinterprets the cited information or evidence.	3 points Makes textual references (direct quotes or paraphrases) that are relevant to the thesis. AND Provides commentary that explains the relationship between evidence and the thesis; however, commentary is uneven, limited, or incomplete.	4 points Makes textual references (direct quotes or paraphrases) that are relevant to the thesis. AND Provides well-developed commentary that consistently and explicitly explains the relationship between the evidence and the thesis.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes					
Typical responses that earn 0 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are incoherent and do not address the prompt. May offer just opinion with little or no evidence provided. 	Typical responses that earn 1 point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are predominantly restatements of ideas in the text (no analysis). 	Typical responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide commentary that links the evidence to the thesis but suggests misunderstanding of the passage or misrepresentation of the rhetorical choices made. Provide evidence and commentary that are unconvincing (makes assertions or assumptions that are not really supported by the text). 	Typical responses that earn 3 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide commentary that is developed and insightful in places but there are occasional lapses into description or minor inaccuracies. Provide commentary that is clear but there are times when the link between the textual evidence and the thesis may be strained. 	Typical responses that earn 4 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide commentary that engages the details of the text to draw conclusions about rhetorical choices. Integrate evidence from the text throughout to support the student's analysis. 	
Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. 					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0-1 points) 	0 points Does not meet the criteria for 1 point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.
	<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempt to contextualize the text, but such attempts consist of predominantly sweeping generalizations. Only hint or suggest other arguments. Examine individual rhetorical choices but do not examine the relationships among different choices throughout the text. Oversimplify complexities in the text. Use complicated or complex sentences or language that are ineffective in that they do not enhance their analysis. 	<p>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Crafting a thesis that demands nuanced consideration of textual evidence to prove – and then successfully proves it. Explaining the significance or relevance of the text's purpose within a broader context. Engaging concession, rebuttal, and/or refutation of other arguments relating to the thesis. Recognizing and accounting for contradictions or complexities within the text. Making effective rhetorical choices that strengthen the force and impact of the student's argument Utilizing a prose style that is especially vivid, persuasive, convincing, or appropriate to the student's argument.
	<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This point should be awarded only if the demonstration of sophistication or complex understanding is part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference. 	

Scoring Rubric for Question 3: Argument Essay

6 points

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A Thesis (0-1 points) 4.B	0 points For any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no defensible thesis. • The intended thesis only restates the prompt. • The intended thesis provides a summary of the issue with no apparent or coherent claim. • There is a thesis, but it does not respond to the prompt. 	1 point Responds to the prompt with a defensible thesis that may establish a line of reasoning.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
Responses that do not earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intended thesis only restates the prompt. • The intended thesis is vague, must be inferred, does not take a position, (e.g. it depends on your point of view). • The intended thesis simply states an obvious fact rather than making a claim that requires a defense. 		Responses that earn this point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis responds to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt <u>and</u> clearly takes a position rather than just stating there are pros/cons.
Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis may appear anywhere within the essay. • A thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning. 		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria				
Row B Evidence AND Commentary (0-4 points) 2.A 4.A 6.A 6.B 6.C	0 points Simply restates thesis (if present). OR Repeats provided information. OR Provides examples that are generally irrelevant and/or incoherent.	1 point Provides evidence or example(s) relevant to the subject of the prompt. AND Provides little or no commentary.	2 points Provides evidence or example(s) relevant to the subject of the prompt. AND Provides commentary; however, it repeats, oversimplifies, or misinterprets the cited information or evidence.	3 points Provides evidence relevant to the thesis. AND Provides commentary that explains the relationship between evidence and the thesis; however, commentary is uneven, limited, or incomplete.	4 points Provides evidence relevant to the thesis. AND Provides well-developed commentary that consistently and explicitly explains the relationship between the evidence and the thesis.
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes					
Typical responses that earn 0 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are incoherent and do not address the prompt. May offer just opinion with little or no evidence provided. 	Typical responses that earn 1 point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide evidence but little or no explanation. 	Typical responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide explanations of evidence that are repetitive (there is little or no development). 	Typical responses that earn 3 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide commentary that is clear but there are times when the link between the evidence and the thesis may be unclear or strained. 	Typical responses that earn 4 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide commentary that engages specific evidence to draw conclusions. Integrate evidence throughout to support the student's reasoning. 	
Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing that suffers from grammatical and/or mechanical errors that interfere with communication cannot earn the fourth point in this row. 					

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C Sophistication (0-1 points) 	0 points Does not meet the criteria for 1 point.	1 point Demonstrates sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation.
	<p style="text-align: center;">Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</p> <p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempt to contextualize their argument, but such attempts consist of predominantly sweeping generalizations. Only hint or suggest other arguments. Use complicated or complex sentences or language that are ineffective in that they do not enhance the argument. <p>Responses that earn this point may demonstrate sophistication of thought and/or a complex understanding of the rhetorical situation by doing any of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Crafting a thesis that demands nuanced consideration of textual evidence to prove – and then successfully proves it. Situating the argument within a broader context, recognizing the implications of the argument. Engaging concession, rebuttal, and/or refutation of other arguments relating to the thesis. Making effective rhetorical choices that strengthen the force and impact of the student's argument. Utilizing a prose style that is especially vivid, persuasive, convincing, or appropriate to the student's argument. <p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This point should be awarded only if the demonstration of sophistication or complex understanding is part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference. 	